Fire and Rescue Authorities Strategy for Children and Young People
Ministerial Foreword

Reducing fire deaths and injuries is more than just providing an efficient emergency response service. It is about education to prevent the type of behaviour which leads to a fire developing in the first instance. None of us are too old to learn these important safety lessons but by targeting our children and young people we can embed behaviours which will make them and our communities safer for their entire lives. Our Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) have an important part to play in contributing to the well-being of children and young people by educating them about the importance of fire safety and the consequences of deliberate fires and hoax calls.

The vast majority of children and young people lead safe, positive and productive lives. However there is a small minority of children and young people who are involved in anti-social fire crime behaviour putting themselves and their communities in danger. Firefighters provide strong role models who inspire and positively influence young people. Recognising this, our FRAs have already achieved so much through the delivery of youth intervention schemes increasing confidence and self esteem among young people, improving their interpersonal and vocational skills and providing a sense of direction and self respect. The young people become more motivated and positive about themselves, which in turn has the effect of making them better citizens.

This Strategy for Children and Young People builds on previous good work and is the result of the Welsh Assembly Government, the FRAs, Education and the Youth Justice Board working together to develop a Strategy that embeds the youth intervention schemes delivered by FRAs with other key strategic agendas such as the All Wales Youth Offending Strategy.

Deprivation and risk from both accidental and deliberate fire go hand in hand, often related to experiences of poor social welfare, lack of family support, low levels of educational attainment, disengagement and disaffection, health issues and insufficient community provision. The FRAs working with key stakeholders delivering both fire safety education and intervention programmes gives children and young people the opportunity to live safe, happy and fulfilled lives, contributing to our Social Justice agenda.

Whilst much has been accomplished, our commitment to our young people has to continue and this is why I endorse this Strategy.

Carl Sargeant AM
Minister for Social Justice and Local Government
Fire and Rescue Authorities Strategy for Children and Young People

This strategy sets out the Welsh Assembly Government’s and the three Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) in Wales’ vision and direction for delivering Children and Young People’s intervention activities. These activities will help children and young people to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well being, with due regard to issues related to ethnicity, disability and gender.

The strategy aims to deliver across Wales an approach to children and young people which has two strands;

- Firstly, general education to Children and Young People in Wales to keep them safe from fire and fire related accidents; and

- Secondly, programmes and interventions which deliver effective reduction of anti-social fire crime behaviour and engage with children and young people who are on the cusp of offending or have already offended.

It will aim to ensure excellence in work with children and young people, especially those in disadvantaged communities, supported by effective partnership working and early intervention.
What do the Fire and Rescue Service want to do?

- To prevent children and young people being harmed or killed in accidental fires or causing fires through ignorance or carelessness.
- To prevent children and young people becoming involved in fire crime and associated antisocial behaviour.
- Work co-operatively to maximise the impact of resources on improving outcomes
- Fully evaluate the effect of the initiatives and interventions with partners

How are the Fire and Rescue Services going to do it?

- The Fire and Rescue services will work with their partners to engage with Local Authorities, Local Education Authorities, Youth Offending teams, other related agencies and voluntary sector agencies.
- By engaging actively with children and young people and their families.
- By developing interventions to prevent and reduce fire crime and fire setting by children and young people.
- By diverting children and young people from fire crime and associated antisocial behaviour.
- By educating children and young people and their families in fire safety skills and responsible citizenship.
- By working with their local partnerships to engage with Local Authorities, Local Education Authorities (LEAs), Youth Offending teams (YOTs), other related agencies and voluntary sector agencies.
- By ensuring that Fire and Rescue Service staff working with children and young people are effective and professional.
- By identifying and disseminating good practice in working with children and young people
Why the Fire and Rescue Service children and young people’s strategy?

The Fire and Rescue Service strategy complements other key national youth related documents and publications such as:

- New Duties on Fire and Rescue Authorities under the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010

On the 10 February 2010 the Children and Families (Wales) Measure received Privy Council approval. This new Welsh law makes statutory provision to take forward the Welsh Assembly Government’s commitment in terms of child poverty, and to take forward its strategy for vulnerable children.

Part 1 of the Measure will require named public agencies in Wales, including Welsh Ministers and local authorities to prepare and publish a strategy for contributing to the eradication of child poverty in Wales. The Measure reflects the Assembly Government understanding that no single organisation can be responsible for dealing with the complex issues associated with child poverty and that in order to make further and faster progress there is a need to galvanise and draw on the expertise and experience of a wide range of public bodies in Wales, including the Fire and Rescue Service.

Work is underway to develop the necessary regulations and guidance to fully implement Part 1 of the Measure. These regulations will set out the format, timings, consultation and review processes for child poverty strategies produced by public agencies such as the Fire and Rescue Service.

In the meantime, however, the Assembly Government is supporting the ‘Child Poverty Solutions Wales’ toolkit to ensure that support is available to agencies such as the Fire and Rescue Service to help them fulfil new duties under the Measure. Please see the attached link for help and advice: [http://www.childpovertysolutions.org.uk/](http://www.childpovertysolutions.org.uk/)

- The “All-Wales Youth Offending Strategy: Delivery Plan 2009-11”; the Assembly Government’s “Children and Young People: Rights to Action document” - and the Seven Core Aims which set out what the Assembly Government is doing for children and young people and which are based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). (Appendix 1)

- The recently published (November 2009) “Getting it Right” document which has been developed by the Welsh Assembly Government. This document was prepared following consultation with several organisations across Wales with links to children and young people to agree what the Key Priorities for action in Wales should be. “Getting it Right”
identifies the 16 priorities that the Welsh Assembly Government is going to focus on. (Appendix 2)

- "14-19 Learning Pathways" has been developed and links to "Extending Entitlement" and the Welsh Assembly Government’s commitment to youth support services. "14-19 Learning Pathways Guidance" (2004 and 2006) sets out the policy framework which is reinforced by the “Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009”.

- The strategy follows the Welsh Assembly Government’s commitment to young people, first set out in “Extending Entitlement: Supporting Young People 11-25 in Wales” in 2000 and 2002, which still receives wide approval and admiration in the UK and across Europe. In order to align policies for under 25 year olds more closely and eliminate any confusion, the 10 Entitlements for 11-25 year olds as set out in the 2002 Guidance have been incorporated within the new overall description Cymru Ifanc: Young Wales.

The strategy also will look to build on activity defined in other documents such as the “Wales Arson Reduction Strategy” (2007) and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Youth Justice Board, the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) and the Welsh Assembly Government (2006). It will also look to build on and embed FRAs’ current engagement with stakeholders and other multi-agency representational bodies.

What are the Fire and Rescue Service’s going to do?

There are a number of the current Children’s and Young People interventions offered by the FRS in Wales supported by the Assembly Government; this strategy sets out the vision of a common brand for FRA interventions across Wales.

The current interventions delivered by the FRS in Wales can be classified into three tiers. These are:

- Tier one interventions: These offer the most effective targeting of offenders, have been successfully evaluated and link with wider Assembly Government objectives.

- Tier two interventions: These interventions are suitable for a key target audience, on the cusp of offending, with benefits for wider Assembly Government objectives, though which require further evaluation.

- Tier three interventions: These interventions are general activities designed for all children and young people across Wales other than specifically targeted individuals.
This Strategy recognises that the Assembly Government identifies the value of the Tier one and Tier two activities as they support the Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) agenda in reducing deliberate fire setting and also support the wider work of the “All Wales Youth Offending Strategy” in working with offenders and those at risk of offending.

FRAs’ will be resourced by the Assembly Government to deliver Tier one and Tier two activities. These will be a set number of specific interventions, agreed by the Assembly Government, targeted in specific areas for a specified number of offenders and those at risk of offending. FRAs’ will work closely with Youth Offending Teams and LEA pupil referral units in identifying those young people most at need and who would benefit most from FRA engagement. This is in line with Priority 15 in “Getting it Right’

Evaluation of the interventions is a key aspect to this strategy. Each FRS will evaluate all their activities and they will be peer assessed as part of the FRS annual peer assessment. For independent evaluation, the Assembly Government may contact Estyn who have been consulted during the development of this strategy and would accept the Assembly Government’s invitation to evaluate interventions.

The referrals for Tier one and Tier two interventions can be made from any organisation dealing with children and young people who are offending, on the cusp of offending or vulnerable. The value of each intervention will be measured by the referring organisation; they will track offending, re-offending and behavioural change (both positive and negative) as part of the evaluation process. This evaluation will be at pre-set intervals following attendance at the interventions.

The Assembly Government will not financially support the Tier three interventions but recognise their value in each FRA.

Each FRA currently employs educationalists who educate in mainstream schools at key stage 1, 2, 3 and 4. The Assembly Government will continue to support materials for the FRAs subject to consistent evaluation.

More Detail on how are the Fire and Rescue Service going to deliver.

Engage actively with children and young people

The Fire and Rescue Service recognises the value of listening to children and young people.

Links to the Core Aims 1 and 2

Links to Priorities 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, and 16
How will the FRS do this?

1. By treating all children and young people with understanding and respect.
2. By developing the participation by children and young people, with a focus on those most at risk or most in need.
3. By promoting equality and diversity in participation.
4. By involving children and young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes for children and young people.
5. By involving children and young people in developing policy and practice on prevention of accidental fires, fire crime and associated anti-social behaviour at national, regional and local level.
6. By committing to making changes as a result of the involvement of children and young people.
7. By recognising the contribution of children and young people through an annual award.

Prevent and reduce fire crime and fire setting by children and young people

The Fire and Rescue Service recognises that early multi-agency intervention is the key to preventing repeat offences and breaking dangerous patterns of behaviour.

Links to the Core Aims 1, 2 and 6

Links to Priorities 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16

How will the FRS do this?

1. By working with families and carers, and partner agencies, to deliver fire setter programmes and other interventions for children and young people who are displaying signs of fire crime or fire setting.
2. By working with partnerships to identify at the earliest opportunity, those children and young people who are becoming involved in fire crime and fire setting.
3. By ensuring that interventions are tailored to the age, ethnicity, abilities and gender of children and young people identified.
4. By working with partnerships to establish information sharing arrangements which support effective inter-agency working, ensure confidentiality and meet legal requirements.
5. By working with partnerships to target fire and rescue expertise and resources on those children and young people for whom they are at most risk or in need of preventative intervention and ensure that others are referred to the most appropriate agency.
6. By increasing awareness and understanding of the work of the Fire and Rescue Service with children and young people, particularly among partnerships.
Divert children and young people from fire crime and associated anti-social behaviour

The Fire and Rescue Service can offer young people at risk help with developing life skills and setting a path to a successful future.

Links to the Core Aims 1, 2, 5 and 6

Links to Priorities 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 14 and 16

Link to Local Authority Children and Young People Plans

How will the FRS do this?

1. By working with parents and carers, the Fire Service Youth Training Association, the Fire and Rescue Service Prince's Trust Support Association, and other partners, to offer children training and other initiatives which improve life skills and divert young people from fire crime and associated anti-social behaviour.

2. To participate in the work of Community Safety Partnerships, Youth Offending Service, and Children and young people partnerships and other initiatives to tackle youth crime and associated anti-social behaviour.

3. By working with partnerships to identify at the earliest opportunity, those children, young people and families who are at risk of becoming involved in fire crime and associated anti-social behaviour.

4. By ensuring that interventions are tailored to the age, ethnicity, abilities and gender of children and young people identified.

5. By working with partnerships to bring together information sharing arrangements which support effective inter-agency working, ensure confidentiality and meet legal requirements.

6. By working with parents, carers, schools, colleges, volunteer groups and other agencies to include fire safety awareness and skills as part of an integrated approach to risk education.

7. By working with partnerships to target fire and rescue service expertise and resources on those children and young people for whom they are most effective, and ensure that others are referred to the most appropriate agency.

8. By increasing awareness and understanding of the work of the Fire and Rescue Service with children and young people, particularly through children and young people partnerships.

Educate children and young people in fire safety skills and responsible citizenship

The Fire and Rescue Service recognises that prevention is the best protection for children, and their families and communities.
How will the FRS do this?

1. By working with parents, carers, schools, colleges and other partners to educate children and young people about the risks of fire and fire safety and to develop lifelong fire safe behaviour.

2. By working with parents, carers, Sure Start and other partners to protect children from death and injury from fire, especially those of pre-school age.

3. By working with parents, carers, schools, colleges and other partners to educate children and young people about the consequences of fire crime and associated anti-social behaviour and develop safe and responsible citizenship.

4. By ensuring that interventions are tailored to the age, ethnicity, abilities and gender of children and young people identified.

5. By developing children and young people as co-workers or volunteers in promoting fire safety in families and communities.

6. By working with parents, carers, schools, colleges and other partner agencies to include fire safety awareness and skills as a part of an integrated approach to risk education.

7. By working with the Local Education Authorities and other bodies to deliver a wide range of cross-curricular resources for Foundation and Key Stages 1-4 linked to the National Curriculum, especially the teaching of risk concepts, Citizenship and Personal Social and Health Education.

8. By increasing awareness and understanding of the work of the Fire and Rescue Service with children and young people, particularly among partner agencies.

Ensure that Fire and Rescue Service staff working with children and young people are effective and professional

The Fire and Rescue Service recognises the need for specialist skills to work effectively with children and young people.
2. By ensuring that all staff understand how to work with children and young people they may encounter in working with the public and are aware of their Service’s Child Protection Policy.

3. By ensuring that staff who work with children and young people meet all requirements for child protection, including a Criminal Records Bureau check, ISA check and assessment for suitability.

4. By ensuring that staff who work with children and young people have the skills and training to promote diversity and equality in design, delivery and evaluation.

5. By ensuring that staff working with children and young people with special needs are given access to specialist training to enable them to be effective and supportive when delivering and working with all they may need to.

6. By identifying and meet the specific training needs of staff who work with children and young people.

7. By ensuring that training provided for work with children and young people is high quality.

8. By examining how best to recognise and reward work with children and young people appropriately.

9. By ensuring that the components of the Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Personnel Development System support staff to be properly skilled to work with children and young people and gain JNC recognised qualifications.

Identify and disseminate good practice in working with children and young people

The Fire and Rescue Service recognises the need for policy and practice to be supported by research into what works, and effective dissemination of the results.

Link to the Core Aims 1 - 7

Links to Priorities 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14 and 16

Evaluation will be carried out by each FRS, by peer assessment teams and where necessary by independent organisations such as Estyn.

How will the FRS do this?

1. By developing good practice, to improve understanding of fire crime and fire setting by children and young people, and of accidental fires in which children and young people are involved.

2. By identifying good practice in the development of local strategies, including needs assessment, targeting and working with partners.

3. By identifying good practice in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of work with children and young people in the Fire and Rescue Service and transferable good practice elsewhere.
4. By identifying and disseminating good practice on equality and diversity in work with children and young people.

5. By encouraging innovation and creativity in working with children and young people, while building on existing good practice in the Fire and Rescue Service and elsewhere.

6. By recognising good practice and effective innovation through an annual award for excellence in working with children and young people.

7. By disseminating good practice effectively to the Fire and Rescue Service and partner agencies, using existing networks and groups where possible.

8. By increasing awareness and understanding of the work of the Fire and Rescue Service with children and young people, particularly among partnerships.

9. By developing external evaluation of the interventions with referring partners to identify success by measuring re-offending and re-engagement in education, training or employment.
Appendix 1

Children and Young People: Rights to Action

The Welsh Assembly Government strategy for children and young people is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Assembly Government has drawn up seven core aims for children and young people, each based on the UN Convention Articles. These are:

Aim 1: A Flying Start in Life; looks at Sure Start; Parenting Support; Early Years education and Development of language and literacy skills

Aim 2: A Comprehensive Range of Education, Training and Learning Opportunities; includes an examination of The Learning Country, Assessment and Testing; Listening to Learners; Bullying; Exclusion; Inclusive education and School breakfasts

Aim 3: The Best Possible Health Free from Abuse, Victimisation and Exploitation looks at children in need, safeguarding children, and the health of children and young people

Aim 4: Play, Leisure, Sporting and Cultural Activities

Aim 5: Treated with Respect and have their race and cultural Identity Recognised

Aim 6: A Safe Home and Community looks at preventing homelessness, youth offending; safe routes to school and substance misuse

Aim 7: Children and Young People not disadvantaged by poverty

Appendix 2

Getting it Right

1. To tackle poverty for children and young people in Wales

What will happen: A new law is being made in Wales that will help to tackle poverty in the lives of children and young people. We will make sure that plans being made to tackle poverty in your local area will be stronger and given more support.

2. To deliver positive outcomes for the most vulnerable children, young people and families

What will happen: There are lots of projects and policies being made to help vulnerable children, young people, and their families. New areas of work will cover children and young people that are in danger of being hurt or taken advantage of at home or elsewhere. This work will help all children and young people even if they live with their parents or are looked after by someone else.

**What will happen:** Everyone needs to know more about the UNCRC. In Wales, we will tell children, young people, parents, and people who work with them about the UNCRC. We will do this in lots of different ways including through school. We will provide support so that everyone can understand how the UNCRC can make their lives better, and how children and young people can get their rights through the services that they receive.

4. **To reduce the gap between policy and outcomes for children and young people**

**What will happen:** We will help to improve training and planning locally so that the services are better for all children and young people. This will mean that all children and young people can get to and use these services which will help them to achieve more.

5. **To improve learning achievement for all children and young people**

**What will happen:** Education is really important! In Wales we are working hard to make educational support better for children and young people, not only in schools and colleges but outside of them as well. We want children and young people to have lots of opportunities and choices about the ways that they learn and gain new skills.

6. **To support emotional well being for all children and young people**

**What will happen:** New work will take place to help children, young people, and their families with emotional health and wellbeing. We will do this in a number of ways including giving more information in a number of different ways (information booklets, training courses, websites) and through new services in different places such as schools. This will help make the quality of life better for children and young people.

7. **To improve opportunities for all children and young people to play safely**

**What will happen:** We will work to make sure that children and young people, including those with disabilities, have the chance for rest, play and to enjoy leisure activities that are for their age group. This will include helping them to get to and use playgrounds, leisure centres, and other places like theatres and museums.

8. **To increase opportunities for all children and young people in Wales to participate in decision-making on issues that affect them**

**What will happen:** Giving children and young people the chance to have their say on decisions that affect them is very important. We have made a good start in Wales, but more needs to be done to make sure that the chance to take part is available to all children and young people. This includes when local decisions and national decisions are being made. It’s your voice and we want to hear it!
9. To work to eliminate discrimination against children and young people with disabilities, improving their access to services & support

What will happen: There are new projects that will take place to help reduce any barriers children and young people may face in getting to or using, services and support. This is especially important for those children and young people with disabilities. We are going to continue to support and move forward with getting equality for all children and young people across Wales.

10. To work to make physical punishment of children and young people illegal in all situations

What will happen: We are committed to making physical punishment of children and young people illegal in Wales. We will support and move toward, positive, nonviolent ways of discipline for children and young people across Wales.

11. To work to eliminate bullying including homophobic bullying

What will happen: We are working hard in Wales to tackle bullying. We have been giving and sharing information to help people understand it and the problems that it causes. We are giving help on various types of bullying (such as homophobic, race related and religious bullying) in a number of different ways (writing booklets, creating training and activity packs). We want to help everyone to value the fact that we are all different and that those differences should be respected.

12. To work to make sure that refugee and asylum seeking children and young people in Wales can claim their UNCRC and human rights

What will happen: Even though this area of work is taken care of by the UK Government, there are many projects taking place in Wales. These projects help make the support and services better so we can meet the needs of refugee and asylum seeking children and young people, who have had to leave their own country for different reasons and have come to live in Wales.

13. To work to eliminate inequality and discrimination against children and young people

What will happen: Many people think and speak negatively about children and young people because of the things they hear, read or see. Children and young people also achieve many positive things and we need to support and celebrate these. This will help change the way people think about, and act towards, children and young people in Wales.
14. To work to make sure that children and young people in the most deprived areas of Wales (e.g. Communities First areas) can enjoy all of their UNCRC and human rights

**What will happen:** We’re going to carry on working with Communities First in deprived areas to bring attention to the UNCRC human rights and to tackle poverty in children and young people’s lives. We want to set up new projects and provide training to make sure children, young people, and their families are not held back just because they don’t have enough money.

15. To improve the transparency of budgeting for children and young people at Welsh Assembly Government level

**What will happen:** We have already started work on giving a clear and honest picture of how money is planned, set aside, and spent on children and young people in Wales. We will work towards being open, clear and honest with all these figures. We will also help children and young people understand and take part in decisions about how money is spent in the future.

16. To work to make sure that children and young people from Wales in the Criminal Justice System, can claim their UNCRC and human rights

**What will happen:** We will continue to run successful projects that support children and young people in the Criminal Justice System in Wales and help them to gain new skills. An important part of this is to support and move forward with education and training projects, including additional support for those with special needs. New projects will be starting soon to help with this.