





Learning from HeadStart sustainability planning – Community of practice



Introduction

HeadStart is a £67.4 million National Lottery funded programme set up by The National Lottery Community Fund, designed to test new ways to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people aged 10 to 16, and prevent serious mental health problems from developing. HeadStart understands that the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people is shaped by experiences in different aspects of their lives, including at school, at home, in relationships with family and peers, interactions with digital technology and within broader mental health systems. In collaboration with schools, families, universities, charities, voluntary and community organisations (VCOs), public and clinical services, and young people themselves, HeadStart aims to:

- Build young people's emotional resilience
- Respond to the early signs of common mental health problems
- Provide joined-up, crossorganisational support when and where it is needed.

The programme has implemented a range of universal, evidence-based interventions to meet its aims, and involves six local authority partnerships identified as having higher levels of social and economic deprivation than the national UK average. These are:

- Blackpool
- Cornwall
- Hull
- Kent
- Newham
- Wolverhampton

In addition to their universal programmes, each partnership has also provided targeted support services and interventions for more <u>'vulnerable'</u> young people. This helps HeadStart provide more specialised and targeted support to young people whose mental health is, or may become, affected by a particular personal, social and/or economic disadvantage at the same time as offering programmes that all young people can engage with and benefit from.

HeadStart sustainability and NCB support

Funding from The National Lottery Community Fund is set to end in summer 2022 and the last two years has seen the HeadStart programme move from an initial 'test and learn' approach to a 'learn and embed' phase. There has been an increased focus for the partnerships in sustainability planning; considering how HeadStart services will be adapted, embedded and continued post-funding while creating a legacy for the programme.

As the impact of Covid-19 on young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health needs has become increasingly visible, the partnerships have been well placed to respond locally, working to adapt and embed key elements of their programmes to ensure young people's needs continue to be met, and new and emerging needs addressed.

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) has been commissioned by The National Lottery Community Fund as Support and Development Provider for the HeadStart partnerships since 2019 and this has been focused on three key areas:

- Supporting partnerships to deliver outcomes for young people;
- Supporting the sustainability and legacy of HeadStart partnerships;
- Networking and learning across the partnerships.

In order to facilitate the sharing of learning between partnerships and create opportunities for peer support and legacy planning, NCB established a HeadStart Community of Practice.

Community of Practice

Between 2019–2021 NCB convened five Community of Practice workshops for the HeadStart partnerships to share learning, progress, challenges and to consider wider policy and practice developments with the potential to impact on their work. A key theme from the Community of Practice was sustainability planning, alongside sector updates and insight from NCB's national and local programmes. HeadStart Programme Leads were consulted in order to establish session topics that were most responsive to local need, as well as consideration of how best NCB could tailor our support offer to individual partnerships. As Covid-19 restrictions were introduced in 2020, the Community of Practice meetings, originally intended to be held face to face, moved online.

Workshops involved HeadStart Programme Leads and other key partnership members and attendees where relevant; such as core operational teams, Public Health representatives and colleagues from the Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families Child Outcomes Research Consortium (CORC), who led the HeadStart evaluation contract.

We hope that key insights from the HeadStart Programme Leads Community of Practice provides transferable learning relevant to other programmes involved in planning the long-term sustainability of funded work.

Thematic learning from sustainability planning Community of Practice | Prioritising | Key lines of enquiry | Measuring impact | Peer support | Local and national context | Con

Setting priorities

Developing an understanding of national and local landscape

Towards the start of the sustainability planning journey, a mapping activity was undertaken with a view to plotting national policy developments to current HeadStart activity and developing a shared understanding of:

- The alignment of programme with current national and local developments and
- Horizon scanning to identify opportunities and challenges for sustainability planning.

At the time, key policy developments potentially impacting emotional wellbeing and mental health support for children and young people were the <u>Children and Young People's Mental Health Green Paper, NHS England's Long-Term Plan</u> and developments around prevention, in education, including:

- The development of Mental Health Support Teams and the Designated Senior Leads for Mental Health in Schools including practical considerations such as the number of MHSTs being developed and the training of Education Mental Health Practitioners, and Designated Senior Leads
- Ambitions for reform in the Long-Term plan and specific commitments including funding increases for children's mental health and comprehensive 0–25 offer, which had specific implications for Children and Young People's Transformation Board, and the development of local NHS plans
- Wider developments in education including the roll out of statutory RSE and health education, an updated Ofsted framework with greater focus for schools on evidencing wellbeing support.

FIGURE 1 mapping key national policy development to HeadStart activity

HeadStart local activities/ Policy change interventions **Designated** Whole school approaches **Senior Leads for** Oftead Mental Health Inspection Framework Mental health and resilience **RSE and Health** education programmes **Education Targeted interventions Primary Care Networks Digital Care Digital** Social media regulation Prevention green paper Working with families and tackling inequalities Spending review

Further discussion supported HeadStart partnerships to identify the following areas for focus in sustainability planning.

- Embedding different approaches in partnership areas, for example co-production
- Engaging local stakeholders such as commissioners and developing narratives from HeadStart that respond to commissioning challenges
- Bringing school partners together and considering how best to support others to engage around emotional wellbeing and mental health agenda
- Workforce development plans to further embed HeadStart approaches such as resilience, trauma informed and whole school approach training
- Scoping future models for delivery and post-programme funding options.

And key challenges for HeadStart to consider across each stage of their sustainability planning.

- Identifying where HeadStart fits in a complex local system
- Identifying needs and gaps in data to help inform commissioning decisions
- Availability of local funding, for example to purchase interventions and services in schools
- Fully evidencing and communicating impact and value of the programme to key stakeholders – the stories behind the data
- How to use the HeadStart branding post-programme funding
- Aligning the programme locally to meet changing political priorities.

Sustainability planning

Using a Key Lines of Enquiry tool

Sustainability planning is an ongoing activity, and the **HeadStart Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) self-assessment tool** (see Appendix 1) was used to support and local area to plan responses to a changing and complex system and to consider opportunities for sustainability.

Using tools such as a self-assessment tool (in this case the KLOE) ensure that a clear vision and process is set and followed which encompasses key phases of sustainability planning. The KLOE was designed to aid HeadStart partnerships to reflect on progress towards sustainability beyond the programme funding.

The KLOE methodology is developed from appreciative enquiry (Bushe, 2011) and enables a systematic, matrix approach based on evidence, professional knowledge and experience of organisational change. It is designed to facilitate frank discussion around key aspects of sustainability planning and also, to identify areas where bespoke support would be beneficial.

The key domains of the tool were introduced to all partnerships along with support in using the framework.

Key considerations when using the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) tool for sustainability planning:

1) System leaders:

- What is the programme's Unique Selling Point (USP) and can local system leaders articulate this?
- Local transformation can be a vehicle for sustainability
- Local commissioner awareness and involvement in sustainability planning is key

2) Evaluation:

- What has been shown to be effective?
- What local learning exists that can be utilised?
- Is there a crossover with programme service users and statutory service users?
- Can you demonstrate how the programme is adding value to statutory services and extending reach?

3) Cost benefit:

- Consider existing work available already nationally to support economic case
- Is cost-benefit data available locally?

4) Learning:

- What are the true costs of certain programme elements e.g. co-production. By identifying true costs, this helps to protect the quality for the future.
- Consider approaches that could be embedded in the future, for example social prescribing developments that could provide a range of activities for schools to refer to

5) System resilience

- Consider how schools and community services can be sustained, considering options including consortium building and developing traded services
- Consider how the learning from work with young people will be sustained e.g. young people involved in commissioning processes

6) Sustaining culture change

- Understand what has been done locally to create culture change, be able to articulate this and understand what is required to sustain it.
- Consider effective behaviours that have been adopted by others within the system, for example the value of an approach to discussing wellbeing with children.
- Find out what has been used by others and plan for this to be utilised across the system.

7) A shared vision and action plan

- What is the vision for the programme?
- Will it be continued as an entire programme or embedded in other ways?
- What happens if the core operational team is removed?
- Consider connectivity on the ground and ensure that there is a strategic home for any future vision.

Measuring impact

How to make the case for change

Being able to measure impact of a programme is a key part of sustainability planning, and was identified as a challenge for some. Measuring impact can be highly complex, requiring resources in both time and expertise and this is often where the challenge lies in this work.

Key examples from the partnerships around how data can be used for sustainability planning included:

- 'Drilling down' into local referrals to CAMHS, including analysis by age. This allowed one partnership to identify that while referral numbers appeared not to have changed, once the 'low mood and anxiety' pathway referrals were analysed from the data, a decrease in referrals to CAMHS was seen which was potentially relevant to HeadStart. Once a change in service use is identified, costs of services can be analysed and compared.
- By using a common measurement tool across a partnership area, for example the Outcomes
 Star, all services aim for common outcomes for young people and are able to demonstrate
 when outcomes are achieved. This supports monitoring and review across all services and
 enables the impact of services for children and young people to be more easily identified,
 keeping young people's outcomes central to services. It can also improve communication and
 relationships between agencies.

Whilst the KLOE is a tool to identify gaps to address for sustainability planning, it does not provide specific guidance on how to address certain issues and an opportunity arose for the partnerships to discuss the specific challenges and approaches to measuring economic impact of the programme and how to frame these conversations with commissioners, including the use of cost-benefit analysis approaches.

Data considerations

- As part of the Accelerated Working Group on Data and Information Sharing, the Council for Disabled Children has developed the 0–25 Multi-agency <u>SEND Data Dashboard</u>, a commissioning tool to support local areas to understand their data relating to children and young people with SEND. There is health data available relating to children and young people in contact with mental health services that can be accessed for each area.
- Correlation data between a HeadStart partnership area and non-HeadStart partnership area
 could be accessed in order to understand the number of young people in contact with other
 mental health services across a particular area. Comparisons like this could be a starting
 point in enabling local areas to use data to 'tell a good story' and start conversations with
 commissioners considering impact.
- Other data sets that can considered locally include <u>Supporting Families</u>, youth crime and local exclusions data. By examining these sources, it can be useful to consider where and how services and interventions may be having a potential impact for statutory services.

Once data correlations are identified, programmes may be able to use this information to measure economic impact based on Unit costs of a service and potential interventions.

Cost Benefit Analysis

NCB has provided bespoke cost-benefit analysis support to 4 of the 6 HeadStart partnerships; looking at identifying potential costs avoided through service interventions and system approaches. For details of the methodology please see report here.

Some considerations from cost-benefit analysis approaches include:

- Cost-benefit analysis does not have to be extensive and can focus on top-line costs. For example, changes in school exclusions and comparative costs of school exclusion to the cost of providing alternative education (e.g. the average cost of a full-time placement in Alternative Provision for one academic year was £18,000 in 2017/18)
- If it can be said with some confidence that a service is likely to reduce the need for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) then a case can be made by comparing the cost of a service to CBT sessions (e.g. £97 per session x 6 = £582, as quoted in (Unit Costs of Health & Social Care 2016, Personal Social Services Research Unit).

Mapping different sustainability journeys

Sustainability and the local context

Different local context will impact on the successes and challenges of sustainability planning. The HeadStart programme leads Community of Practice was developed as a 'safe space' to introduce and share challenges, as well as draw on the collective expertise of others for support around 'sticky issues'.

HeadStart partnerships discussed:

- How will you sustain key parts of your programme?
- What will be the legacy of HeadStart in your local area?
- What challenges and/or successes are you experiencing or envisioning?

There was reference to the use of mechanisms such as a sustainability forum managed internally by the partnership, to consider and discuss local opportunities and ensure sustainability planning remains on the agenda along with the use of a sustainability tracker.

Key themes emerged around system change, <u>partnership working</u> with health, education and voluntary sector, <u>evidencing impact</u>, and co-production, with examples below.

System change

- Ensure your priorities are aligned with local strategic priorities; for HeadStart this included Local Transformation Plans, Local Authority education, health and social care integration plans, and emerging education inclusion strategies. Other programmes should consider your own local and programme context.
- Align with **local frameworks**, for example THRIVE enables the programme to be further embedded into the local **system for sustainability**.

- Ensure that activity is **visible within local transformation and commissioning structures,** such as at ICS level in order to support sustainability.
- Understand potential local cabinet changes and the impact on local political priorities and relationship. This was particularly relevant during key point within the sustainability journey.
 Consider how to link with other programmes and local initiatives.
 - Newer connections have been developed around Primary Care Networks and considering social prescribing approaches that align with some of HeadStart's approaches locally, in addition to place based approaches.
 - HeadStart-led PSHE programmes in some partnership areas have been standardised in schools as health education (physical health, mental health and emotional wellbeing) is compulsory in all schools as part of <u>statutory changes</u>.
- Consider adaptable elements of the programme e.g. considering wider age ranges, specific target groups of service users, particular connections with services and community links.

Evidencing impact

- Evidencing where your programme can provide additional support to key emerging initiatives.
 In the case of HeadStart this included understanding how the programme aligned with the emergence of Mental Health Support Teams and connecting this learning was important in demonstrating the overall impact of the HeadStart programme locally, but also key learning for national consideration.
- Consider the use of cost analysis models to demonstrate impact locally and influence discussions with local commissioners.

Co-production

Consider what can be done differently locally to sustain cultural change around co-production.
 Considering different funding streams such as the <u>'Levelling Up Fund'</u> to demonstrate connectivity and a strategic approach to making coproduction business as usual.



Sample questions for facilitation discussion around sustainability learning:

- Are there any key local plans and priorities that have supported your sustainability planning?
- Do you have a strong understanding of the priorities of local system leads?
- Have you managed to identify any local 'gaps' in support that your programme will be able to fill?
- Have you supported the development of any innovative delivery locally?
- How has your programme inspired and influenced change locally across broader systems? E.g. workforce development, service delivery, of services, integrated working
- What data do you have and do you need to support your sustainability discussions locally?
- How are you supporting your local voluntary and community organisations?
- What parts of your programme will be embedded or adopted locally?

Aligning local and national initiatives

Understanding the impact of developments locally

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) were flagged by the HeadStart partnerships as a key learning area; prompting partnerships to think about the development of ICSs and how this will impact on programme delivery and wider provision locally. ICSs are collaborative partnerships between Clinical Commissioning Groups, NHS Providers and local authorities. There are 42 ICS 'footprints' across geographical local areas to plan, design and deliver health and care services. There are opportunities for HeadStart in the development of ICSs as there will be focus on prevention, linking physical and mental ill health, improving mental health services and co-production.

Key considerations around the development of new local commissioning structures in relation to sustainability included:

- Understanding different contexts: what different operating models exist and what experiences to date?
- Understanding local context at a place-based level including the challenges in meeting different population (and hidden) needs, with particular focus on diversity across rural and urban areas.
- Ensuring parity of esteem relationship between physical and mental health.
- Ensuring the profile of 'children and young people' and 'mental health' in developments of Integrated Care Systems.
- Connecting new and emerging structures to the existing system, a priority on early intervention and prevention, addressing disadvantage and diversity; and understanding commissioning at place-based or neighbourhood levels.
- Retaining a personalised element to commissioning while responding to the need for specialist
 provision will require ensuring the support of the whole system, wider support networks and a
 clear, broad and agreed definition of 'wellbeing' and 'emotional support'.

 Taking a strategic and cultural change approach to joint working. Co-producing with partners, focusing on preventing and including Public Health and wider children's services workforce and smaller providers.

Summary

NCB's development of the HeadStart Community of Practice followed the sustainability journeys of the partnerships, enabling key learning and expertise to be shared. Provision of information and discussion around local and national developments supported the partnerships to establish key priorities and identify challenges for sustainability planning. The provision of the Key Lines of Enquiry Tool supported the subsequent planning process and helped highlight development areas, for example demonstrating impact.

The Community of Practice has been a space to share ideas, considering the complexities involved in approaches such as demonstrating economic impact and seeking solutions considering locally available resources.

Sharing the wealth of knowledge collected by partnerships has supported others in their sustainability planning and the facilitated discussions during the Community of Practice has helped draw out key areas of interest for others. In addition to learning from one another, profiling key national policy developments such as Integrated Care Systems has supported the partnerships in agile planning and responsiveness to change, further developing the sustainability of the programme.



Appendix

Appendix 1: Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) for sustainability planning

Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) and benchmark examples (not exhaustive)	R=red A=amber G=green	Evidence
1. Political – engagement and c	ommitment	of system leaders
1.1. Amongst system leaders there is enthusiasm for, and commitment to, HeadStart.		
 1.2. The HeadStart partnership members, and key system leaders, can articulate what HeadStart is including; Any Theory of Change or model which underpins the programme The main delivery elements of the programme The enabling aspects e.g. co-production, community development, co-ordination How approaches differ from other programmes (a USP?) Any known or emerging outcomes and key learning 		
1.3. Sustaining effective practice from HeadStart is being considered as part of current local CYP mental health system refresh planning and redesign e.g. CYP mental health transformation (STP/LTPs; Green Paper implementation) and integrated care plans where relevant.		
1.4. Learning and practice from HeadStart is inspiring and influencing changes across the broader children's system such as new pathways, workforce roles and delivery models. (For example, learning is being utilised and practice adopted in developments such as iThrive, multi-disciplinary teams/hubs, MHSTs, personalised care, Place-based planning, Public Health/addressing inequalities, VCS market development, etc)		
1.5. Senior system leads and commissioners have been involved in full and frank discussion about the elements of the HeadStart programme and declared their intentions in relation to funding and/or adopting aspects of the programme in the future.		

2. Evaluation - Impact on outcomes for young people, parent/carers, families and communities

2.1. The partnership has discussed and planned for the following in relation to HeadStart;	
 What has shown to be effective? Do we understand why and how? What is still unknown? How and when will we find out? 	
 2.2. Evidence of impact is collated and summarised from a range of data, for example: The national and local evaluation backed by more detailed reports on areas of interest Outcome measurement information is available where appropriate from providers. Qualitative data from young people and parent/carers, families, and communities is systematically collated to inform commissioners and system leaders about the value of the programme to them, including comparative to other service offers. Qualitative feedback including observations on impact from Schools, Children's Services, Community Organisations and other key stakeholders. 	
2.3. There is a clear understanding of the particular demographics and adversities/risk profiles of those reached, and with what interventions and impact.	
2.4. There is data on young people and families known to services and their crossover with HeadStart provision e.g. existing statutory service users accessing HS activity.	
2.5. The impact of participation and coproduction on both the individual and the programme has been part of evaluation (CYP and parent/carers).	
2.6. Changes in statutory service use is supplied to the Partnership (e.g. changes in demand, compliance/attendance, incidents) including comparisons by area (HS and non-HS), and by HeadStart target group where possible (contributed to by a range of services).	
2.7. School specific indicators are collated (by HS and non-HS schools) such as changes to exclusion, absence, progress, pastoral service use/demand, staff experience.	

the next 12–18 months have been identified with potential future funders such as CCG commissioners, national grant givers, school support services, etc. and a plan is in place for collection.	
3. Understanding of economic Impact	and potential savings in the system
3.1. Where there is evidence of impact there has been a costings exercise to establish potential savings over the short, medium and long-term (drawing on local delivery costs and existing reviews of evidence which include cost-benefit analysis).	
3.2. Comparison – Evidence of impact is compared to evidence from other interventions with same or similar objectives (i.e. between HS and non-HS areas; and between interventions targeting groups) including comparative cost/benefit analysis where possible.	
3.3. Changes to demand, engagement and compliance with statutory services in HeadStart areas has been considered as part of the economic picture of impact.	
4. Learning – capture	and dissemination
 4.1. Learning from HeadStart is routinely disseminated including: Lessons from the entire HS journey including the impact of partnership development, coproduction, community engagement and evaluation. Learning in relation to vulnerable and at risk YP including those from 'target groups' and those affected by health, social and economic inequalities. 	
4.2. Effective approaches to participation have been documented, including engagement with harder to reach young people and families (including cost, support and process requirements) and related impact/outcomes.	
4.3. The results of any community asset mapping are widely available and, where possible, transferred to information channels such as hubs, websites, GP practices, schools etc (with options for routine updates).	

2.8. Gaps and priorities for data collection in

4.4. HeadStart staff and volunteers (young	
people, parent/carers and community members	
involved) are supported to reflect on their	
knowledge and skill development, their	
achievements to date, and future aspirations;	
including practical help such as CV development,	
CPD, etc.	

5. System resilience - building capacity to sustain

5.1. The voluntary and community sector is being supported and resourced to develop its capacity to bid for, and deliver, effective programme elements in future (e.g. prioritisation of consortia development or other partnership delivery models).	
5.2. Local commissioners are exploring alternative contracting methodology which will enable delivery of valued interventions and approaches tested through HS, particularly community-based activity (e.g. social prescribing, contract frameworks, prime contracts).	
 5.3. Transparent discussion about options for the future of the schools' element of the programme have taken place with education leads including: Existing traded services/school support services, Public health funded school support, Likely linked developments such as Mental Health Support Teams. 	
 5.4. Effective approaches to participation tested in HeadStart have, or will be, adopted as sustainable, ongoing practice at: System wide level (e.g. young commissioners prog, youth board/councils, etc), Organisational level (e.g. service improvement, parent/CYP peer support, etc) individual level (e.g. shared decision making, etc). 	
5.5. Workforce development plans have responded to the learning and evaluation from HeadStart and there are plans to sustain valued skills, knowledge and behaviours through workforce development such as training, induction, etc	

6. Sustaining culture change across the system			
 6.1. There is a shared understanding and articulation of how 'culture' within services, schools and communities has been impacted by HeadStart including through: Influencing individual's values and behaviours Relationships and connections across the system/community Shared knowledge, skills and approaches to practice across the workforce Shared language and common purpose Principles and approaches embedded within protocols, practice guidance, governance, 			
 pathways etc. Ability of young people to contribute to the development of, and to access, culturally appropriate, local resources that matter to them. 			
6.2. The Partnership has openly discussed the extent, and value, of the culture change and made explicit plans to sustain this.			
6.3. Effective behaviours and approaches have been adopted within other, non-HS services e.g. co-productive approaches; shared definitions/language; tools and guidance; community development and asset-based approaches.			
6.4. Resource sign-posting and co-ordination elements, where effective, will be passed to existing roles where possible e.g. community based staff/teams, youth workers, etc			
7. A shared vision and ac	tion plan for post-2021		
7.1. There is a shared vision for the programme's future post 2021 (this might be as part of a local transformation vision) which takes forward the agreed priorities for what should be sustained if possible (irrespective of how/methodology).			
7.2. There is a governed, resourced and realistic action plan in place for implementing the 2021 vision for HeadStart (or the prioritised elements of the programme) in the future.			

 7.3. Approaches to sustainability have been critically appraised as part of planning including: Continuation of 'HeadStart' as a branded identity for a range of provision shown to be effective integration/adoption of programme elements (practice, approaches, language etc) within existing services Responsibility in future for elements to be sustained (including funding/seeking funding, management of and accountability for). 	
 7.4. If HeadStart is to be dismantled (i.e. ceasing the model of branded identifiable services with common goals, supported through a programme approach) planning has included consideration for the loss of enabling factors such as: Brand Programme leadership A staff team to facilitate, co-ordinate, and support delivery A framework of shared goals and measures driving a coherent range of provision Continuing connectivity between people in communities and the services and resources identified and strengthened in HeadStart 	
 7.5. Whatever the vision and future 'model' for HeadStart, there is clarity about: The future strategic home and ownership for HeadStart activity, and for continuation of the approach (Theory of Change) e.g. the CYP Mental Health Local Transformation Board or Group. Where and how the structures, approaches and learning from the Participation and coproduction element of the programme will be held and embedded in future. Where and how effective shared objectives and outcome measures will be adopted within commissioning plans and new specifications/contracts across the system. 	

(developed by Lisa Williams for NCB, 2019)

Endnotes

1. Bushe, G.R. (2011) Appreciative inquiry: Theory and critique. In Boje, D., Burnes, B. and Hassard, J. (eds.) The Routledge Companion To Organizational Change (pp. 87-103). Oxford, UK: Routledge.



United for a better childhood

The National Children's Bureau brings people and organisations together to drive change in society and deliver a better childhood for the UK. We interrogate policy, uncover evidence and develop better ways of supporting children and families.

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