

CHILD POVERTY
RESEARCH REVIEW 7

Child poverty



Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services

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- Child Poverty
- Safeguarding
- Schools and Communities
- Youth
- Families, Carers and Parents.

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There is close and ongoing cooperation with the Association of Directors of Children's Services, the Local Government Association, the NHS Confederation, the Children's Services Network, the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, Ofsted and the regional Government Offices.

C4EO is funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

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First published in Great Britain in September 2009
by the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's
Services (C4EO)

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This report is available online
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Acknowledgements

The review authors would like to thank the Department for Children, Schools and Families for funding the Centre's activities and the Theme Advisory Group for their guidance.

We are grateful to the following people for conducting and documenting the literature searches: Pauline Benefield, Alison Jones, Lynne Marshall, Maureen Heron, Chris Taylor and Amanda Harper at the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER); Janet Clapton at the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE).

Thanks also to Marian Morris from NFER for advising on data sources, Misia Coghlan for her background paper and Helen Aston.

Many thanks also to the project administrator, Vani Cardozo.

1. Summary

This review aims to provide a clearer understanding of the development, implementation and evaluation of whole-area child poverty strategies. It was carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research on behalf of the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services (C4EO).

Whole-area strategies are seen as pivotal in supporting the achievement of the government's targets for eradicating child poverty in England by 2020 and for impacting on outcomes for children, families and services.

The review therefore considers the evidence on issues associated with the establishment and delivery of whole-area poverty strategies and draws out the implications for decision-makers. It also identifies the most promising directions for future research and development. 'Area' in this context means geographical coverage encompassed by children's trusts and/or local strategic partnerships, as distinct from a locality or community-level definition.

This publication will be followed by a full knowledge review, which will include evidence from stakeholders and validated local practice to illustrate 'promising developments' in whole-area child poverty strategies.

1.1 Key messages

The review focuses on three aspects of strategy development: the facilitators and barriers, the key elements that should be included in a whole-area strategy, and methods and tools for monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of strategies. Many of the top-level findings identified and stated here may be familiar, but it is important to confirm their importance to the development and implementation of whole-area child poverty strategies. Strategies should:

- focus on outcomes and a shared positive vision of what kind of inclusive society is wanted, driven by strong senior leadership, all-party support and understanding of the vision among all stakeholders and the public
- be supported by long-term financial support to avoid the limitations of short-termism in funding for both the planning and delivery of services
- include the active and meaningful participation of families living on low incomes, including children, and community-based organisations as well as full cross-sector involvement
- address the management and maximisation of family income (for those both not in work and in work) through a broad perspective on services required that addresses all domains of need, to raise aspirations, to give choices and to include the hard-to-reach, from building confidence and resilience to transport, flexible and appropriate employment opportunities and childcare

- include a public promotional message to counteract negative attitudes towards the poor, which work against social inclusion for all
- be based on evidence-informed decision-making, which includes improving the quality and consistency of local data and systematic monitoring and evaluation of the strategies.

1.2 Implications from the research for service improvement

Based on the evidence reviewed, we recommend that decision-makers and managers working to reduce child poverty:

- work with parents to address proactively the factors that cause poverty and the solutions that can lift families out of poverty. Whole-area strategies need to embrace, therefore, the spectrum of organisations and services that play a role in delivering support to children, young people and parents, including the private sector as both employers and service providers (e.g. banks)
- ensure that services are joined up. This can be achieved at the commissioning stage, by ensuring that clear plans are in place outlining the responsibilities of different agencies for elements of service delivery. Such planning can help to counteract potential policy tensions that may impact on provision
- attend to both place-based and people-focused interventions to improve services. Strategies need to recognise the importance of spatial issues associated with poverty distribution in communities but also take account of the fact that poverty may be found everywhere
- build closer and more sustained relations with local employers and understand and respond more proactively to local market conditions, to improve the delivery of employment-support services.

1.3 'What works' evidence

Many of the messages from the evidence will already be known to those responsible for strategy formulation at area level. By stating them here it provides a reiteration of what is important to consider and address in developing, implementing and evaluating whole-area child poverty strategies:

Facilitators to developing and implementing a whole-area child poverty strategy

- Clearly agreed, understood and shared terminology and definitions across partners
- Open channels of communication and trust across partners
- An appropriate degree of autonomy empowered by central government to areas to design and deliver strategies to meet local needs
- A risk-taking ethos to challenge existing practice along with clear governance and robust accountability processes
- Strong and supportive political leadership at both national and local levels.

Points to inform developing and implementing an effective whole-area child poverty strategy

- Create a positive and shared vision with clearly defined outcomes that set out what kinds of futures and society we want for children. These outcomes should be embedded in the strategy
- Drive the vision with strong senior leadership, all-party support and understanding of the vision among all stakeholders and the public
- Make the values and theoretical ideas that will underpin the strategy clear – do not assume everyone thinks the same or holds the same views and ideas about meanings
- Learn from good practice to create the mechanisms to facilitate effective participation
- Harness the benefits of histories of working together to leverage top-down as well as horizontal relationships
- Local authorities should act as a hub in facilitating networks of organisations and individuals at different levels
- Focus on income maximisation strategies for families (whether in or out of work) and take a broad perspective on the range of services that may be involved in lifting and keeping families out of poverty
- Time, at least two years, is required to develop whole-area child poverty strategies due to the complexity of the issues and number of stakeholders involved
- Long-term financial investment is needed to successfully implement strategies.

Monitoring and assessing the development and implementation of a whole-area child poverty strategy

- Effective monitoring and assessment is required to inform the development of whole-area strategies. It informs progress, allows lessons to be learned, and provides feedback into ongoing strategy development
- Approaches to monitoring and assessing whole-area strategies should be focused on outcomes for children
- Indicators can be used as part of the monitoring and evaluation process to assess the extent to which the whole-area strategy has an impact on outcomes for children
- Partners may need to consider how the data required for target setting can be obtained if it is not currently available
- Effective monitoring incorporates reviewing and revising actions and targets as the strategy develops
- Evaluation methods should be used to improve the effectiveness, monitoring and assessment of child poverty strategies.

1.4 Limitations of and gaps in the evidence base

There are limits with regard to the level of detail that can be probed within the available evidence. These relate to, for example, intergenerational poverty and strategic interventions for particular age bands of children or the needs of specific groups of children and their families, including those from different ethnic groups and disabled children or children living in households with disabled or chronically ill parents.

- Given that it is less than five years since the introduction of the Children Act 2004 (England and Wales. Statutes 2004), this may mean that not enough time has yet passed to see published studies about child-poverty strategy at the whole-area level. Although earlier evidence from 1999 may be helpful, the closer the evidence is to current models of service delivery the more relevant it is likely to be.
- While policy reviews are important to encourage a climate of critique and challenge, it is recognised that the evidence base underpinning some items of this nature included in this review may not be as rigorous as some empirical studies.
- Missing from the evidence base at present is a sufficient focus on economic analyses. Evidence that explored in detail issues related to economic models for development and sustainability was not found, yet is important.

This review represents the first stage of a number of evidence collection activities, so these limitations and gaps can be addressed to some extent in the next stage: the full review. In the full review we will assess studies identified but not available for the main review and explore evidence on associated areas that have emerged from the main review. These include community regeneration and economic models.

We will also probe in more detail the specific aspects of strategic development that relate to particular groups of children, with particular needs. These groups might include disabled children and children living in rural areas.

The full knowledge review will also include evidence from clients and service providers, as well as examples of validated practice in strategy development. Requests will be made to the sector for practice examples on a number of the themes and topics that have emerged from this review. These will be subject to a quality assurance process, and judged against a set of criteria, which in particular will be looking for evidence of improved outcomes for children and young people.

2. Purpose and scope of the review

The purpose of this knowledge review is to investigate the evidence on issues associated with the establishment and delivery of whole-area poverty strategies, which are recognised as being pivotal to tackling child poverty. The Theme Advisory Group (TAG) – a group of experts involved in the fields of child poverty policy, research and practice from the third sector and statutory sectors, including central government – advised that a focus on the wider context of supporting strategic intervention related to child poverty at area level would offer timely support for the children’s services sector to address a recognised knowledge gap.

The review aims to provide:

- the best research evidence from the UK – and where relevant from abroad – on what works in improving services and outcomes for children and young people
- the best quantitative data on a thematic priority with which to establish baselines and assess progress in improving outcomes.

(See Appendices 2 to 5 for details of how research literature was identified and assessed.)

This review will be followed by a full knowledge review, which will incorporate the best validated local practice examples of successful development and implementation of whole-area child poverty strategies. These will be drawn from evidence provided by local authorities, children’s trusts and their partners and are subject to a validation process by C4EO.

Unlike other reviews, the poverty review has not included a scoping stage prior to the research review. This means that the research review has incorporated a broad scoping search strategy to select the key items for review. More detail on the search strategy associated with the review is available in Appendix 2.

2.1 Review questions and definitions

Three review questions were formulated in consultation with the Theme Advisory Group:

1. What are the barriers and facilitators to developing and implementing a whole-area child poverty strategy?
2. What key elements ought to be included in a whole-area child poverty strategy in order for it to be effective?
3. How might the development and implementation of a whole-area child poverty strategy be best monitored and assessed (e.g. via models, tools, information management and indicators)?

Sub-themes related to the review questions have been considered and addressed where appropriate within the discussion of the findings. These sub-themes will be explored

further through validated local practice case studies, additional literature and stakeholder panel data as part of the full review.

A specific measure of child poverty has been adopted for this review, on the advice of the Theme Advisory Group. Child poverty is defined primarily in terms of income and is measured through the number of children living in households below 60 per cent of contemporary median equivalised household income. This is known as the relative low income indicator, which looks at whether the poorest families are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the economy as a whole. It can be presented based on figures before or after housing costs.

‘Area’ in the context of this review means geographical coverage encompassed by children’s trusts and/or local strategic partnerships, as distinct from a locality or community-level definition.

3. Policy context

While the three review questions focus on area-level strategic activity aimed at eradicating child¹ poverty, it is important to situate this activity within the broader context of child poverty in England and the government policy response since Tony Blair's landmark speech on eliminating child poverty in 1999. This section provides a very brief contextual overview based on a policy overview undertaken by Coghlan 2008.

The contextual economic and social landscape, as with families experiencing poverty, is not static. This review is being conducted at a time of global economic recession. Save the Children has argued that a negative impact on some families with children is already in evidence (Save the Children 2009). This is affecting government targets for eradicating child poverty (Hirsch 2009), which will impact further on data and policy.

Ways of defining and measuring child poverty are complex and contested, and a range of definitions and characteristics is used to inform policy and service development (Bradshaw 2006; Strelitz 2008). Townsend's (1979) definition, which remains in use by the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) emphasises that poverty is relative (to time and place), and is more complex than being purely about 'survival' (CPAG 2008). Strelitz (2008) suggests that a focus on severe poverty (defined as 'persistent' or 'deep' poverty) can add a critical dimension to our understanding of poverty. In particular, it can help to address a perceived divide between the experiences and expectations of policy-makers and the experiences of the most deprived.

The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG 2008) lists three indicators against which child poverty is measured, based on those identified in the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) report *Measuring child poverty* (DWP 2003):

- children experiencing relative low income – children in households with 'needs-adjusted incomes below the 60 per cent national median income' (which may be measured before and after housing costs)
- children experiencing material deprivation and relative low income combined
- children experiencing absolute low income.

Combining different measures is often argued as the best set of indicators for measuring poverty (London Health Observatory 2009; Bradshaw 2006) but identifying the most appropriate range of measures, supported by access to high-quality data, is a challenge.

¹ A child is understood as being an individual aged under 16, or an unmarried 16- to 18-year-old in full-time education.

In 1999, the-then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, made a landmark speech in which he promised to eradicate child poverty 'within a generation', by 2020, largely in response to the rise in child poverty between 1979 and the 1990s.

The government set a series of interim targets towards the goal of eradicating child poverty, accompanied by a suite of welfare reforms aimed at improving life chances and outcomes for children, including the Children Act 2004 (England and Wales. Statutes 2004) and the implementation of the Every Child Matters agenda.

The creation of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in June 2007 led to a new, integrated approach to serving the needs of children and young people. The department's work programme for 2008-09 was centred on the overarching goal of achieving well-being and equality, represented in its seven Departmental Strategic Objectives.

In October 2007, the government set up a joint Child Poverty Unit to drive an integrated strategy across the Treasury, the DWP and the DCSF. Cross-departmental policy levers include improving children's life chances through children's services, tackling deprivation in communities, providing financial and material support (including housing benefit and financial advice) and increasing employment and raising incomes. There is a strong expectation by government that local authorities should also play a vital role in delivering on these child poverty strategies. The Child Poverty Unit spearheads the government's commitment to employment solutions as the main routes out of poverty.

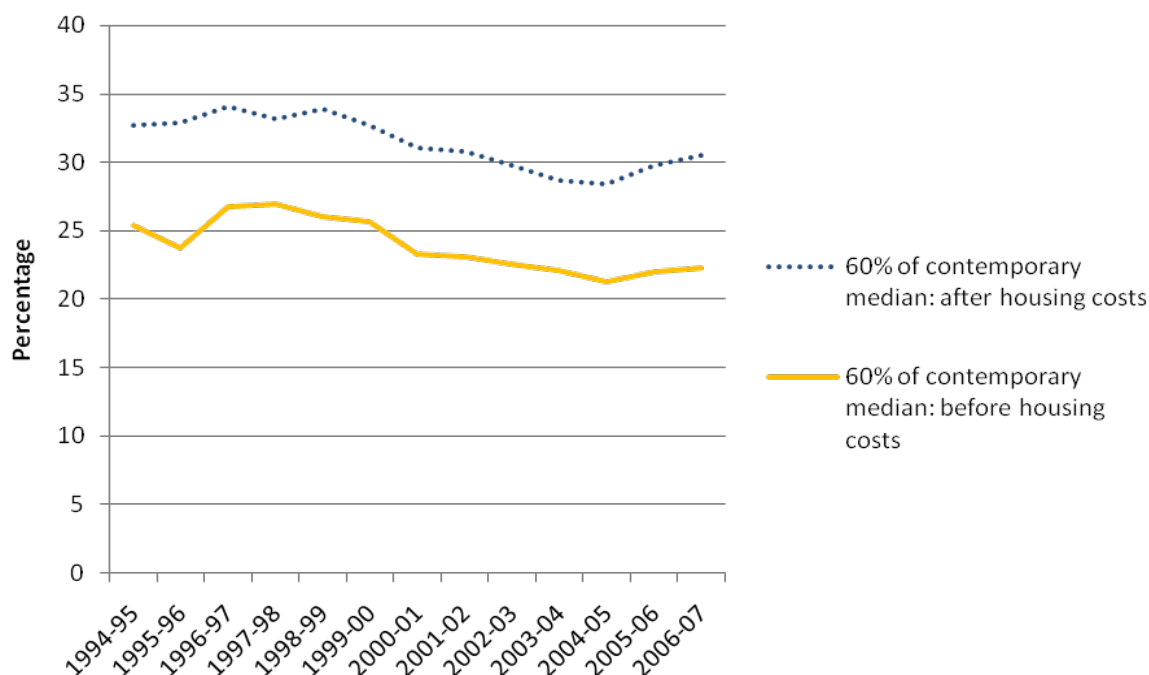
Also in 2007, the government announced a new Child Poverty Public Service Agreement (PSA), reaffirming the commitment to halve child poverty by 2010. Targets associated with this Public Service Agreement include raising the achievement of all children, narrowing the achievement gap and making sure that all children are on the path to success. In December 2007, the DCSF's Children's Plan (DCSF 2007 p 5) announced a new aim of 'making England the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up' and set out the 10-year plan to achieve this aim. One of its goals is to halve child poverty by 2010 and to eradicate it by 2020.

In March 2008, HM Treasury, DWP and DCSF jointly published *Ending child poverty: everybody's business* (HM Treasury, DWP and DCSF 2008), setting out the government's detailed strategy to tackle child poverty around the four cross-departmental policy levers described by the Child Poverty Unit. In this report the government highlighted the role of local authorities in leading local action and expressed commitment to supporting this role through the Local Area Agreement process, alongside new governance and funding arrangements. This action pledge influences the shaping and implementation of whole-area child poverty strategies in England.

A report from the House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee, published in March 2008 (GB. Parliament. HoC. Work and Pensions Committee 2008), emphasised the need for further investment to meet the poverty targets and for ways to address low public sympathy for the poor. It also reinforced the importance of good-quality childcare for a good start in life and for getting parents, especially lone parents, into and remaining in work.

The government faces a very ambitious target of reducing the number of children living in poverty by 1.2 million between now and 2010–11. Figure 1 shows trends in the proportion of children in poverty in England for 1994/95 to 2006/07, before and after housing costs. In general, there has been a decrease in the proportion of children living in households below the contemporary median income between the years 1994/95 and 2006/07.

Figure 1. Trends in the proportion of children in poverty 1994/95 to 2006/07



Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies, Family Resources Survey data

However, progress on meeting child poverty targets has been slow, and some children remain at particularly high risk of poverty including those:

- in workless families
- from a minority ethnic background
- with one or more disabled adults in their family
- who have three or more siblings
- living in inner London. (HM Treasury, DWP and DCSF 2008).

On 11 June 2009, the government introduced its Child Poverty Bill (GB. Parliament. HoC 2009). This Bill enshrines in law a duty on current, and future, governments, local authorities and their partners to eradicate child poverty by 2020. If passed, the Bill will require governments to publish a three-yearly UK-wide child poverty strategy, to consult with local authorities, devolved administrations and children when preparing strategies and

to publish annual progress reports for Parliament. An expert independent commission will also be established (DCSF 2009).

Additionally, the government plans to invest £35 million in 2009–10 and £80 million in 2010–11 for research and to establish new child poverty pilots including new services in children's centres and testing of new approaches to inform and shape policy in the next decade.

In its 2009 manifesto on ending child poverty, published on the 10th anniversary of Tony Blair's landmark speech, the Child Poverty Action Group (2009) acknowledges the steps taken towards social justice since that time and the importance of the presence of the goal of a child poverty free society in mainstream politics and underpinned by statute. It also provides many reasons why there is a continuing need to be angry about child poverty and to translate this into action through all levels of society, with an emphasis on the following 10 steps:

- protecting jobs
- mending the safety net
- moving away from means tests
- removing barriers to work
- stopping in-work poverty
- a child-first strategy for childcare
- ending the classroom divide
- providing fair public services for those who need them most
- ending poverty premiums in taxes and services
- ensuring a decent home for every family.

4. What are the facilitators and barriers to developing and implementing a whole-area child poverty strategy?

This section sets out the facilitators and barriers to developing and implementing a whole-area child poverty strategy, as identified in the literature. The 26 items relevant to this section tended to focus on the barriers, rather than the facilitators. However, it was possible to infer the facilitators from the barriers in most cases. The evidence base includes 16 studies based on robust empirical evidence, including longitudinal research and studies using mixed methods approaches.

Key facilitators and barriers to developing and implementing a whole-area child poverty strategy suggested by the evidence

Facilitators

- Clearly agreed, understood and shared terminology and definitions
- Open channels of communication and trust
- Strong leadership of change along with clear governance and robust accountability processes
- An appropriate degree of area-level autonomy to design and deliver strategies to meet local needs
- Involvement of the full range of services and organisations in the delivery of the strategy
- A risk-taking ethos to challenge existing practice.

Barriers

- Lack of joined-up priorities and direction, especially at the national–local interface. Local agencies often exercise limited control over nationally determined policy
- Practical challenges of creating and sustaining collaborative structures and processes
- Hidden assumptions and ideas that can hinder development of common understandings and priorities, compounded by the use of terms that often have different meanings for different people
- Child poverty may be peripheral as a focus in whole-area strategy
- Lack of robust and high-quality data to support decision-making
- Uncertain and often short-term funding arrangements associated with the work that impacts on planning cycles and sustainability
- Lack of time and resources and an underestimation of the capacity required for strategic development
- Lack of innovation in making cultural or practical adjustments to enable meaningful participation at all levels – including among community groups, individuals and children.

4.1 Barriers

A number of themes emerge from the literature that relate to the barriers in developing and implementing a whole-area child poverty strategy. These themes have been grouped as follows, and are discussed in turn below:

- collaborative processes and structures
- quality of available data
- time, resource and capacity
- participation.

Collaborative processes and structures

The evidence identified a number of barriers related to collaboration. These relate to the challenges associated with different types and levels of organisation attempting to work in a streamlined fashion towards the achievement of a shared goal – the erosion of child poverty. Issues include:

Lack of joined-up priorities and direction

Howarth *et al* (2001) note the challenge of attempting to reach consensus on priorities when so many organisations and agencies are involved in direction, planning and delivery. A lack of 'joined-up' thinking and action can arise at many levels: within local authorities or children's trusts and the many agencies that comprise these; cross-departmentally, where division of responsibility for initiatives between departments can inhibit progress (CESI and CPAG 2007); or between local and central government, where there can be a struggle for power or control. For example:

- HM Treasury and DCSF (2007) cite poor coordination of local offers in the youth service as common and also comment that roles within the education system and youth support can be unclear
- Higgins and Ball (1999) and Warwick Business School (2006) cite tensions between local and central government. A perceived lack of autonomy and flexibility at local level is often viewed as a barrier to progress. According to Warwick Business School (2006), areas require the power to regulate the way resources are deployed locally, supported by simplification of the welfare benefits system. However, it is also noted that while high levels of decentralisation, including citizen-led activity, can mobilise action, it can also be perceived to threaten political and professional control (Higgins and Ball 1999), or to marginalise issues that should be dealt with at a national level (Alcock 2004).

Alcock (2004) refers to the government's Social Exclusion Unit's work on local responses to local problems and flags up warnings of potential barriers arising from this experience. He suggests that area-based initiatives and local actions can be a substitute for a real response to social problems via broader social and economic change at national level. He also alerts us to the dangers of the pathologisation of social exclusion problems via 'blaming the victim' (Alcock 2004 p 93) and a limiting discourse that promotes the view that the poor should sort out the problems that they are perceived as getting themselves into.

Curtis (2006) suggests that the interface between types of organisation will always be awkward and that this can lead to a point at which the transaction costs involved become overburdensome and collaboration falters. The scale of the benefits may not justify the investment (Geddes 2000). Alcock (2004) identifies a theoretical tension between the way organisations are structured and what is required in relation to levels of collaboration and sharing of responsibility.

Lack of management 'buy-in'

The items covered in this review reflect the commonly held, and evidenced, view that any strategy needs a strong senior management endorsement and lead if it is to be effective. Howarth and Morrison (2007) note that a lack of ownership among senior managers, alongside conflicting professional ideologies, can be a major hurdle to be overcome in developing and implementing strategies through collaboration. Similarly, internal management structures may inhibit the development of collaborative processes and structures (Daniels *et al* 2008) and there can be difficulties in the design process due to the detailed complexities involved (Higgins and Ball 1999).

While it can help if senior staff and officers 'champion' the cause, it is also important that such individuals do not become isolated. Anti-poverty strategy can become prone to marginalisation if it is taken forward by special officers and perceived as an 'add on' to mainstream activity (Higgins and Ball 1999).

Peripheral focus

Axford (2008) suggests that the tensions associated with striving for the dimensions of both equality and fraternity may act as a barrier to coherence in strategy development. He suggests that there are similar issues in balancing the three interrelated domains of poverty, social exclusion and quality of life.

An Every Child Matters outcome focus can sometimes draw attention away from child poverty targeting (CESI 2007). Conversely, there may be activities that are tackling child poverty but are not necessarily defined as child poverty initiatives depending on how they were conceptualised and presented originally. An example of this challenge is provided below.

Social inclusion partnerships (SIPs)

Kemp *et al* (2002), considering social inclusion partnerships with a broad remit for social and economic change, note that many SIPs regard the alleviation of child poverty as one aspect of their broader work, rather than as a central focus. They note: 'a positive impact on children is a welcome by-product of services developed for some other purpose' (Kemp *et al* p 37). While such by-products may be beneficial for young people, if a more structured approach to alleviating child poverty is to be achieved, it may be necessary for such partnerships to consider anti child poverty strategies as a core thread of their work.

Quality of data available to support evidence-based decision-making

A number of the items identified the importance of good data, including high-quality local data, being available to enable trend forecasting (DCSF 2008) and for financial planning (Friedman *et al* 2005; Utting *et al* 2008). Data generation should be a part of strategy development and implementation through the inclusion of monitoring and evaluation activity (Higgins and Ball 1999).

However, existing quantitative and administrative data are not always appropriate as a basis on which to make targeting decisions (Edwards *et al* 2006; Howarth and Morrison 2007). Those planning to use such data for targeting purposes may need to 'seek expert advice on how to interpret and use such evidence' (Edwards *et al* 2006 p vi). Howarth and Morrison (2007) also caution that evidence often does not account for the subjective nature of organisational life, including its unconscious, even irrational nature, which can influence decision-making.

The development by the London Health Observatory of a local basket of inequality indicators, commissioned by the Department of Health, is an example of a positive initiative to 'help support local action to achieve the Government's national inequalities targets for life expectancy and infant mortality, by highlighting information relevant to addressing the targets and assisting local areas with monitoring progress towards reducing health inequalities' (London Health Observatory 2009).

Buchanan (2006) refers to knowledge in a broader sense, suggesting that there is a need to ensure that barriers related to knowledge of services and accessibility, including cultural issues, are addressed.

Time, resources and capacity

Evidence for this review supports other evaluations in recognising that a lack of adequate resources and funding can be a barrier to developing and implementing strategic arrangements (Higgins and Ball 1999; Rich *et al* 2001). Considerable effort needs to go into 'collaborative capacity building at strategic level' (Edwards *et al* 2006 p iii). Percy-Smith (2006) also suggests that things may get worse before they get better due to the effort expended in setting up and maintaining area-level strategy.

Underestimation of the capacity required (Percy-Smith 2006; Howarth and Morrison 2007) is often due to the complexity of structures in higher-level collaborations, which can also lead to multiple partnerships with overlapping membership that impact on delivery.

A lack of availability of long-term development time to develop strategies, and the process of resource allocation, can both be a challenge (Higgins and Ball 1999). Geddes and Root (2000) question the ambitious policy aims set by the government and whether these were matched by sufficient funds. Dealing with unplanned activity may also be an issue in planning cycles. 'Local partnerships may exercise little control over decisions made by external actors that impact on the local community' (Geddes 2000 p 796). Central funds are needed but under the right terms and conditions. Short-term funding is often cited as a 'major brake' on local authority ability to invest in infrastructure (CESI 2007) and 'just as the benefits [of a pilot] are beginning to show the pot becomes empty' (Warwick Business School 2006 p 31).

Participation

Participation by all sections of communities and sectors is recognised as essential in developing local and area-wide strategy. Reliance on accepted practices and provision may result in the continuation of existing activities and relationships with their usual groups and communities, which can inhibit participatory practices (Edwards *et al* 2006 p viii). The literature identified a number of barriers to such community-wide participation, as follows:

- 'consultation' mistakenly presented as 'participation' – consultation imposes a predefined agenda on respondents, whereas participation is an inclusive approach, where the views of the community are integral in shaping questions and policy
- a rapidly changing policy context and lack of sufficient time and resources allocated to do the work, which can impact negatively upon planning for participation, particularly with children and young people (Spicer and Evans 2005)
- a lack of understanding between community-based organisations and cities (which can be substituted for local authorities) (Rich *et al* 2001) – according to Rich *et al*, community-based organisations perceive local government and the political environment as primary obstacles to effective collaboration, while city officials feel that community-based organisations have limited resources, poor administration and parochial interests that affect collaboration
- achieving the best balance between obtaining wide representation, rather than the voice of an elite group, while also managing the potential problem of consultation fatigue among regular group members (Spicer and Evans 2005).

Participation as a continuous process can be sidelined if it is the responsibility of one officer or group and may inhibit wider ownership and prioritising of participation (Higgins and Ball 1999; Spicer and Evans 2005). Depth of partnership involvement by some may also be tokenistic and power and leverage among different groups and individuals may be highly segmented, impacting on meaningful participation (Geddes 2000 p 791).

4.2 Facilitators

Many of the levers for effective whole-area strategies can be inferred by considering the converse of the barriers already outlined. So, for example, the literature implies that whole-area strategy can be facilitated by:

- good collaboration through strong partnerships with joined-up priorities and direction and management 'buy-in'. Child poverty needs to be a central focus in planning and delivery
- good-quality data to support decision-making and a clear strategy for monitoring, evaluation and review
- adequate time and capacity for the development and implementation phases, along with sufficient local funding
- genuine participation, where all sections of the community are involved in developing and commenting on local and area-wide strategy.

The items reviewed also presented arguments regarding specific facilitators, as follows:

Terminology

Clear conceptualisation is essential in relation to the terminology on child poverty being used in the strategy development and implementation process (Roaf 2002; Buchanan 2006; Howarth and Morrison 2007). This must be supported by an agreed definition of terms (Utting *et al* 2008) in order to address the difficulties of building a common understanding within partnerships (Geddes 2000). Roaf (2002 p 148) suggests that it should be clear whether the focus and commitment is on 'building bridges or demolishing barriers'.

Communication

Rich *et al* (2001) found that open channels of communication and trust are needed for effective communication (see also Howarth and Morrison 2007; O'Riordan 2007) and that initiatives such as a community-based organisation forum for sharing ideas on best practice were used and seen as valuable by participants.

Risk-taking ethos

Transaction costs in cross-agency and department working that were cited as barriers may be minimised through standardisation but this may be at the risk of a reduction in effectiveness (Curtis 2006). As part of the cost-benefit analysis of area-wide strategy a good understanding of the role of risk-taking and a questioning of the status quo in developing new approaches should be included (Daniels *et al* 2008).

Strong leadership of change

Ryan *et al* (2008) observe that top-down change is appropriate for strategically important initiatives and the more radical the change, the more senior the buy-in needs to be. Attention must be given to process issues and ‘the ongoing nature of large scale change’ (p 28). Ongoing and critically reflective dialogue, negotiation and positive embrace of conflict (Grisoni and Miller 2002 p 219) is required as an aspect of the leadership of change required. The presence of members with sufficient seniority to remove structural and procedural barriers is also a facet of strong leadership.

Local autonomy

However, Curtis (2006) says that the state should avoid controlling actions that subvert or constrain responsible action by others. Centralised policies delivered through local agents may not be attuned to local market conditions, so use of an income-generating resource model may not lead to sustainability (Daniels *et al* 2008). Collaboration with community-based organisations is vital, therefore, as it can lead to a more comprehensive range of activities that is more effective in meeting goals (Rich *et al* 2001). Non-statutory provision can be more flexible (Higgins and Ball 1999) in responding to local conditions but should not be used as a means of sustaining short-termism in planning. Such strong local partnerships can offer also greater recognition to excluded groups (Geddes 2000). Pooling of financial and other resources can also add value (Geddes 2000; Rich *et al* 2001).

Finally, Percy-Smith (2006, p 319) cites robust accountability mechanisms at different levels as central to strategy development and implementation including to ‘the executive of the wider partnership group, to external stakeholders, including funders, to service users and the public at large and to review delivery arrangements’.

5. What key elements ought to be included in a whole-area child poverty strategy in order for it to be effective?

This section examines what the available literature tells us about the key elements of an effective whole-area child poverty strategy. Evidence from 29 studies related to this review question. This included 16 empirical studies that used longitudinal approaches or mixed methods, such as surveys and case studies. Evidence from policy and practice examples was also included. It is worth noting that authors did not always agree on key elements, or placed lesser or greater emphasis on specific features depending on their perspective.

Key elements of effective whole-area child poverty strategies

- Create a positive and shared vision with clearly defined outcomes that are desired – what kinds of futures and society do we want for our children? These outcomes should be embedded in the strategy.
- Drive the vision with strong senior leadership, all-party support and understanding of the vision among all stakeholders and the public.
- Make the values and the theoretical ideas that will underpin the strategy clear – do not assume everyone thinks the same or holds the same views and ideas about meanings.
- Aim for all-sector and community involvement, including the private sector as employer and service provider. In doing this, ensure that clear roles and responsibilities are established that build on partners' skills and expertise.
- Make participation a priority for children and families living on low incomes, as well as community organisations. Learn from good practice in order to create the mechanisms for facilitating effective participation.
- Ensure that services are designed to complement each other, which means understanding the way different policies may have the potential to counteract benefits of one service for another.
- Develop organisational structures to leverage top-down as well as horizontal relationships. Local authorities should act as a hub in facilitating networks of organisations and individuals at different levels.
- Remember that, although poverty is often regionalised or 'place based', there are pockets of poverty nationwide. Therefore, although there is a need for place-based services, provision also needs to be responsive to poverty in all contexts.
- Focus on income management and maximisation for parents and take a broad perspective on the range of services that may be involved in lifting and keeping families out of poverty.
- Time (at least two years for the development phase) and long-term financial investment in the implementation is needed to successfully manage the complexity of the task.

Elements identified in the evidence have been grouped under a number of interrelated themes, which are discussed in turn below. These include: a positive and shared vision; transparency of underpinning values and theoretical perspectives; all-sector and community development; joined-up service design; effective organisational structure; place-based and people-focused strategies; effective use of high-quality evidence; sufficient time and resources; managing and maximising family income; and other service priorities for consideration in a whole-area child poverty strategy.

Friedman *et al* (2005) suggest that planning and doing should be seen as closely linked as in the theory of change approach. Therefore, for some of the themes in this section it may be difficult to separate out the elements as relevant to either development or implementation; rather, they should be seen as part of a continuum of planning, action and review. Friedman *et al* (2005 p 250) go on to say that ‘the logic of this approach requires partnerships to consider the evidence base on which their collaborative actions are predicated and brings a useful discipline to the process’, which of course is the underpinning rationale for C4EO. Some of the themes outlined below also reflect the facilitators outlined in the previous section.

5.1 A positive and shared vision

A coherent vision is needed on which to build a strategy (Spicer and Evans 2005; Ryan *et al* 2008) with clearly defined desired outcomes, stated in clear language and related to an entire population (Friedman *et al* 2005; Howarth and Morrison 2007; Axford 2008). Percy-Smith (2006, p 337) says there needs to be an ‘inspirational vision based on jointly held values’ and this is endorsed by Howarth *et al* (2001) who argue that the strategy should be visionary and *positive* (p 2), setting out how a society should be in recognition of the limits of a deficit model.

This vision would be marketed effectively (Ryan *et al* 2008) to stakeholders and the public, and each element of a strategy would need an action plan (Percy-Smith 2006). As an element of effective partnership working, clarity of purpose when setting goals and objectives, required actions and milestones (CESI and CPAG 2007; Lord *et al* 2008) is essential. This should include a focus on the whole child in the wider context of their family, community and society (Daniels *et al* 2008).

Howarth *et al* (2001) say that those on low incomes should be involved in a meaningful way in the creation of this vision. Spicer and Evans (2005) also argue that the principle of participation should be central, underpinning the formulation of the strategy. In discussing participation approaches for and with children and young people, Spicer and Evans (2005) recognise the potential tensions in committing to act on the articulated views and preferences of children if these do not align with central/trust priorities. However, they claim that there is a need for decision-makers to make the conceptual shift from consultation-focused to participation-focused in development and implementation activity. This requires ‘considerable changes in the way in which partners work’ (Spicer and Evans 2005, p185), including language used, structure/format of meetings, location and formats of materials.

As outlined in the previous section, strong political leadership is also required to shape and implement such a vision (Geddes and Root 2000; Warwick Business School 2006; Howarth and Morrison 2007) and training can support visionary or thought leadership, including for elected members or those having a lead member role (Warwick Business School 2006). Howarth and Morrison (2007, p 61) assert that 'leadership that inspires and creates a compelling narrative' is required.

It is important to focus on outcomes for local people, not data for bureaucracy (Friedman *et al* 2005 p 260). Child poverty targets need to be more firmly embedded within the policy rationale for local initiatives (CESI 2007 p 46) and again include the voice of citizens in the process of formulating outcomes, for example learning from effective engagement strategies with young people (Warwick Business School 2006; Lord *et al* 2008).

Buchanan (2006 p 1138) sums up principles that should be at the heart of a vision for a child poverty strategy in saying: 'consider principles of work for those who can and security for those who can't'.

5.2 Transparency of underpinning values and theoretical perspectives

The development and implementation of strategy is not a value-free or politically neutral activity. For example, Axford (2008) identifies at least three perspectives about poverty causes and alleviation that may inform strategy development including management of the self-excluding moral underclass, social integrationist and redistributive perspectives. Curtis (2006 p 156) suggests that there are contradictory ideas about the relationship between wealth creation and poverty alleviation and that this results in the 'need for carefully crafted compromise to avoid engaging in ideological conflict'.

Broadly, Roaf (2002 p 145) suggests that 'Needs and rights should be held in equal equilibrium' and Buchanan (2006 p 1149) reminds us that there is a 'need to attend to the psychological impact of living in poverty and being socially excluded'.

5.3 All-sector and community development

O'Riordan (2007) and DCSF (2008) emphasise that action is required across **all** local services. Commissioners need to draw on the best of available provision, particularly from the third sector (HM Treasury and DCSF 2007) with effective coordination of services from all sectors that are able to demonstrate an impact on young people's outcomes.

It is important that there is consistency of partnerships (Utting *et al* 2008) during implementation, supported by strong leadership and senior project management champions (Grisoni and Miller 2000; Utting *et al* 2008). Effective coordination of economic regeneration objectives with social inclusion and redistributive objectives should be a main element of strategic planning on child poverty (Geddes and Root 2000 p 57). It must also be ensured that mainstream, local services make an effective difference (also Kemp *et al* 2002). Strategies enabling all-sector participation were identified through the literature and include:

- **establishing clear roles and responsibilities** – firm boundaries in relation to individual organisational roles and responsibilities enable strong bridges to be built (Roaf 2002 p 149). In talking about delivery of the Quality Protects agenda, Grisoni and Miller (2002) found that organisational members need high levels of autonomy, confidence and participation in decision-making and to be clear about their mission and values. Part of the negotiation of roles and responsibilities as commissioning or delivery partners should involve analysis of potential gains and losses for agencies and individuals in area-based planning and delivery (Howarth and Morrison 2007 p 66)
- **building on skills and experience** – harnessing the cultural capital from a positive history of working together to build collaborative capacity further (Howarth and Morrison 2007) is important. Identifying and utilising a balance of skills and competencies across individuals and organisations is also an element to incorporate (Percy-Smith 2006). However, those involved in area-wide planning processes need to be alert to claims of area-wide strategies that may, in fact, not be (Higgins and Ball 1999). Promotion of cultural and organisational change as a component of strategy formulation and implementation is also required (Geddes and Root 2000)
- **embedding a participative approach** – Spicer and Evans (2005 p 182) refer to two types of participation: the first is qualitative, often informed by a rights-based perspective and involving direct involvement; the second is quantitative – accessing relatively large numbers of views in a one-off approach, then representing these through the assimilation of the views. Both types of participation are needed to obtain a range of perspectives and insights from children and young people. The authors comment that to achieve true participation it is necessary to ‘unfreeze professional attitudes, procedures and styles of working, catalyzing change’ (Spicer and Evans 2005 p 186) so this should be an element of any strategy development work. Alcock (2004) notes, however, that participative involvement should be supported without passing the burden of social change on to local citizens.
- **corporate planning** – responsibilities of individual departments should be translated into mandate through corporate plans (O’Riordan 2007) and effective enabling governance should be one of the outcomes of multiple agency involvement (public, civic society and private) (Curtis 2006). Finally, Howarth and Morrison (2007) raise the importance of attending to process and people issues in strategy design and implementation.

5.4 Joined-up service design

Services need to work together in a holistic way and achieve joined-up service design. For instance, integration of area- and neighbourhood-based initiatives (Geddes and Root 2000) should be part of this striving for harmony. Axford (2008) suggests that there is a need to have a consistent threshold regarding who receives what kinds of interventions and why.

Many local authorities have incorporated child poverty within their more holistic, family-based approaches, and existing initiatives such as Family Centres and Sure Start provide ‘the opportunity for accelerated organisational change across agencies’ (Warwick Business School 2006 p 19). This can again support congruence.

A report by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (CESI 2007) recommends that child poverty targets should be mandatory in all of the most deprived local authorities. Cortis (2008 p 112) says that 'building strategy around principles of place management, service coordination and community involvement' has been the Australian response that appears to address a high level of congruence. Buchanan's (2006) evidence points to the continuing need for 'joined up solutions to joined up problems' (p 1147).

5.5 Effective organisational structure

The literature suggests that in order to achieve effective organisational structure the following is needed:

- **transformational leadership** – leaders are needed who have a good understanding of policy and can 'successfully manipulate the existing organisational culture' to develop new structures and win staff over 'emotionally and intellectually' (Ryan *et al* 2008 p 28).
- **relationships between local services and government** – Axford (2008 p 42) comments on the relationship between central government policy and local contexts and suggests that 'the centre of gravity of children's services shifts depending upon the relative strength of the factors that shape policy'. Strategy needs to be responsive to issues emerging in a local context as well as government priorities. Kemp *et al* (2002) reinforce this by noting that child poverty at area level cannot be tackled in isolation from government benefit levels.
- **involvement of all stakeholders including all agencies that work with children and young people in the statutory and voluntary sector and those who live in poverty** – involving those in poverty could mean adopting a stakeholder-led approach focused on the devolvement of responsibilities, including to families in poverty themselves (Ryan *et al* 2008 p 29).

All the above can be facilitated by finding and using strategy champions who are energised and committed (Howarth and Morrison 2007).

5.6 Place-based and people-focused strategies

Poverty is everywhere so strategies should be wider than place-focused (Howarth *et al* 2001; Axford 2008). It is important that for areas that have both urban and rural needs, relevant organisations and outcomes that relate to **both** must be included (Higgins and Ball 1999). Scaling up of local initiatives and cross-area working (CESI 2007) is an element that could be supported by the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships and Government Offices in the regions. Challenges associated with place-based approaches (for example neighborhood management schemes, programmes for tackling anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood warden schemes) and people-based schemes (such as initiatives related to teenage pregnancy strategies and improving access to information technology (LGA 2001) are outlined below.

Community targeting can be argued as both efficient and inefficient (Cortis 2008 p 114) as social problems at local level are generated by broader economic structures. Cortis also points to the limitations of place-based approaches, which can leave families in poverty in other areas underserved, while 'also recognizing the reality of spatial concentration of

social disadvantage' (p 113), which together creates resource distribution challenges in an area context. She suggests that 'management of social geographies can mediate experiences of hardship and bolster personal resilience'. This suggests the need for strategies to attend to both the strengths and limitations of place-based initiatives and understanding of child poverty from a population perspective. Greater emphasis on initiatives focused on personalisation and resilience building (HM Treasury 2007) may support this.

5.7 Effective use of high-quality evidence

Availability of high-quality evidence has been discussed in the context of both barriers and facilitators. Robust evidence to underpin strategy development including current position and trends (CESI and CPAG 2007) is an essential element of strategy formulation and development.

Once a strategy is implemented this should be accompanied by a regular review of the full range of services to ensure they are maximising their potential contribution to the reduction of child poverty (Warwick Business School 2006). Tools such as the Child Poverty Toolkit (CESI and CPAG 2007) can help.

Buchanan (2006) argues that major change initiatives represent social experiments that require substantive pilots to meet the ethics of implementation so that the evidence for future decision-making is sound.

5.8 Sufficient time and resources

Evidence from Higgins and Ball (1999) suggests that at least two years should be allowed to undertake the development phase of a strategy of this complexity and make the necessary plans, and that such development is a major political and managerial commitment that requires appropriate and ongoing resources for implementation. As noted in CESI and CPAG (2007), adequate resource levels to **deliver** the strategy, and appropriate monitoring and evaluation of their impact, are necessary. Alcock (2004) suggests that this can be helped by demarcation of long-term and short-term planning and actions, but that the vital element required is long-term budgets to meet long-term challenges.

5.9 Managing and maximising family income

Evidence by the CESI (2007) suggests that an element of a child poverty strategy should include promotion of broad understanding about economic well-being in relation to child poverty.

All five partners in the European Cities Against Child Poverty Network (ECAPN 2008a and b) saw raising family income as crucial to reducing child poverty. The range of responses to these varied, but greater devolution of responsibility for social services and education (among partners other than England) (ECAPN 2008b p 6) appears to allow for more devolved solutions to develop.

Central government requires at area level the provision of **training** to help adults enter and progress in work to reduce child poverty (Utting *et al* 2008). Area-level interventions can provide employment support services and help families access working tax credits and related benefits through provision such as Jobcentre Plus and working with skills and training providers (p 26). The CESI (2007) believes that more stretching targets for Jobcentre Plus in London are required, or that a complete overhaul with 'resources reallocated to match new targets' (Kenny 2008 p 8) should be introduced.

Children's trust partners should also consider a range of contributory factors impacting on child poverty and family income and how to develop appropriate **services** to mitigate these factors including social care, childcare, housing support, transport and high-quality and accessible local amenities (Utting *et al* 2008).

Attracting local investment into areas of high deprivation (Axford 2008) is an important element of whole-area strategy development, developing into employment schemes, boosting of tax allowances and creating employment opportunities through area-level collaborations with employers and local authorities acting as a role model employer. Howarth *et al* (2001) also say that the role of the private sector as both an employer and a service provider needs to be addressed proactively.

A mixed-economy of provision is required to support parents into work or to progress once in work, which take accounts of different domains of need and a whole-area child poverty strategy should include some or all of the following:

- cheap, available, flexible, wrap-around, high-quality childcare for all dependent children such as breakfast clubs and extended schools as well as pre-school provision and holiday schemes for lower-income families (Kemp *et al* 2002; Warwick Business School 2006; CESI 2007; ECAPN 2008b). This should include clear and consistent entitlement to free childcare for non-employed parents in training and job searching (Kenny 2008)
- soft skills and confidence-building training and support (Warwick Business School 2006; ECAPN 2008b)
- strong linkages between employment advice and wider advice and training areas such as debt and income management and single points of access to support and advice (Howarth *et al* 2001; Kemp *et al* 2002; Warwick Business School 2006; CESI 2007; ECAPN 2008b). Organisations should use their influence to bring together other agencies involved in training and employment (Kenny 2008 p 8) to provide high-quality careers advice and training
- provision of into-employment stepping stones such as work 'tasters and placements' (ECAPN 2008b)
- good intelligence on, and networks with, the whole-area employment market to ensure that the training available matches the needs of the labour market (ECAPN 2008b)
- community banking facilities and credit union developments (LGA 2001; Warwick Business School 2006)
- removing barriers to work through suitable housing for care leavers, affordable childcare and welfare rights advice, mentor support, life skills (Warwick Business

School 2006) and targeting for specific groups in poverty such as Bangladeshi women, parents with mental ill-health, young people with a care history and disabled parents (also CESI 2007)

- working with businesses in the area as both employers and service providers, for example developing a strategic programme for and promoting retailing service in deprived areas (LGA 2001) and to facilitate a cultural shift around flexibility in the workplace (Kenny 2008) and to mitigate the potential for postcode discrimination by employers (Kemp *et al* 2002). Campaigns, for example on benefit take-up (LGA 2001).

5.10 Other service priorities for consideration in a whole-area child poverty strategy

In accordance with achieving good outcomes for all Every Child Matters domains and the impacts of poverty on all aspects of a child's life, whole-area strategies should also ensure that other interrelated domains are addressed. These may take an added value or layered approach. Edwards *et al* (2006) suggest that strategies should pay attention not only to the identification of the barriers faced by different groups but also to an **understanding** of these and their implications, which may be helped by reference to the Every Child Matters outcomes and broader concepts of social inclusion. These may require action related to:

- recreation, both structured and unstructured
- transport
- housing
- health
- education – teachers trained to develop curriculum alternatives and to work with socially excluded young people, for example.

Children should be helped to develop their capacity to deal with the barriers they face (Edwards *et al* 2006). A layered approach to identifying and supporting outcomes across and within interventions may be cost-effective, non-stigmatising and generate added value. For example, in dealing with food poverty issues, a breakfast club may provide childcare to support parents and provide access to healthy food and nutrition advice that benefits the children and possibly influences the parents (Kemp *et al* 2002).

6. How might the development and implementation of a whole-area child poverty strategy be best monitored and assessed?

This section looks at how the development and implementation of a whole-area child poverty strategy can be best monitored and assessed (for example via models, tools, information management and indicators) according to the available literature. The evidence base for this review question was less extensive than for the other questions. Nine of the key items related to this review question. They included good-quality research studies but also practice descriptions and toolkits because there was a shortage of empirical evidence.

Key findings

- Effective monitoring and assessment are required to inform the development of a whole-area strategy. They inform progress, allow lessons to be learned and provide feedback into ongoing strategy development.
- The evidence suggests that approaches to monitoring and assessing a whole-area strategy should focus on outcomes for children.
- Indicators can be used as part of the monitoring and evaluation process to assess the extent to which the whole-area strategy has an impact on outcomes for children.
- Targets that are set within the strategy must be capable of being monitored. Partners may need to consider how the data required for target setting can be obtained if it is not currently available.
- Partnerships could make the assessment of progress more robust by employing evaluation methods to assess whether or not it is the actions that have resulted in the achievement of the objectives and how they have contributed.
- Partners should share targets and goals and be informed of progress towards the targets.
- Effective monitoring incorporates reviewing and revising actions and targets as the strategy develops.

The evidence suggests that monitoring and evaluation are key features of an effective whole-area child poverty strategy (Geddes and Root 2000; Traynor and Davidson 2001; CESI and CPAG 2007), primarily because they allow those working in partnerships to assess the aspects of the strategy that are working well and whether their actions are leading to an overall improvement in the level of child poverty.

The literature suggests that effective monitoring and evaluation involves a number of interrelated stages. It recommends that whole-area partnerships:

- **set targets** – the evidence suggests that it is important that the targets that are set within the strategy are capable of being monitored
- **monitor performance towards the strategy** using indicators or evaluation methods. It is recommended that they gather information of performance against targets and assess whether or not these have delivered the actions set out within the strategy
- **revise action plans** over time and review the strategy.

6.1 Setting targets

The evidence suggests that targets can assist in monitoring the progress of a whole-area child poverty strategy (Friedman *et al* 2005; CESI and CPAG 2007). In order for these to be effective, they should focus on outcomes for children (Higgins and Ball, 1999; Friedman *et al* 2005). Items included in the review that focused more generally on service planning and delivery of children's services also suggest that local authorities and their partners should focus on outcomes for children (Howarth and Morrison 2007; DCSF 2008). The evidence suggests that effective targets are measurable, focus on outcomes and assess the extent to which actions have led to improved outcomes for children.

Good-quality local data are needed in order for partners to target priorities and monitor and evaluate progress towards targets (CESI and CPAG 2007; DCSF 2008). It is recommended that if the information needed to set targets does not exist, partners include actions in the plan to obtain data in the future. For example, partnerships might consider setting an objective to improve management information across the partnership within a specified timescale (CESI and CPAG 2007).

6.2 Monitoring performance towards the strategy

Indicators

Indicators can be used to measure whether the actions of those developing and implementing the strategy are achieving the outcomes. The evidence suggests that partners should use indicators to establish the extent to which actions are leading to an improvement in the level of child poverty in the area (Friedman *et al* 2005; CESI and CPAG 2007; CESI 2007). It is recommended that these indicators are agreed with partners and the community. Indeed, several of the studies reviewed by the team suggest that the development of indicators should be an inclusive process involving the community (Geddes and Root 2000; Friedman *et al* 2005).

Friedman *et al* (2005) used a case study of a local authority to explore the benefits of outcome-based accountability in measuring the effectiveness of strategies to support children and young people. In this case, local people were encouraged to help to develop local indicators which 'fill the gaps' left by national performance frameworks. This inclusive approach was recommended because it helped to ensure that the indicators had resonance with the local community (Friedman *et al* 2005).

The evidence outlines how partners can use indicators. One of the toolkits, which is primarily aimed at members of local strategic partnerships, and particularly those that have chosen to include the new child poverty indicator (N116) within their Local or Multi-Area Agreement to target child poverty in their areas, suggests that high-level indicators (such as the children in low-income families indicator) be used. This would allow partners to see whether their actions and performance against targets is feeding through into an overall improvement in the level of child poverty in the area (CESI and CPAG 2007).

Evaluation methods

Partnerships may need to consider making the assessment of progress towards the whole-area strategy more robust. The evidence reviewed suggests using evaluation methods to improve the effectiveness of monitoring and assessment (Higgins and Ball 1999; Friedman *et al* 2005; CESI and CPAG 2007), Friedman *et al* (2005) explain how this involves making a distinction between measuring outcomes at population level and performance at agency level. They state that it requires 'a shift from the logic of audit to the logic of evaluation' (Friedman *et al* 2005 p 247). It is also about making links between how processes impact on outcomes for individuals.

One of the studies the team reviewed – Higgins and Ball (1999) – used a survey of local authorities and case studies to explore the management and development of anti-poverty strategies. The authors found that most English and Welsh authorities carried out some form of monitoring, although few evaluated their strategies. Case studies revealed a number of monitoring and evaluation approaches. For example, one authority did not have quantifiable targets but did try to review its strategy, which involved updating the deprivation index for the area. Others produced action plans outlining what their goals would be for the following year, how they planned to achieve these goals and what their target dates were. The research found that the local authorities monitored plans to assess

if objectives were achieved but some simply stated that work towards these objectives was ongoing (Higgins and Ball 1999).

Overall, there was evidence to suggest that in order to successfully assess the development and implementation of a whole-area child poverty strategy, partners may wish to employ evaluation methods to assess whether or not it is the actions that have **resulted** in the achievement of the objectives and **how** they have contributed (Higgins and Ball 1999; CESI and CPAG 2007).

6.3 Revising action plans

Theory of change

Two of the studies reviewed by the team advocate the use of the theory of change model to support action planning. They suggest that action planning should include monitoring activities (Traynor and Davidson 2001; Friedman *et al* 2005). For example, one of these studies, which adopted the theory of change model, suggests that monitoring should be underpinned by action research principles. This means that monitoring and formative assessment are concurrent with the activity and that final outcomes are defined first and then interim and short-term goals developed subsequently (Traynor and Davidson 2001). Friedman *et al* (2005) also recommend that planning and actions are closely linked. This has implications for the timing of monitoring and assessment since this model recommends that it occurs at the same time as the activity.

Shared understanding of goals

Two of the studies suggest that it is important that goals are agreed and shared by all of the partners (Friedman *et al* 2005; Howarth and Morrison, 2007). For example, a literature review by Howarth and Morrison (2007) found that shared goals provide direction for action and a base for measuring effectiveness. However, the authors note that establishing goals for collaboration can be complex due to language, organisational cultures and procedures. Furthermore, the goals that are set by frontline managers may be interpreted differently by frontline practitioners.

The research and toolkits reviewed by the team present a number of approaches and tools that partners could use to involve practitioners and the community in the development of goals or targets. For example, Friedman *et al* (2005) advocate local service users and frontline staff being involved in reviews of services as part of the cycle of development. The toolkits for local authorities and practitioners in children's centres contained tools such as audits, which could be used to assess whether practitioners are aware of the anti-poverty strategy and whether it is clear and easy to find (TfC 2008). These types of tools would allow partners to assess the extent to which staff are aware of and understand the whole-area child poverty strategy.

Clear roles and responsibilities

Effective monitoring and assessment requires the people involved to have clear roles and responsibilities. The evidence suggests that people should be allocated responsibility for providing the information that is required for monitoring and assessment in specified timescales, to judge whether the targets have been met (CESI and CPAG 2007). One of the items, previously discussed, which was based on the principles of action research, highlighted the need for the role and authority of evaluators to be clearly defined between all stakeholders (Traynor and Davidson 2001).

Sharing information and progress updates

The evidence suggests that in order to effectively monitor performance towards the strategy, all partners should be informed of the progress towards targets. For example, one of the items designed to support members of local strategic partnerships suggests that partners hold routine progress assessments when the partnership meets and discusses progress. It is also suggested that partners receive updates via email (CESI and CPAG 2007). This is recommended because it allows partners to review progress and supports the notion of shared goals and targets.

The evidence suggests that the information gained through monitoring can inform progress, allow lessons to be learned and provide feedback into ongoing strategy development (Higgins and Ball 1999; Friedman *et al* 2005; CESI and CPAG 2007). Furthermore, effective monitoring can allow successful interventions to be scaled-up or replicated in other areas (Geddes and Root 2000).

7. Conclusions and main messages

7.1 Main messages

The evidence reviewed for this report provides reiteration of a number of useful top-level messages regarding development, implementation and evaluation of whole-area child poverty strategy development and implementation. Some of these messages will have resonance, in relation to the integrated working agenda for example. However, the scale and complexity of strategy development and implementation in an area-wide context present distinctive challenges and requirements to children's trusts and their wider partners and allies.

Strategy should be based on a shared positive vision of what kind of inclusive society is wanted (rather than a remedial outlook) and be associated with outcomes that translate the vision into practical differences that this would make to the lives of children. The design of a vision should include the active and meaningful participations of citizens, including those living on very low incomes, and community-based organisations as well as full cross-sector involvement. It should be backed up by committed leadership at senior level, and actively championed throughout partner organisations and with the public. All sectors have a part to play in tackling child poverty and bringing to the table, therefore, the involvement of the private sector as employers and services providers and those with a role to play in economic regeneration and employment is key.

Robust and appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be used to monitor progress against these outcomes. Indicators may be used as part of this, drawing on work done by organisations such as the London Health Observatory on the Local Basket of Inequalities Indicators (London Health Observatory 2009). Currently, aspects of the data quality and availability at local level to support evidence-informed decision-making are not adequate.

Any strategic vision should take into account the cross-cutting and pervasive nature of child poverty and recognise that working with parents of children in poverty, with a focus on income maximisation and quality of life, is the most effective means to help people get themselves out of and stay out of poverty. Such a focus should be broad and adopt the 'wrap-around' principles of choice, flexibility, accessibility and relevance. While the value of place-based initiatives is recognised, a focus should also be retained on the fact that families in poverty are not confined spatially.

Any strategy should be backed-up by long-term financial support from central government in order to avoid the limitations of short-termism. Careful management of the relationship with and priorities of central government and children's trusts is required, with local authorities acting as the hub between area-level activity and localities.

7.2 Every Child Matters and cross-cutting themes

This review is primarily concerned with the structures, mechanisms and processes that support the achievement of good outcomes for children living in poverty. When considering area-level strategy development it encompasses clearly a strong dimension of change management (e.g. Geddes and Root 2000; Spicer and Evans 2005). Issues associated with leadership driving and championing change are also a feature of many of the articles reviewed for this report (e.g. Geddes and Root 2000; Grisoni and Miller 2002; Warwick Business School 2006; Howarth and Morrison 2007). Workforce development for those shaping the agenda (e.g. changing practice to accommodate citizenship participation and leadership development for elected members) and delivering the interventions (professionals upskilled to work more effectively with families living in poverty) is in a sense a by-product of successful application of the previous two cross-cutting issues. Equality and diversity issues lie at the heart of any effective child poverty strategy. These cross-cutting themes also relate to those assessed within the IDeA's Beacon scheme on the theme of preventing and tackling child poverty: leadership: vision and strategy; community and customer engagement and empowerment, actions, partnerships, and outcomes. This is promising for finding validated practice evidence from local authorities.

7.3 What's missing from the evidence base?

Given the level of the strategic focus of the evidence base reviewed and the space available to discuss this evidence, this means there are limits with regard to the level of detail that can be probed within the report. Thus, the ways in which child poverty strategies might address issues related to intergenerational poverty are not covered. It is hoped that we may be able to consider this issue at the full review stage, when examples of local practice in this area are identified. This may also be possible for ways in which strategies may segment priorities according to age bands of children and the needs of specific groups of children and their families, including those from different ethnic groups and disabled children or children living in households with disabled or chronically ill parents. The request for validated practice will be informed by requests for information on specific topics identified within this report.

Given that it is less than five years since the introduction of the Children Act 2004 (England and Wales. Statutes 2004) this may mean that not enough time has yet passed to see published evaluations on whole-area child poverty strategy post legislation. It is recognised that a message from this report is that child poverty needs to be considered within a familial context and this suggests that parts of the literature related to wider community regeneration and inclusion strategies, for which there is robust evidence from 1999, could be probed. This will be considered for the full review stage.

Part of the purpose of this review was to ascertain the level and quality of the evidence base and there was some expectation that this would be patchy in relation to the specific questions chosen for the review, which are focused on whole-area, not locality, level.

Some of the publications chosen are policy analysis/conceptual pieces and it is to be expected that the scale of the policy changes introduced by the government would lead to significant attention to the nature of these policies and their relationship to social problems and historical comparisons. These kinds of policy reviews are important to encourage a climate of critique and challenge, however it is recognised that the evidence base underpinning some items of this nature is as rigorous as many empirical studies (e.g. Axford 2008).

We would also suggest that missing from the evidence base at present is a sufficient focus on economic analyses. The challenges of resource allocation and planning were highlighted in the report yet evidence that explored in detail issues related to economic models for development and sustainability was limited and in our view this is a key element that children's trusts and regional or area-level strategy groups would benefit from.

7.4 Implications for local, regional and national services

The evidence from this report raises a number of implications for local, regional and national services. Importantly, the evidence shows that services at these different levels should not be seen in isolation from each other.

The evidence in the review emphasises the importance of striving for congruence in the commissioning and delivery of services through collaboration, to counteract the potential tensions in policy direction that may impact on provision and to ensure benefits of one service are not potentially counteracted by another. For example, integration of area- and neighbourhood-based initiatives (Geddes and Root 2000) should be part of striving for congruence in service development.

The review evidence conveys the importance of working with parents to proactively address the factors that cause poverty and the solutions that can lift and keep families with children out of poverty. The scope of whole-area strategies needs to embrace, therefore, the spectrum of organisations and services that play an evidenced role in delivering support to children, young people and parents.

Services may also be improved by attending to both place-based and people-focused interventions within any strategy. This recognises the importance, but not the exclusivity, of spatial issues associated with poverty distribution in communities.

In addition, service improvement may be achieved by closer and more sustained relations with local employers and private sector services including banks so that they can understand and respond more proactively to local market conditions.

The evidence also indicates implications for central government in its support of whole-area work on child poverty eradication. These include the need for targets that are not restrictive and frameworks that allow for local flexibility (Warwick Business School 2006); and time and resources to take up the opportunities presented by the Children Act 2004 (England and Wales, Statutes 2004) supported by longer-term funding cycles (Warwick Business School 2006).

Continued and meaningful efforts to engage and facilitate the participation of all sections of the community, including low-income families, in service design and review may also contribute to service improvement.

7.5 In conclusion

This review has highlighted a number of key messages about 'what works' that could inform whole-area child poverty strategy development and implementation. The review has also identified gaps in the evidence and areas on which the full review may focus more attention in order to address the need for a greater level of granularity about evidence-informed implementation and service development.

The full review will include examples of validated local practice requested from and submitted by the sector, as well as views from a range of stakeholders on what is important in a whole-area child poverty strategy.

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Appendix 1: The evidence base

Of 1,203 items screened for inclusion, approximately 750 were selected for coding and of these, 459 were fully coded (see Appendix 4 for the coding framework). The reduction in numbers was due to decisions made about relevance and sufficiency at the coding stage. Approximately 40 items² were coded as definite key items, with a further 116 as possible key items. The limits of the abstract information meant that it was often not possible to categorise an item as a definite key item.

The sources of data that elicited the highest number of items deemed to be relevant to the study were the database Social Policy and Practice followed by Theme Advisory Group recommendations (see Appendix 2 for more details of the databases and sources searched and Appendix 3 for a summary of relevant items found).

The main characteristics of the 32 papers reviewed

For this report the team scan read approximately 40 definite key items and 10 possible key items. It is important to state that the availability of full texts played a strong part in the choice of items for this review. From reading the full texts of these 50, the team chose to include 32 of the documents in the review (some papers were not as relevant as expected). Final decisions about choice of items to be included for review were made jointly between at least two members of the review team. For each item a summary template was completed (see Appendix 5). Main features of the 32 items selected for the review were as follows:

- **Type of literature** – 21 items were research papers (16 of which were empirical pieces of work, including research employing surveys, case studies and mixed methods designs, and five of which were reviews); five were conceptual pieces; three were good practice guides or practice descriptions; two were toolkits and one was a policy document.
- **Country of origin** – The majority were from England (15 items) or the UK as a whole (eight items). The remainder were from Scotland (two), the European Union (two) and Ireland (one). The minority from non-European countries included two from Australia and one from the USA.
- **Question relevance** – The majority of the items related to review questions 1 and 2. Twenty-eight items were relevant to review question 1 and 21 to review question 2. Many of the items related to both of these review questions. There was less evidence available for review question 3 – only nine items provided evidence about strategies for monitoring the development and implementation of a whole-area child poverty strategy.

² Note – ongoing activity related to item coding etc means that figures do not remain constant.

- **Cross-cutting issues** – Thirteen of the key items that were included addressed one or more of the cross-cutting issues identified for this review. These included equality and diversity (eight items), change management (eight items), workforce development (four items) and leadership (four items).

The evidence suggests the need to focus on the child within the context of the whole family (Edwards *et al* 2006; Warwick Business School 2006; HM Treasury and DCSF 2007). Kemp *et al* (2002 p 39) convey this in a quote by one of their respondents: ‘services to children – such as after school clubs – also benefit parents, while services provided to parents – such as literacy programmes – benefit their children’; and another: we ‘need to think of families as a unit: children’s needs cannot be met unless the needs of parents are also addressed’.

Appendix 2: Search results and search strategy

This appendix contains details of the search results and search strategy. The first stage in the process was for the Theme Lead to set the key review questions and search parameters and agree them with the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) team. The list of databases and sources to be searched was also agreed with the Theme Lead. The keywords comprised a poverty set; a set of terms relating to local authorities to cover their relatively new ways of working; and a strategy-related set. The keywords were adhered to as far as possible for all bibliographic databases, with closest alternatives selected where necessary.

A list of websites considered relevant to the search was compiled by the NFER team and supplemented by key organisations identified in the National Children's Bureau's organisations database, the British Education Internet Free Collection and by others identified in the course of the bibliographic database searches. Members of the Theme Advisory Group were invited to suggest relevant documents, networks and websites.

The next stage in the process was to carry out searching across the specified databases. The database and web searches were conducted by information specialists. Owing to the spread of database holdings across consortium member institutions, the database searching tasks were divided between NFER, the Social Care Institute for Excellence and the National Children's Bureau, whose information specialists worked in close consultation to ensure consistency. Initial screening was done at this stage to ensure that the results conformed to the search parameters. Searches were limited to items published in the English language between 1999 and 2009. The records selected from the searches were then loaded into the EPPI-Reviewer database and duplicates were removed. The review team members used information from the abstract and/or the full document to assess the relevance of each piece of literature in addressing the key questions for the review. They also noted the characteristics of the text, such as the type of literature, country of origin and relevance to the review question. A 20 per cent sample was selected at random and checked for accuracy by another member of staff.

The numbers of items found by the initial search, and subsequently selected, can be found in Table 1. The three columns represent:

- items found in the initial searches
- items selected for further consideration (that is, those complying with the search parameters after the removal of duplicates)
- items considered relevant to the study by a researcher who had read the abstract and/or accessed the full document.

Table 1. Overview of searches

Source	Items found by database searches	Items selected for further consideration	Items considered relevant to the study
Databases			
Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA)	201	75	36
Australian Education Index (AEI)	281	30	6
British Education Index (BEI)	302	74	49
ChildData	1,805	290	70
Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL Plus)	18	18	2
ERIC	659	94	29
Medline	4	4	1
PsycINFO	372	33	13
Internet databases/portals			
British Education Internet Free Collection	324	11	0
Social Care Online	1,014	89	5
Social Policy and Practice	1,384	354	161
Theme Advisory Group recommendations (including texts and organisations)	146	146	122

Search strategy

This section provides information on the keywords and search strategy for each database and web source searched as part of the review.

All searches were limited to publication years 1999 to 2009, in English language only.

A brief description of each of the databases searched, together with the keywords used in the searches, is outlined below. The search strategy for each database reflects the differences in database structure and vocabulary.

The following conventions have been used: '(ft)' denotes that free-text search terms were used, '\$' denotes a truncation of terms, '?' is used as a wildcard to accommodate variant spellings, and '(+NT)' denotes that narrower subject terms have been included (where available).

Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA)

(searched via CSA Illumina 13/02/09)

ASSIA is an index of articles from over 500 international English language social science journals.

Poverty set

- #1 poor families
- #2 poverty
- #3 poor children
- #4 low income families
- #5 disadvantaged young people
- #6 child welfare
- #7 homeless children
- #8 homeless young people
- #9 disadvantaged children
- #10 deprivation
- #11 welfare benefits
- #12 NEET (ft)
- #13 not in education employment or training (ft)
- #14 tax credit\$ (ft)
- #15 take-up and benefit\$ (ft)
- #16 free school meals
- #17 family support
- #18 #1 or #2 or #3 or #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9 or #10 or #11 or #12 or #13 or #14 or #15 or #16 or #17

Local authority/whole-area set

- #19 interagency collaboration
- #20 integrative approach
- #21 integrated services
- #22 local education authorities
- #23 local government
- #24 local authorities
- #25 government
- #26 service delivery
- #27 preventive programmes
- #28 early intervention programmes
- #29 partnerships
- #30 children\$ service\$ (ft)
- #31 children\$ trust\$ (ft)
- #32 integrated work\$ (ft)
- #33 integrated activit\$ (ft)
- #34 multiagency or multi-agency (ft)
- #35 whole service (ft)
- #36 extended school\$ (ft)
- #37 child-centred (ft)
- #38 duty and cooperat\$ (ft)
- #39 interventions
- #40 #19 or #20 or #21 or #22 or #23 or #24 or #25 or #26 or #27 or #28 or #29 or #30
or #31 or #32 or #33 or #34 or #35 or #36 or #37 or #38 or #39

Initiatives set

- #41 Children's Fund (ft)
- #42 early excellence centre\$ (ft)
- #43 Education Maintenance Allowance\$ (ft)
- #44 Excellence in Cities (ft)
- #45 Local Network Fund\$ (ft)
- #46 Narrowing the Gap (ft)
- #47 Sure Start (ft)
- #48 children's centre\$ (ft)
- #49 Youth Inclusion Programme\$ (ft)
- #50 Step Up to Science (ft)
- #51 Mentoring Plus (ft)
- #52 Neighbourhood Support Fund\$ (ft)
- #53 school breakfast club\$ (ft)
- #54 Pupil Learning Credit\$ (ft)
- #55 National Childcare Strategy (ft)
- #56 New Deal (ft)
- #57 Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative (ft)
- #58 #41 or #42 or #43 or #44 or #45 or #46 or #47 or #48 or #49 or #50 or #51 or #52
or #53 or #54 or #55 or #56 or #57
- #59 #40 or #58
- #60 #18 and #59

Change management search

- #61 organisational change
- #62 change and management (ft)
- #63 change and strat\$ (ft)
- #64 #61 or #62 or #63
- #65 local government
- #66 local authorities
- #67 local education authorities
- #68 government
- #69 #65 or #66 or #67 or #68
- #70 #64 and #69

Author search

- #1 Barnard-Helen

Australian Education Index (AEI)

(searched via Dialog 09/02/09)

AEI is Australia's largest source of education information covering reports, books, journal articles, online resources, conference papers and book chapters.

Poverty set

- #1 economically disadvantaged
- #2 disadvantaged environment
- #3 low income groups
- #4 child welfare
- #5 disadvantaged
- #6 children at risk
- #7 socioeconomic status
- #8 homeless people
- #9 high risk persons
- #10 welfare recipients
- #11 free school meal\$ (ft)
- #12 poverty (ft)
- #13 deprivation (ft)
- #14 social exclusion (ft)
- #15 famil\$ income (ft)
- #16 poor children (ft)
- #17 famil\$ support (ft)
- #18 parent\$ support (ft)
- #19 #1 or #2 or #3 or #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9 or #10 or #11 or #12 or #13 or #14 or #15 or #16 or #17 or #18

Local authority/whole-area set

- #20 agency cooperation
- #21 intervention
- #22 prevention
- #23 local government
- #24 local education authorities
- #25 state government
- #26 delivery systems
- #27 children's service\$ (ft)
- #28 children\$ trust\$ (ft)
- #29 child advocacy (ft)
- #30 child-centred (ft)
- #31 extended school\$ (ft)
- #32 integrated service\$ (ft)
- #33 integrated work\$ (ft)
- #34 integrated activities (ft)
- #35 inter-agency or interagency (ft)
- #36 multi agency or multiagency (ft)
- #37 partnership\$ work\$ (ft)
- #38 local authorit\$ (ft)
- #39 workforce reform\$ (ft)
- #40 service delivery (ft)
- #41 service provider\$ (ft)
- #42 #20 or #21 or #22 or #23 or #24 or #25 or #26 or #27 or #28 or #29 or #30 or #31
or #32 or #33 or #34 or #35 or #36 or #37 or #38 or #39 or #40 or #41

Initiatives set

- #43 Children's Fund (ft)
- #44 early excellence centre\$ (ft)
- #45 Education Maintenance Allowance\$ (ft)
- #46 Excellence in Cities (ft)
- #47 Local Network Fund (ft)
- #48 Narrowing the Gap (ft)
- #49 National Childcare Strategy (ft)
- #50 Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative (ft)
- #51 New Deal (ft)
- #52 Neighbourhood Support Fund (ft)
- #53 Mentoring Plus (ft)
- #54 Pupil Learning Credit\$ (ft)
- #55 school breakfast club\$ (ft)
- #56 Step Up to Science (ft)
- #57 Sure Start (ft)
- #58 children\$ centre\$ (ft)
- #59 Youth Inclusion Programme\$ (ft)
- #60 #43 or #44 or #45 or #46 or #47 or #48 or #49 or #50 or #51 or #52 or #53 or #54
or #55 or #56 or #57 or #58 or #59

- #61 #42 or #60
- #62 #19 and #61

Change management search

- #63 change strategies
- #64 organisational change
- #65 change management (ft)
- #66 #63 or #64 or #65
- #67 local government
- #68 local education authorities
- #69 local government employees
- #70 state government (ft)
- #71 local authority (ft)
- #72 #67 or #68 or #69 or #70 or #71
- #73 #66 and #72

British Education Index (BEI)

(searched via Dialog 27/10/08)

BEI provides information on research, policy and practice in education and training in the UK. Sources include over 300 journals, mostly published in the UK, plus other material including reports, series and conference papers.

Poverty set

- #1 economically disadvantaged
- #2 disadvantaged environment
- #3 low income groups
- #4 child welfare
- #5 disadvantaged
- #6 children at risk
- #7 socioeconomic status
- #8 homeless people
- #9 high risk persons
- #10 welfare recipients
- #11 free school meal (ft)
- #12 poverty (ft)
- #13 deprivation (ft)
- #14 social exclusion (ft)
- #15 family income (ft)
- #16 poor children (ft)
- #17 family support (ft)
- #18 parent support (ft)
- #19 NEET (ft)
- #20 not in education employment or training (ft)
- #21 #1 or #2 or #3 or #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9 or #10 or #11 or #12 or #13 or #14 or #15 or #16 or #17 or #18 or #19 or #20

Local authority/whole-area set

- #22 agency cooperation
- #23 intervention
- #24 prevention
- #25 local government
- #26 local education authorities
- #27 delivery systems
- #28 children's service\$ (ft)
- #29 children\$ trust\$ (ft)
- #30 child advocacy (ft)
- #31 child-centred (ft)
- #32 extended school\$ (ft)
- #33 integrated service\$ (ft)
- #34 integrated work\$ (ft)
- #35 integrated activities (ft)
- #36 inter-agency or interagency (ft)
- #37 multi-agency or multiagency (ft)
- #38 partnership\$ work\$ (ft)
- #39 local authorit\$ (ft)
- #40 workforce reform\$ (ft)
- #41 workforce near remodelling (ft)
- #42 service delivery (ft)
- #43 service provider\$ (ft)
- #44 #22 or #23 or #24 or #25 or #26 or #27 or #28 or #29 or #30 or #31 or #32 or #33
or #34 or #35 or #36 or #37 or #38 or #39 or #40 or #41 or #42 or #43

Initiatives set

- #45 Children's Fund (ft)
- #46 early excellence centre\$ (ft)
- #47 Education Maintenance Allowance\$ (ft)
- #48 Excellence in Cities (ft)
- #49 Local Network Fund (ft)
- #50 Narrowing the Gap (ft)
- #51 National Childcare Strategy (ft)
- #52 Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative (ft)
- #53 New Deal (ft)
- #54 Neighbourhood Support Fund (ft)
- #55 Mentoring Plus (ft)
- #56 Pupil Learning Credit\$ (ft)
- #57 school breakfast club\$ (ft)
- #58 Step Up to Science (ft)
- #59 Sure Start (ft)
- #60 children\$ centre\$ (ft)
- #61 Youth Inclusion Programme\$ (ft)
- #62 #45 or #46 or #47 or #48 or #49 or #50 or #51 or #52 or #53 or #54 or #55 or #56
or #57 or #58 or #59 or #60 or #61
- #63 #44 or #62
- #64 #21 and #63

Change management search

- #65 change strategies
- #66 organisational change
- #67 change management (ft)
- #68 #65 or #66 or #67
- #69 local government
- #70 local education authorities
- #71 local government employees
- #72 local authority (ft)
- #73 #69 or #70 or #71 or #72
- #74 #68 and #73

Author search

- #1 Barnard-Helen

British Education Index Free Collection (formerly the British Education Internet Resources Catalogue)

(searched via the WWW 16/02/09)

The free collection search interface of the British Education Index (BEI) includes access to a range of freely available internet resources as well as records for the most recently indexed journal articles not yet included in the full BEI subscription database. NB. These searches were executed after the organisation website searches had been carried out and therefore duplicate items were ignored as much as possible. This accounts for the relatively low selection rate.

Initiatives set (129 items found, of which one item was selected initially)

- #1 Children's Fund (ft)
- #2 early excellence centres (ft)
- #3 Education Maintenance Allowance (ft)
- #4 Education Action Zones (ft)
- #5 Excellence in Cities (ft)
- #6 Local Network Fund (ft)
- #7 Narrowing the Gap (ft)
- #8 National Childcare Strategy (ft)
- #9 Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative (ft)
- #10 New Deal (ft)
- #11 Neighbourhood Support Fund (ft)
- #12 Mentoring Plus (ft)
- #13 Pupil Learning Credits (ft)
- #14 breakfast clubs (ft)
- #15 Step up to Science (ft)
- #16 Sure Start (ft)
- #17 children's centres (ft)
- #18 Youth Inclusion Programmes (ft)

#19 #1 or #2 or #3 or #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9 or #10 or #11 or #12 or #13 or #14 or #15 or #16 or #17 or #18

Poverty (*185 items found, of which seven items were selected initially*)

#20 poverty
 #21 social mobility
 #22 socioeconomic status
 #23 welfare recipients
 #24 low income groups
 #25 homeless people
 #26 high risk persons
 #27 family income
 #28 economically disadvantaged
 #29 disadvantaged
 #30 disadvantaged environment
 #31 children at risk
 #32 child welfare
 #33 free school meals (ft)
 #34 deprivation (ft)
 #35 social inclusion (ft)
 #36 social exclusion (ft)
 #37 poor children (ft)
 #38 family support (ft)
 #39 parent support (ft)
 #40 NEET (ft)
 #41 not in education employment training (ft)
 #42 tax credits (ft)
 #43 take-up and benefits (ft)
 #44 #20 or #21 or #22 or #23 or #24 or #25 or #26 or #27 or #28 or #29 or #30 or #31 or #32 or #33 or #34 or #35 or #36 or #37 or #38 or #39 or #40 or #41 or #42 or #43

Local authority/whole-area set

#45 preventative practice (ft)
 #46 local authorities (ft)
 #47 agency cooperation
 #48 child advocacy
 #49 integrated activities
 #50 intervention
 #51 local education authorities
 #52 local government
 #53 prevention
 #54 central government (ft)
 #55 frontline (ft)
 #56 children's trusts (ft)
 #57 children's services (ft)
 #58 duty of cooperation (ft)

- #59 duty to cooperate (ft)
- #60 extended schools (ft)
- #61 integrated working (ft)
- #62 interagency (ft)
- #63 inter agency (ft)
- #64 multiagency (ft)
- #65 multi agency (ft)
- #66 partnerships (ft)
- #67 workforce reform (ft)
- #68 workforce remodelling (ft)
- #69 workforce modernisation (ft)
- #70 service delivery (ft)
- #71 service providers (ft)
- #72 whole-area
- #73 whole-area
- #74 whole service
- #75 #45 or #46 or #47 or #48 or #49 or #50 or #51 or #52 or #53 or #54 or #55 or #56
or #57 or #58 or #59 or #60 or #61 or #62 or #63 or #64 or #65 or #66 or #67 or
#68 or #69 or #70 or #71 or #72 or #73 or #74
- #76 #44 and #75

Change management search (*10 hits, of which three were selected initially*)

- #77 change management (ft)
- #78 change strategies or organisational change (ft)
- #79 #77 or #78
- #80 local education authorities
- #81 local government employees
- #82 local government
- #83 children's services (ft)
- #84 central government (ft)
- #85 local authority (ft)
- #86 local authorities (ft)
- #87 #80 or #81 or #82 or #83 or #84 or #85 or #86
- #88 #79 and #87

ChildData

(searched via National Children's Bureau Inmagic interface 24/02/09)

ChildData is the NCB database, containing details of around 35,000 books, reports and journal articles about children and young people.

Poverty set

- #1 economically disadvantaged (ft)
- #2 disadvantaged-environment (ft)
- #3 low income groups (ft)
- #4 child welfare (ft)
- #5 disadvantage\$ (ft)
- #6 homeless people (ft)
- #7 homelessness (ft)
- #8 welfare recipients (ft)
- #9 free school meals (ft)
- #10 poverty (ft)
- #11 social exclusion (ft)
- #12 family income (ft)
- #13 poor children (ft)
- #14 parent support (ft)
- #15 NEET (ft)
- #16 not in education employment or training (ft)
- #17 tax credits (ft)
- #18 take-up and benefits (ft)
- #19 social class (ft)
- #20 #1 or #2 or #3 or #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9 or #10 or #11 or #12 or #13 or #14 or #15 or #16 or #17 or #18 or #19

Local authority/whole-area set

- #21 agency cooperation (ft)
- #22 local government (ft)
- #23 local education authorities (ft)
- #24 education authorities (ft)
- #25 local government (ft)
- #26 central government (ft)
- #27 government (ft)
- #28 delivery systems (ft)
- #29 frontline delivery (ft)
- #30 children's services (ft)
- #31 children's trusts (ft)
- #32 child advocacy (ft)
- #33 child-centred (ft)
- #34 duty of cooperation (ft)
- #35 duty to cooperate (ft)

- #36 extended schools (ft)
- #37 integrated service (ft)
- #38 integrated working (ft)
- #39 integrated activities (ft)
- #40 inter agency (ft)
- #41 interagency (ft)
- #42 multi agency (ft)
- #43 multiagency (ft)
- #44 partnership\$ (ft)
- #45 workforce (ft)
- #46 workforce reform (ft)
- #47 workforce remodelling (ft)
- #48 workforce modernisation (ft)
- #49 service delivery (ft)
- #50 service providers (ft)
- #51 whole-area strategies (ft)
- #52 whole service (ft)
- #53 #21 or #22 or #23 or #24 or #25 or #26 or #27 or #28 or #29 or #30 or #31 or #32 or #33 or #34 or #35 or #36 or #37 or #38 or #39 or #40 or #41 or #42 or #43 or #44 or #45 or #46 or #47 or #48 or #49 or #50 or #51 or #52
- #54 #20 and #53

Change management set

- #55 change strategies (ft)
- #56 organisational change (ft)
- #57 change management (ft)
- #58 change (ft)
- #59 #55 or #56 or #57 or #58

Services set

- #60 local government (ft)
- #61 local education authorities (ft)
- #62 local government employees (ft)
- #63 local authorities (ft)
- #64 education authorities (ft)
- #65 children's services (ft)
- #66 central government (ft)
- #67 #60 or #61 or #62 or #63 or #64 or #65 or #66
- #68 #59 and #67
- #69 #54 or #68

Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL Plus)

(searched via EBSCO Host 18/02/09)

CINAHL Plus provides indexing for 3,802 journals from the fields of nursing and allied health. Due to the focus of the database coverage, a broad search was carried out for material pertaining to children and poverty.

- #1 poverty
- #2 poverty areas
- #3 #1 or #2
- #4 child
- #5 #3 and #4

Education Resources Information Center (ERIC)

(searched via Dialog 18/02/09)

ERIC is sponsored by the United States Department of Education and is the largest education database in the world. Coverage includes research documents, journal articles, technical reports, programme descriptions and evaluations and curricula material.

Poverty set

- #1 poverty
- #2 economically disadvantaged
- #3 low income groups
- #4 welfare recipients
- #5 homeless people
- #6 poor children (ft)
- #7 child poverty (ft)
- #8 disadvantaged
- #9 #1 or #2 or #3 or #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8

Local authority/whole-area set

- #10 agency cooperation
- #11 local government
- #12 children\$ service\$ (ft)
- #13 children\$ trust\$ (ft)
- #14 extended school\$ (ft)
- #15 integrated services
- #16 integrated activities
- #17 education authorit\$ (ft)
- #18 integrated work\$ (ft)
- #19 inter-agency or interagency (ft)
- #20 multi-agency or multiagency (ft)
- #21 local authorit\$ (ft)
- #22 school districts
- #23 institutional cooperation

- #24 partnership work\$
- #25 #10 or #11 or #12 or #13 or #14 or #15 or #16 or #17 or #18 or #19 or #20 or #21 or #22 or #23 or #24
- #26 #9 and #25

Change management search

- #27 change strategies
- #28 organisational change
- #29 #27 or #28
- #30 local government
- #31 local authorit\$ (ft)
- #32 education authorit\$ (ft)
- #33 school districts
- #34 #30 or #31 or #32 or #33
- #35 #33 and #34

Medline

(searched via Ovid SP 18/02/09)

MEDLINE is the primary source of international literature on biomedicine and healthcare. Due to the focus of the database coverage, a broad search was carried out for material pertaining to children and poverty.

- #1 Poverty
- #2 poverty areas
- #3 #1 or #2
- #4 child
- #5 #3 and #4

PsycINFO

(searched via Ovid SP 10/02/09)

PsycINFO contains references to the psychological literature, including articles from over 1,300 journals in psychology and related fields, chapters and books, dissertations and technical reports.

Poverty set

- #1 welfare recipient\$ (ft)
- #2 social deprivation
- #3 disadvantaged
- #4 poverty
- #5 NEET (ft)
- #6 not in education employment or training (ft)
- #7 lower income level
- #8 family socioeconomic level
- #9 socioeconomic status
- #10 #1 or #2 or #3 or #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9

Local authority/whole-area set

- #11 workforce modernisation (ft)
- #12 workforce reform\$ (ft)
- #13 workforce remodeling (ft)
- #14 local education authority\$ (ft)
- #15 partnership\$ (ft)
- #16 cooperation
- #17 extended school\$ (ft)
- #18 children's trust\$ (ft)
- #19 frontline (ft)
- #20 children's service\$ (ft)
- #21 local government (ft)
- #22 interagency (ft)
- #23 local authority\$ (ft)
- #24 multi-agency or multiagency (ft)
- #25 integrated work\$ (ft)
- #26 integrated services
- #27 #11 or #12 or #13 or #14 or #15 or #16 or #17 or #18 or #19 or #20 or #21 or #22
or #23 or #24 or #25 or #26
- #28 #10 and #27

Initiatives set

- #29 Children's Fund
- #30 Excellence in Cities
- #31 Education Maintenance Allowance\$
- #32 Sure Start
- #33 Mentoring Plus
- #34 Early Excellence Cent\$
- #35 Neighbourhood Support Fund
- #36 National Childcare Strategy
- #37 breakfast club\$
- #38 Narrowing the Gap
- #39 #29 or #30 or #31 or #32 or #33 or #34 or #35 or #36 or #37 or #38
- #40 #28 and #39

Social Care Online

(searched via WWW 17/02/09 and 18/02/09)

Social Care Online is the Social Care Institute for Excellence's database covering an extensive range of information and research on all aspects of social care. Content is drawn from a range of sources, including journal articles, websites, research reviews, legislation and government documents and service user knowledge.

Initiatives set (*485 items found, of which 38 were initially selected*)

- #1 Childrens Fund (ft)
- #2 Early Excellence Centres (ft)
- #3 Education Maintenance Allowance (ft)
- #4 Excellence in Cities (ft)
- #5 Education Action Zones (ft)
- #6 Local Network Fund (ft)
- #7 Narrowing the Gap (ft)
- #8 National Childcare Strategy (ft)
- #9 Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative (ft)
- #10 New Deal (ft)
- #11 Neighbourhood Support Fund (ft)
- #12 Mentoring Plus (ft)
- #13 Pupil Learning Credits (ft)
- #14 breakfast clubs (ft)
- #15 Step Up to Science (ft)
- #16 Sure Start (ft)
- #17 children's centres (ft)
- #18 Youth Inclusion Programme
- #19 #1 or #2 or #3 or #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9 or #10 or #11 or #12 or #13 or #14 or #15 or #16 or #17 or #18

Poverty (*461 items found, of which 33 items were initially selected*)

- #20 social mobility (ft)
- #21 low incomes
- #22 child welfare (ft)
- #23 disadvantaged (ft)
- #24 children in need
- #25 socioeconomic (ft)
- #26 homeless people
- #27 high risk (ft)
- #28 child poverty (ft)
- #29 free school meals (ft)
- #30 poverty
- #31 deprivation (ft)
- #32 social exclusion
- #33 family income (ft)
- #34 poor children (ft)
- #35 family support
- #36 parent support (ft)
- #37 tax credits
- #38 welfare recipients (ft)
- #39 #20 or #21 or #22 or #23 or #24 or #25 or #26 or #27 or #28 or #29 or #30 or #31 or #32 or #33 or #34 or #35 or #36 or #37 or #38

Local authority/whole-area set

- #40 agency cooperation (ft)
- #41 intervention
- #42 preventative practice
- #43 collaboration
- #44 interagency cooperation
- #45 multidisciplinary services
- #46 local government
- #47 local authorities (ft)
- #48 local education auth\$ (ft)
- #49 central government
- #50 delivery (ft)
- #51 frontline (ft)
- #52 children's services
- #53 children's trusts
- #54 child centred
- #55 child advocacy (ft)
- #56 duty to cooperate (ft)
- #57 duty of cooperation (ft)
- #58 extended schools (ft)
- #59 integrated services (ft)
- #60 integrated (ft)
- #61 multiagency (ft)
- #62 partnership (ft)
- #63 #40 or #41 or #42 or #43 or #44 or #45 or #46 or #47 or #48 or #49 or #50 or #51
or #52 or #53 or #54 or #55 or #56 or #57 or #58 or #59 or #60 or #61 or #62
- #64 39 and #63

Change management set (68 hits, of which 18 were initially selected)

- #65 change strategies (ft)
- #66 organisational change (ft)
- #67 change management
- #68 #65 or #66 or #67
- #69 local government
- #70 local education authorities (ft)
- #71 local government employees (ft)
- #72 local authorities
- #73 children's services
- #74 central government
- #75 #69 or #70 or #71 or #72 or #73 or #74
- #76 #68 and #75

Social Policy and Practice

(searched via Silverplatter 16/02/09)

Social Policy and Practice is a bibliographic database with abstracts covering evidence-based social policy, public health, social services, and mental and community health. Content is from the UK, with some material from the USA and Europe.

Poverty set

- #1 children in need
- #2 poverty
- #3 lower income
- #4 poor children (ft)
- #5 take-up and benefit\$ (ft)
- #6 NEET (ft)
- #7 not in education employment or training (ft)
- #8 #1 or #2 or #3 or #4 or #5 or #6 or #7

Local authority/whole-area set

- #9 local education authorities or local education authority
- #10 local authorities
- #11 local government
- #12 frontline (ft)
- #13 integrated work\$ (ft)
- #14 whole system view
- #15 whole systems approach
- #16 whole-area
- #17 partnership\$
- #18 children's trust
- #19 integrated approach
- #20 joint working
- #21 whole service (ft)
- #22 multiagency
- #23 children's services
- #24 interagency approach
- #25 interagency cooperation
- #26 interagency
- #27 #9 or #10 or #11 or #12 or #13 or #14 or #15 or #16 or #17 or #18 or #19 or #20 or #21 or #22 or #23 or #24 or #25 or #26
- #28 #8 and #27

Change management search

- #29 change management
- #30 organisational change
- #31 #29 or #30
- #32 local education authorities or local education authority
- #33 local authorities

- #34 local government
- #35 #32 or #33 or #34
- #36 #31 and #35

Author search

- #1 Smith-Noel

Organisations

A list of key organisations was approved by the Theme Advisory Group. The list, which primarily included the group's specific recommendations, was supplemented by some additional organisations, which had been identified as potentially useful by the NFER librarian during pre-formal searches.

Organisation	URL	Records initially selected by NFER library
Action for Children	www.actionforchildren.org.uk/	3
ATD Fourth World	www.atd-uk.org/	2
Barnardo's	www.barnardos.org.uk/	5
Bevan Foundation	www.bevanfoundation.org/	2
C4EO	www.c4eo.org.uk/	16
Cabinet Office Social Exclusion Taskforce	www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force.aspx	8
Cabinet Office Strategy Unit (Social Mobility Project)	www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy.aspx	1
Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion	http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/case/	3
Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion (CESI)	www.cesi.org.uk/	3
Centre for Market and Public Organisation (Bristol University)	www.bristol.ac.uk/cmppo/	2
Centre for Research in Social Policy (Loughborough University)	www.crsp.ac.uk/	6
Child Poverty Action Group	www.cpag.org.uk/	1
Child Poverty Solutions – Wales	www.childpovertysolutions.org.uk	3
Child Poverty Toolkit	www.childpovertytoolkit.org.uk	1
Children in Wales (including End Child Poverty Cymru)	www.childreninwales.org.uk/index.html	10
Children's Legal Centre	www.childrenslegalcentre.com/	3
Children's Workforce Development Council	www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/	1
Chronic Poverty	www.chronicpoverty.org/	1
Citizens Advice	www.citizensadvice.org.uk/	2
Daycare Trust	www.daycaretrust.org.uk/	1
Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)	www.dcsf.gov.uk/index.htm	11
Department for International	www.dfid.gov.uk/	0

Development (DFID)		
Department for Work and Pensions' Child Poverty website	www.dwp.gov.uk/childpoverty	4
End Child Poverty	www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/	2
European Cities Against Child Poverty	http://againstchildpoverty.com/	1
Every Child Matters (Child Poverty)	www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/parents/childpoverty/	3
Fabian Society	www.fabians.org.uk/	1
Family Action	www.family-action.org.uk/	1
Government Social Research Unit	www.gsr.gov.uk/	1
Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government (IDeA)	www.idea.gov.uk	0
Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex	www.iser.essex.ac.uk	0
Institute for Public Policy Research	www.ippr.org.uk/	1
Joseph Rowntree Foundation	www.jrf.org.uk/	23
Local Authorities and Social Exclusion Network	www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wbs/research/lgc/research/lase_network/	0
Local Government Association	www.lga.gov.uk	1
Local Government Information Unit	www.lgiu.gov.uk	0
London Child Poverty Commission	http://213.86.122.139/	14
Low Pay Commission	www.lowpay.gov.uk/	2
Make Poverty History	www.makepovertyhistory.org/	0
National Centre for Social Research (NatCen)	www.natcen.ac.uk/	1
National Children's Bureau	www.ncb.org.uk/	0
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit	www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/	1
Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network	www.niapn.org/	0
Northern Ireland Executive	www.northernireland.gov.uk/	1
NSPCC	www.nspcc.org.uk/	1
One Parent Families (Gingerbread)	www.oneparentfamilies.org.uk/	1
Research in Practice	www.rip.org.uk/	0
Save the Children	www.savethechildren.org.uk/	2

Scottish Government	www.scotland.gov.uk	5
Scottish Poverty Information Unit	www.povertyinformation.org/	2
Shelter	www.shelter.org.uk/	1
Social Care Institute for Excellence	www.scie.org.uk/	1
Social Policy Research Unit (York)	www.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/	8
The Poverty Site	www.poverty.org.uk	3
Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research (Bristol University)	www.bris.ac.uk/poverty/	2
UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre	www.unicef-irc.org	3
Welsh Assembly Government	http://wales.gov.uk/	2

Appendix 3: Scoping results

Summary of characteristics of coded items

The sources of data that elicited the highest number of items deemed to be relevant to the study were the database Social Policy and Practice followed by Theme Advisory Group recommendations (see Appendix 2 for more details on the databases and sources searched).

Scoping stage

Table 2 shows that the majority of the 459 coded items were relevant to review questions 1 (154) and 2 (166). Far fewer items related to review question 3.

Table 2. Relevance to the review questions

Relevance to review question	Number of items
Relevant to question 1	154
Relevant to question 2	166
Relevant to question 3	51
General relevance only	154
Inadequate information, but could be relevant	23

Note – items may be categorised as relevant to more than one question.

The majority of the relevant sources were based on empirical research (128 items). They also included opinion/discussion pieces (78), reviews/ synthesis (73) and policy (50). As Table 3 shows, there were also items such as practice descriptions (43) and guides (23). 45 items had inadequate information with regard to literature type.

Table 3. Type of literature

Type of literature	Number of items
Research/data	128
Opinion/discussion piece	78
Review/synthesis	73
Policy	50
Inadequate information	45
Practice description	43
Practice guide	23
Theory	13
Other	9
Total	462

Note – a small number of items were coded as relevant to more than one category.

Items classified as research included reviews/synthesis (75 – including the 73 coded as review/synthesis for type of literature); 27 were qualitative and 23 quantitative. The remainder employed a mixed methods approach (20), assessment (1) or other research design (3). For many items there was inadequate information.

The majority of the items were UK focused (196) or focused on England specifically (146), although there were 24 that were focused on other European countries. The remaining were non-European in origin. In total, 32 sources contained inadequate information to identify the country involved.

The team found that the majority of the sources focused on national (153) or local or regional areas (114), and found that these items, as might be expected, provided the best evidence for the review. Fewer covered specific organisations or projects (54) or practice intervention (7).

The sources covered the following cross-cutting issues: equality and diversity (128), change management (56), workforce development (44) and leadership (22). Cross-cutting issues were not addressed by 139 of the items and 125 items did not contain adequate information for the team to make an informed decision about their relevance.

Appendix 4: Coding framework

Section A: section 1

<p>A.1 Is abstract present? <i>(single code to be allocated)</i></p>	<p>A.1.1 Yes and adequate <i>(adequate enough to make decisions about its relevance)</i></p> <p>A.1.2 Yes not adequate <i>(also use this if abstract is not adequate but a web-link is provided and add note 'coded using full report')</i></p> <p>A.1.3 No</p>
<p>A.2 Review question relevance <i>(multiple codes permitted)</i></p> <p><i>Note: If item is clearly not relevant, you need to return to screening and remove</i></p>	<p>A.2.1 Relevant 1 <i>What are the barriers/facilitators to developing and implementing a whole-area child poverty strategy?</i></p> <p>A.2.2 Relevant 2 <i>How might the development and implementation of a whole-area child poverty strategy be best monitored and assessed (e.g. via models, tools, information management and indicators)?</i></p> <p>A.2.3 Relevant 3 <i>What key elements ought to be included in a whole-area child poverty strategy in order for it to be effective?</i></p> <p>A.2.4 General relevance (context only) <i>Although not specifically relevant to answering any of the scoping review questions (i.e. strategies for preventing and remediating poverty), this item does contain information that would be relevant to a contextual/background section in the main review. For example, poverty rates, characteristics of children at risk of living in poverty and the impact of poverty (e.g. on crime, health, education and relationships)</i></p> <p>A.2.5 Inadequate information, but could be relevant <i>Code if you think it could be relevant</i></p>
<p>A.3 Type of literature <i>(single)</i></p>	<p>A.3.1 Research/data <i>Including statistical reports</i></p> <p>A.3.2 Literature review</p> <p>A.3.3 Policy <i>This is a statement of policy from a central or local government body</i></p> <p>A.3.4 Practice description <i>A descriptive account (not research)</i></p>

	<p>A.3.5 Practice guide <i>Practice-related guides, handbooks and toolkits (i.e. main purpose is practical guidance rather than detailing research findings)</i></p> <p>A.3.6 Opinion/discussion piece <i>This presents an opinion or makes an argument (from media source or professional journal)</i></p> <p>A.3.7 Theory <i>(i.e. scholarly articles from peer-reviewed journals)</i></p> <p>A.3.8 Other <i>(please enter details in A.4)</i></p> <p>A.3.9 Inadequate information</p>
<p>A.4 Other type of literature <i>(please enter details)</i></p>	<p>A.4.1 Please give details</p>
<p>A.5 Country/area involved <i>(multiple) Please select country. Enter area in text if applicable</i></p>	<p>A.5.1 UK</p> <p>A.5.2 England</p> <p>A.5.3 Scotland</p> <p>A.5.4 Wales</p> <p>A.5.5 Northern Ireland</p> <p>A.5.6 Europe (additional to UK)</p> <p>A.5.7 USA</p> <p>A.5.8 Canada</p> <p>A.5.9 Australia</p> <p>A.5.10 New Zealand</p> <p>A.5.11 Other (non-European) <i>Please give details in A.6</i></p> <p>A.5.12 Inadequate information</p>
<p>A.6 Other country (non-European) <i>Please give details</i></p>	<p>A.6.1 Please give details</p>
<p>A.7 Country/area details <i>(single) Further information on country/area involved, if available (e.g. North East of England; Georgia, USA)</i></p>	<p>A.7.1 No further information</p> <p>A.7.2 Country/area – further information <i>Add further information about the country/countries and area/areas involved</i></p>
<p>A.8 Research design <i>(make a judgement on best fit – could be multiple but aim for single)</i></p>	<p>A.8.1 Not research</p> <p>A.8.2 Quantitative</p> <p>A.8.3 Qualitative</p> <p>A.8.4 Mixed methods</p>

	<p>A.8.5 Experimental (e.g. RCT)</p> <p>A.8.6 Assessment</p> <p>A.8.7 Literature review</p> <p>A.8.8 Other research design <i>Please enter design details in A.9</i></p> <p>A.8.9 Inadequate information</p>
<p>A.9 Other research design <i>Please enter brief description of other design (NB. not specific methods)</i></p>	<p>A.9.1 Please enter design details</p>
<p>A.10 Research methods <i>(multiple) Main methods used</i></p>	<p>A.10.1 Not research</p> <p>A.10.2 Survey <i>(including web and telephone surveys/CATI)</i></p> <p>A.10.3 Interviews <i>(face-to-face or telephone or via web, may be pre-structured but allows some room for individual response)</i></p> <p>A.10.4 Observation</p> <p>A.10.5 Secondary analysis <i>(i.e. new analysis using data collected for a previous study)</i></p> <p>A.10.6 Literature review/scoping study <i>(as a main method, not just a few references to theory/research)</i></p> <p>A.10.7 Other method <i>Please give details in A.11</i></p> <p>A.10.8 Inadequate information</p>
<p>A.11 Other research methods <i>Enter brief description of methods if not included in list</i></p>	<p>A.11.1 Describe other method</p>
<p>A.12 Study population <i>(single)</i></p>	<p>A.12.1 Not research</p> <p>A.12.2 Please enter details <i>(only applies to research projects – e.g. number, age and key characteristics of study population. For example: ‘Study of 50 children aged five and six all eligible for free school meals’ i.e. who has been studied?)</i></p> <p>A.12.3 Inadequate information</p>
<p>A.13 Level of intervention <i>(single)</i></p>	<p>A.13.1 Group of individuals</p> <p>A.13.2 Practice intervention</p> <p>A.13.3 Organisation or project</p>

	<p>A.13.4 Local or regional area</p> <p>A.13.5 National</p> <p>A.13.6 Cross-jurisdiction</p> <p>A.13.7 Other level of intervention <i>Please give details in A.14</i></p> <p>A.13.8 Inadequate information <i>Type of disability not given</i></p>
<p>A.14 Other intervention <i>Please enter brief details of other intervention</i></p>	<p>A.14.1 Please enter details</p>
<p>A.15 Identify as key item <i>(single) Is this one of the 30 to 50 most relevant items?</i></p>	<p>A.15.1 Yes (use for definite 'yes') <i>This item answers one or more of the key review questions, is highly relevant and authoritative and should be considered for including in the scoping study as one of up to 50 key studies. Note: please order the full text</i></p> <p>A.15.2 No (use for definite 'no')</p> <p>A.15.3 Possibly (use if item fits in some of 'yes' but not all) <i>This item may be important to include as one of the 30 to 50 key items. Note: consider ordering a full copy – you will need this if you are to summarise it in the scoping study report</i></p> <p>A.15.4 Inadequate information</p>
<p>A.16 Key area <i>(single) Which aspect(s) of the theme priority does this item address in particular?</i></p>	<p>A.16.1 Key area <i>Please provide conceptual area addressed by this item (use one short sentence to describe what the item is about – info will be used to get an overview of what all items are conceptually about)</i></p> <p>A.16.2 Inadequate information</p>
<p>A.17 Cross-cutting issues <i>(multiple) – whether or not item addresses these issues</i></p>	<p>A.17.1 Equality and diversity</p> <p>A.17.2 Workforce development</p> <p>A.17.3 Change management</p> <p>A.17.4 Leadership</p> <p>A.17.5 No cross-cutting issues addressed <i>None of the cross-cutting issues identified is addressed</i></p> <p>A.17.6 Inadequate information</p>
<p>A.18 Has QA check been carried out? <i>(single)</i></p>	<p>A.18.1 Yes</p> <p>A.18.2 No</p>

<p>A.19 Extra notes</p>	<p>A.19.1 Please enter any extra notes for this item <i>For example, if you feel this item addresses an important question that is not currently posed as a review question, you can note it here</i></p>
<p>A.20 Priority of reference? <i>(single) What priority should be given to this item for consideration in the main review?</i></p>	<p>A.20.1 Yes closely answers one or more review questions</p> <p>A.20.2 Yes somewhat answers one or more review questions</p> <p>A.20.3 Yes worth considering</p> <p>A.20.4 Yes include as context</p> <p>A.20.5 No</p> <p>A.20.6 Inadequate information <i>This item has insufficient information to enable an assessment (e.g. lack of abstract)</i></p>

Appendix 5: Main review methods

This section outlines the methods used in the study. As explained in the section 'Policy context', the study began by establishing questions to be addressed and also determining the parameters for identifying material relevant to the study topic. Parameters were used to identify exclusion and inclusion criteria, for example:

- All literature had to be available in English. The geographical areas covered were the UK, Europe and English-speaking languages in the rest of the world.
- The cross-cutting issues of leadership, workforce development, change management, and equality and diversity are considered.
- The age range for the review was 0–18 years and more specifically any individual under 16 years of age or unmarried 16- to 18-year-olds in full-time education.
- Literature published from 1999 onwards was included in the searches, chosen as this was the year of Tony Blair's pivotal Beveridge lecture on social justice, given at Toynbee Hall on 18 March (Blair 1999).

The study used a broad range of sources to identify relevant material: searches of bibliographic databases (containing literature on education, social sciences, psychology and health); web searches; current research; and recommendations from the Theme Advisory Group. Full details of the search strategy including the named databases used can be found in Appendix 2.

Twenty per cent of the selected records (including items coded and those for which team members had queries – some of which resulted in removal from the selected list) were subject to quality assurance checks, carried out by a member of the team who had not been involved in the original assessment.

The review team was guided by a 'best evidence' approach to select literature of the greatest relevance and quality for the review. This entailed identifying:

- the items of greatest relevance to the review questions from those that were available
- the items that came closest to providing an ideal design to answer the review questions
- the quality of the research methods, execution and reporting.

The team reviewed all priority items that were accessible within the time period allocated, and wrote a summary for each item using a standard template (see below). The review team also assessed the quality of the evidence in each case.

Item summary template

Item title and author	
Purpose	
Project intervention/description	
Design	
Country/area	
Sample	
Research methods	
Main findings	
Relevance to review question	
QA/ethical issues	
Reviewed by	

Strengths of the review include:

- guidance from the Theme Advisory Group on the issues of greatest importance in child poverty
- comprehensive and documented searching for relevant literature
- an analysis of the quality and strength of evidence
- identification of some of the best available evidence from research (and other literature) to inform specific questions.

Limitations of the review include the following:

- A scoping stage was not undertaken prior to the main review. This means that the main review has incorporated a broad scoping search strategy to select the key items and there was a large quantity of items to review in the timescale.
- The team did not have access to all the requested items within the period allocated for reviewing items so this affected the number and choice of items available for review, and therefore access to all the best evidence.
- As a result of a specific focus on whole-area child poverty strategies, the review search terms were necessarily focused around keywords that would best elicit data on whole-area, strategic-level approaches. A result of this is, terms such as 'community/neighbourhood regeneration' were not covered, and hence, a body of related literature is not covered in this review that may be relevant.
- The review was limited to English-speaking countries and English language literature.

SEPTEMBER 2009

Child poverty

This review aims to provide a clearer understanding of the development, implementation and evaluation of whole-area child poverty strategies. It focuses on three aspects of strategy development: the barriers and facilitators, the key elements that should be included in a whole-area strategy, and methods and tools for monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of strategies.

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