



**Ensuring a
great future**

Medway Children and Young People's Plan 2019-2024

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Foreword

This is a plan for all children, young people and their families living in Medway.

In this new plan we have retained many features of our last Children and Young People's Plan. This is not because we are complacent, but because we believe it has already made, and can continue to make, a real difference in the lives of children and young people. The ambitious and aspirational approach in this new plan is building on solid foundations that have been already mapped out and are therefore critical to its success.

But just as the children whose voice heavily influenced our last Children and Young People's Plan have matured, so have our ambitions. We want to make not just step-by-step improvements, but to start to address some of the more difficult challenges that sometimes limit children's life chances – whether it be the school they go to, the community they grow up in, or the earnings of their parents. We do not accept these limits on the opportunities for children and young people in Medway.

At the same time, the national agenda around children's services has continued to evolve since our last iteration. This has brought opportunities as well as challenges, and Medway is now well placed to respond.

This plan cannot answer all of the issues which we have identified, especially in areas where we need to do more work to understand the underlying cause. This plan is intended to be a "live" document that provides an overarching framework to stimulate action, encourage debate and support continued challenge of our collective leadership. It will drive conversations across our partnerships and also with children, young people, families and front line professionals to help ensure that whatever we do genuinely makes a difference to their lives.

Ian Sutherland

Director of People – Children and Adults' Services

Cllr Andrew Mackness

Lead Member for Children's Services

Our Plan

This plan provides a high-level framework for helping children and young people in Medway. The plan is based on three key themes and will be used to inform how we deliver and commission services for children. Any references to “child” or “children” should be taken to mean any young person aged 0-19 (i.e. the 19th birthday), care leavers up to the age of 25 (i.e. the 25th birthday) and young people up to the age of 25 who have special educational needs and disabilities for whom the local authority continues to provide support.

The plan has been developed by members of the Medway Children and Young People Delivery Board, and will be championed by the wider Medway Children and Young People Transformation Board ("The Board"); a partnership that represents all the agencies working with children and young people across the Medway Towns, of which the Council is a key part.

The Board unites all partners providing services for children and young people at both a strategic and local level. References to “we” in this document are intended to refer to the Board collectively, working in close partnership with children and their families.

The plan is in two broad sections:

- What’s Driving Us – Background information and a broad assessment against our last plan
- Where We Want to Be – Our vision, outcomes, priorities and overall approach.

What's Driving Us



Context

This children and young people's plan draws together several important strategic initiatives helping to better the lives of children and young people in Medway.

The first is the Medway Council Plan (2016/17 to 2020/21), which has three priorities that each contribute to Medway's 'child-focused future' in different ways:

- **Supporting Medway's People to realise their potential:** all children achieving their potential in school, developing resilient families and health active communities.
- **Making Medway a place to be proud of:** a clean green environment
- **Maximising regeneration and economic growth:** residents with jobs and skills, getting around Medway and preventing homelessness.

The Plan also draws together targeted strategies across Medway Council Children's Services and our external partners into a single plan. Including the SEND and Inclusion Strategy, LAC Strategy, Medway Safeguarding Children's Board Strategic Plan, Youth Justice Partnership Plan, Skills and Employability Plan and Education Strategy.

Clients

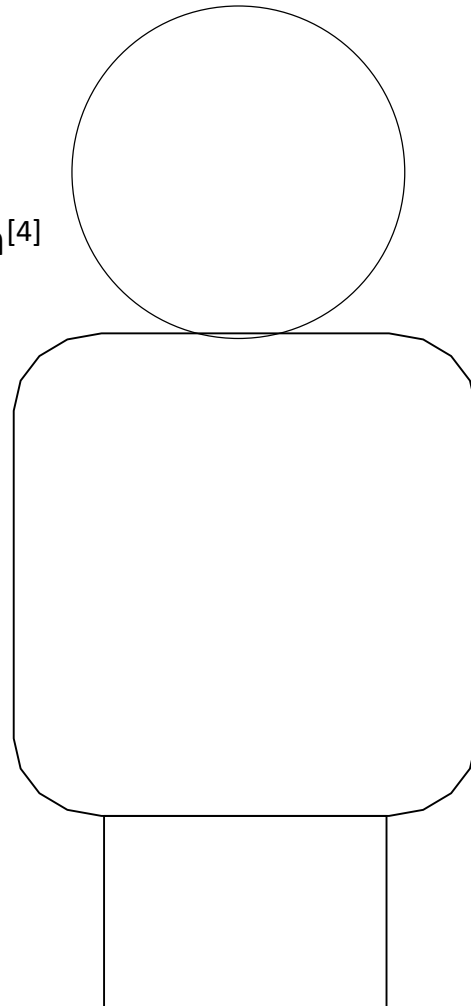
There are approximately **95,000** children and young people aged between 0-25 living in Medway^[1]

63,693 are under 18

420 are Looked After Children^[4]

356 are on Child Protection plans^[4]

2058 are Children in Need^[4]



44,041 pupils across Medway's primary and secondary schools^[2]

24 were adopted in the last 12 months^[3]

2,147 have an EHC Plan^[3]

12,000 attend university in Medway

1. 2018 estimate based on ONS mid-year 2017 data
2. Based on October 2017 school census
3. As at November 2018

Working Environment

There are a number of different factors that affect our working environment with children, young people and their families. These are both external and internal.



Social

- Population Wants and Needs
- Staff Engagement
- Dialogue
- Public Perception



Economic

- Budget constraints
- Marketplace
- Service Delivery



Political

- Politicians
- Elections
- Policy



Technological

- Hardware and software development
- Social Media
- Online Communities



Legal

- Court Cases
- Information Security
- Laws
- Regulators
- Statutory Requirements



Environment

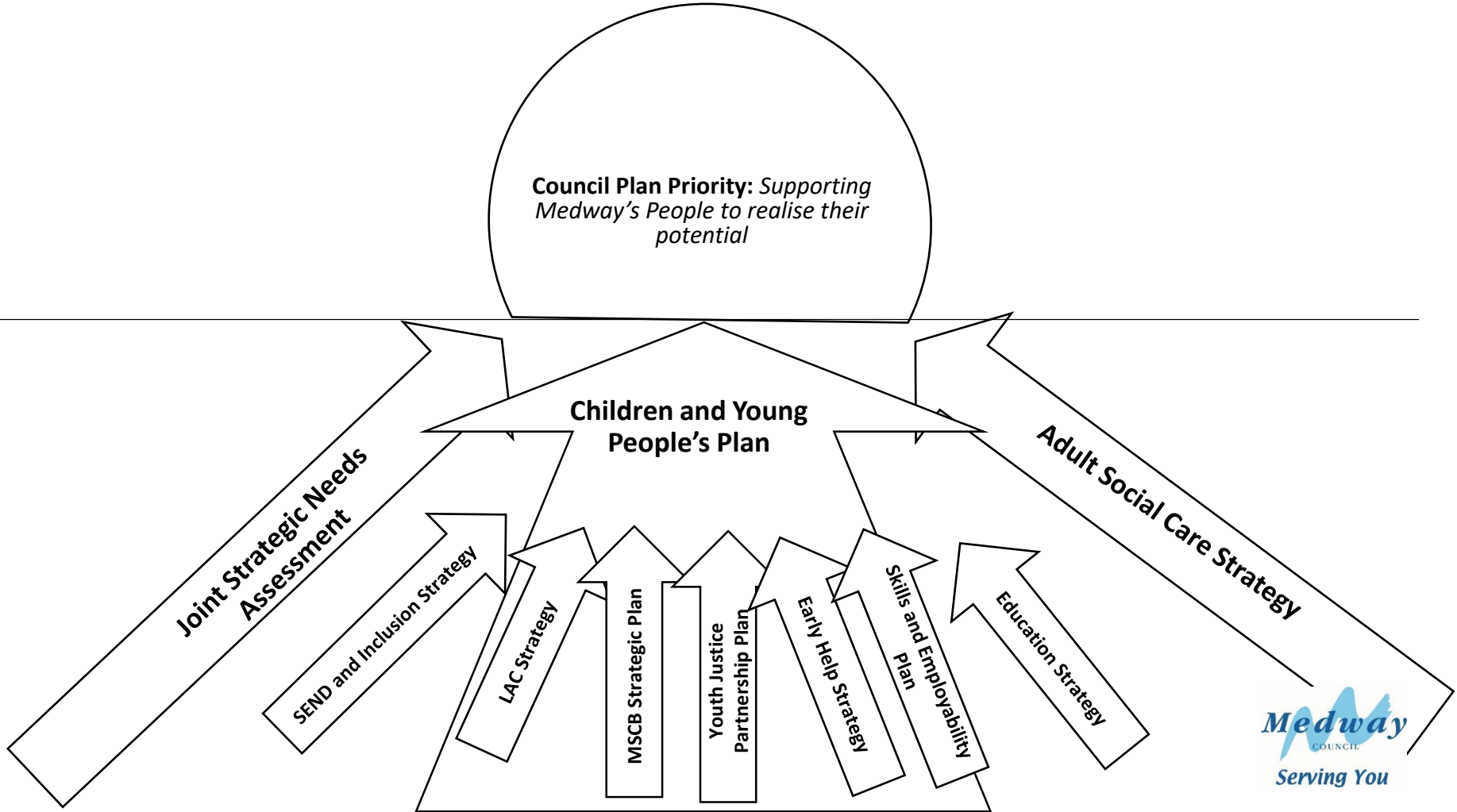
- Estates
- Regeneration
- Air Quality / Pollution



Statutory Framework

After a review in May 2016, the Government agreed that the current arrangements for Local Safeguarding Children's Boards were not effective enough. A stronger, but more flexible, statutory framework was proposed. There is no longer a requirement to have an LSCB, but a duty for three key partners (The Police, Local Authority and CCG) to develop a local arrangement for partnership working to improve safeguarding of children and young people.

Existing Policy



Where have we come from...

In 2015, Children's services in Medway Council required improvement to be good. Services had improved from 2013, when they were found to be inadequate.

Senior local authority leaders, politicians and partner organisations worked effectively together to create positive changes in the experiences of children and young people in most of the areas identified for improvement.

In 2019, Leaders, managers and partners remain committed to further improvement in outcomes for our Children and Young People within Medway.

Where We Want to Be



Our Vision

We have a vision to give Medway a 'child-focused future', a future where children and young people have 'a healthy start', 'are learning well' and 'thriving in their community' whilst having fun.

Medway Council has a relentless focus on continuous improvement to ensure a great future for our children and young people.

We drive forward in our aim to ensure a 'great future' where our children and young people are resilient and healthy, learn well and are contributing to the decisions that affect them.

We want to support all our residents to realise their potential. But the great future of Medway can only be guaranteed by empowering young people to work with us, rather than the Council and its partners doing things for them or to them: creating their own good start. Highly personalised work involves children, young people and their families finding the right solution to the challenges they face with support from a breadth of services provided in the area.

We know that if we are to help every child and young person then we shall need to ensure:

- A high quality universal offer for all
- Targeted services that identify need ASAP and intervene as appropriate
- Specialist services that support the most vulnerable or disadvantaged children

Our Commitment

Our commitment to creating a child-focused future sends a clear message to everybody about just how important children and young people are to Medway's culture and environment.

Medway's Children and Young People's Plan reflects these principles. The priorities from our previous plans are still ingrained in the key messages of this 2019 CYPP. We want all children in Medway to:

- Be thriving in their community
 - Empower families to be resilient and economically secure
 - Protect those at risk of harm
 - Have fun growing up and have a voice
- Have a healthy start
 - Promote health and wellbeing through positive choices
 - Improve social, emotional and mental health and resilience
 - Reduce health inequalities
- Be learning well
 - Ensure children have access to good provision
 - Raise achievement and progress for all
 - Equip young people for life and work in a strong Medway economy
 - Focused help to where it is needed earlier

These, along with our new priorities and key indicators were chosen because they are a powerful focus for us as a Council as well as our partners. Rapid progress on these will have a knock-on effect in other areas, helping us go further and faster on our improvement journey.

How we are going to get there...

Our Principles

We will ensure that we work alongside Children, Young People and their families to develop and improve services

We will carefully listen and act promptly

We will speak in a way children and families want to be spoken to

We will work together in a joined-up way

We will ensure value for money appropriately

We will be creative and innovative

We will be honest and transparent

We will care and respect the children and families that we are working with

We will be child-centred

Our Vision

A HEALTHY START

Children and young people in Medway are thriving, healthy and learning well.

THRIVING IN THEIR COMMUNITY

LEARNING WELL

Organisation and Core Competencies

- Strong clear leadership
- Shared common purpose
- Clear, robust, future-proofed structure
- Right skills
- Right attitudes
- Engaged staff that are empowered
- Right estates and people
- Getting the basics right
- A good set of service standards

Our Future Challenges

- Partnerships
- Robust Data to inform service improvement
- Increasing requirement to make savings and think creatively about how we deliver

Thriving

Children's needs are best served in their own resilient families if this is appropriate. Helping families stay together must therefore be a key focus for all children's services.

Early identification of need and effective early intervention are essential. Early intervention and prevention services can reduce the number of children and young people needing to become looked after, avoid repeat entry into care or support them to return safely to their families in a timely manner.

The Council, the Police and the CCG will work in partnership to take forward our new safeguarding arrangements resulting from the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

These principles will enable more families to be economically secure, get back into work and increase child safety whilst reducing child poverty.

What we are doing already

- National recruitment campaign for social workers – vacant social work posts reduced from 39% to 25%
- Youth Service remodelled during 2017/18 to embed the service into the Medway communities, and to focus on working with vulnerable groups.
- New structure in locality based hubs puts us in a strong position to offer effective joined up early help working closely with families.

PRIORITY 1 - Empower families to be resilient and economically secure

PRIORITY 2 - Protect those at risk of harm

PRIORITY 3 - Have fun growing up and have a voice

Thriving

Objectives

Success Factors

Increase in EHA

Increase in step-down

Mission

Children and young people are safe within an economically secure environment with strong and effective parents

Higher average household income with fewer children living in poverty

Reduce NEET

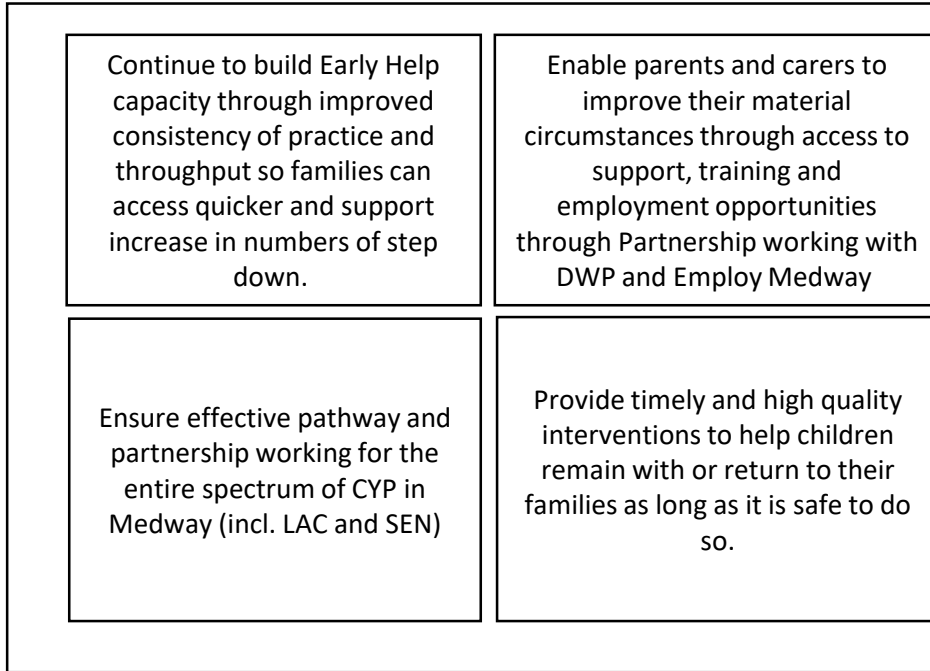
% of Medway Levy payers recruiting apprentices

Continue to build Early Help capacity through improved consistency of practice and throughput so families can access quicker and support increase in numbers of step down.

Enable parents and carers to improve their material circumstances through access to support, training and employment opportunities through Partnership working with DWP and Employ Medway

Ensure effective pathway and partnership working for the entire spectrum of CYP in Medway (incl. LAC and SEN)

Provide timely and high quality interventions to help children remain with or return to their families as long as it is safe to do so.



Thriving

Objectives

Ensure the quality and timeliness of assessment and care planning and decision making for children in need and in need of protection.

Provide and commission the right mix of placements

Protect vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of gang culture.

Ensure providers are held to account for the service they are being commissioned to deliver

Offer locally based interventions that address disadvantage at a neighbourhood level

Success Factors

Increase in EHA

Reduction in placement breakdowns

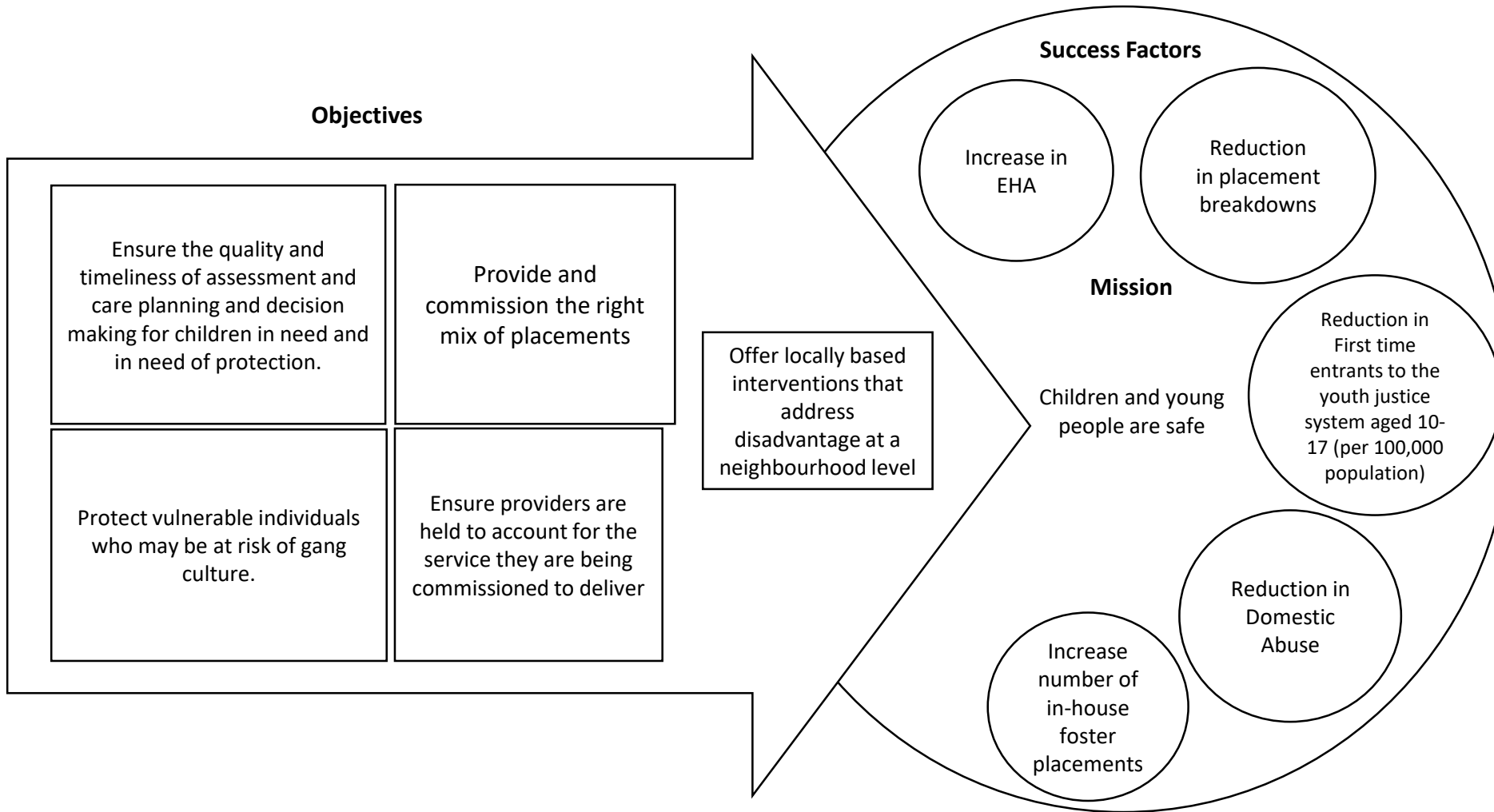
Mission

Children and young people are safe

Reduction in First time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10-17 (per 100,000 population)

Reduction in Domestic Abuse

Increase number of in-house foster placements



PRIORITY 1 - Empower families to be resilient and economically secure

PRIORITY 2 - Protect those at risk of harm

PRIORITY 3 - Have fun growing up and have a voice

Thriving

Objectives

Create safe spaces for young people to enjoy and achieve

Ensure Young People have a voice to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them and make sure their opinions are taken into account

Ensure links between the service and engagement groups such as MYC, YPAG, MYCPC, MCiCC and MPCF

Service developments and commissioning will actively take account of the views of Children and Young People.

Promote access to activities especially Council run activities and venues

Success Factors

Attendance at Family Hubs

Improved feedback

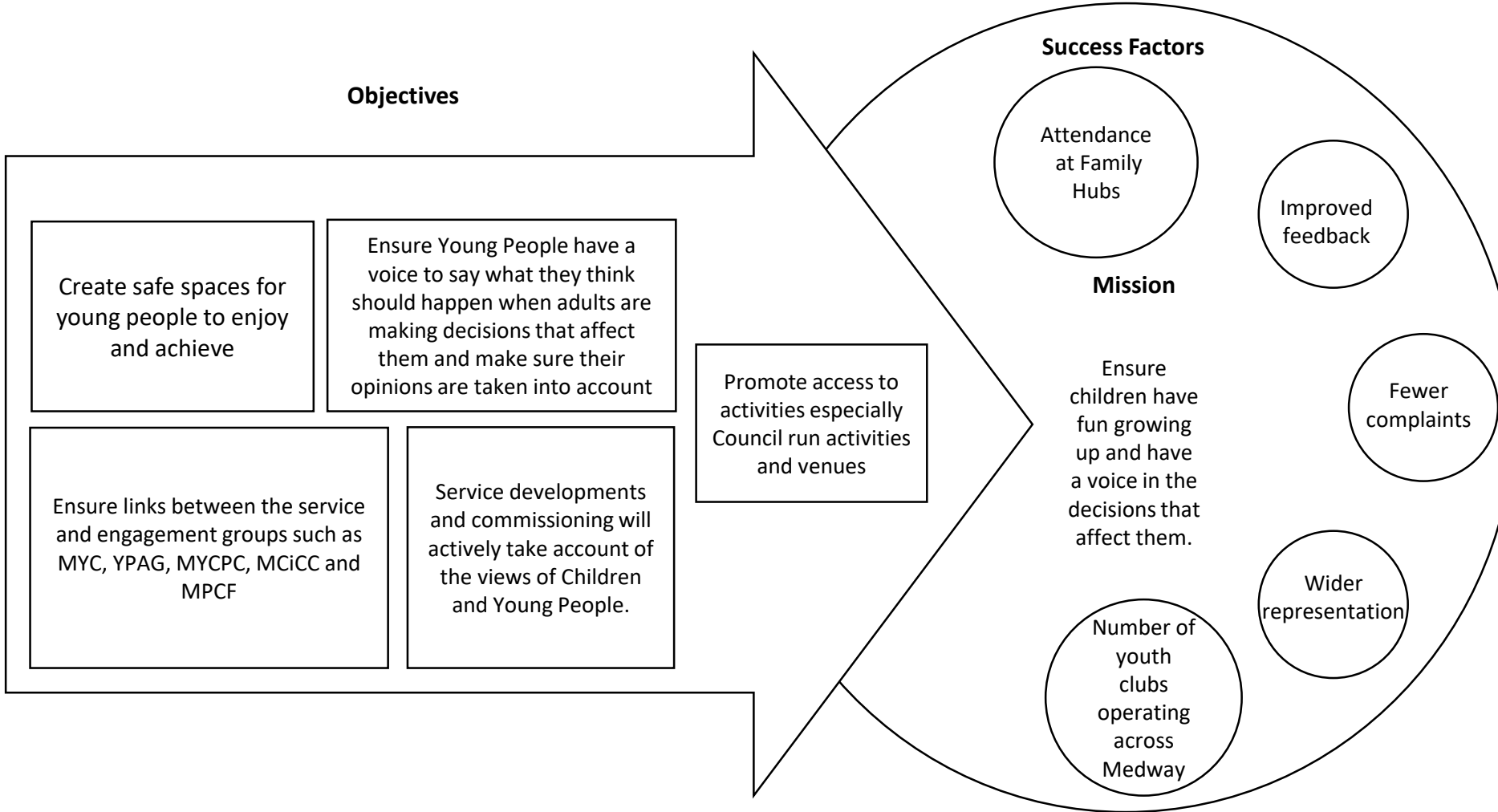
Mission

Ensure children have fun growing up and have a voice in the decisions that affect them.

Fewer complaints

Number of youth clubs operating across Medway

Wider representation



PRIORITY 4 - Promote health and wellbeing through positive choices
Appendix 1

PRIORITY 5 - Improve social, emotional and mental health and resilience

PRIORITY 6 - Reduce health inequalities

Healthy

Ensuring that every child has a good start in life is essential for the future success of Medway and the health and wellbeing of people in the towns and surrounding areas.

Development begins before birth, and the health of a baby is significantly affected by the choices their parents make, and their mother's health and wellbeing. As well as causing an increased risk of premature birth, miscarriage and perinatal birth, smoking in pregnancy can have detrimental effects for the growth and development of the baby and the health of the mother.

As part of our Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy we will be focusing on giving the child the best start and promoting the best and healthiest choices for parents to make during pregnancy and the early years of a child's life.

What we are doing already

- A lead person carries out a family assessment meaning telling story only once. Therefore quicker development of an action plan to meet family's needs.
- Help young people access social and leisure opportunities.
- Established a healthy weight network
- Improving accessibility to schools by walking, cycling and public transport.
- Training all staff involved with maternal pathway to raise the subject of smoking and support quit attempts.
- Recommissioned an integrated health visiting and school nursing service to improve universal health offer from pregnancy through birth and up to age of 18.
- Developed and delivered a core framework for PSHE across Medway Schools.

PRIORITY 4 - Promote health and wellbeing through positive choices
Appendix 1

PRIORITY 5 - Improve social, emotional and mental health and resilience

PRIORITY 6 - Reduce health inequalities

Healthy

Objectives

Promote positive health choices by parents, especially during pregnancy

Reduce a range of risk taking behavior including substance misuse and sexual health

Ensure every child and young person's needs are assessed and planned for with needs being met

Improve pathway and information sharing and ensure all partner agencies understand the part they play.

Undertake targeted and intelligence led activity to improve health related behaviour in schools

Success Factors

Reduction in smoking at the time of delivery

Improved identification of need

Mission

Promote health and wellbeing through positive choices

Increased GP and Dentist Registration

Improved Decision Making

Increase in EHCP

Healthy

Objectives

Create children and family hubs with partners including the development of emotional wellbeing services with providers

Support the whole family in relation to emotional wellbeing

Develop a range of accommodation and support options that support independence and tenancy readiness.

Support improved parenting skills through evidence based programmes that help build resilience and promote self-help

Improve confidence, skills and knowledge across the Children and Young People's workforce around social and emotional mental health at a universal and targeted level.

Success Factors

Timeliness

Reduce numbers children in year 6 that are overweight or obese

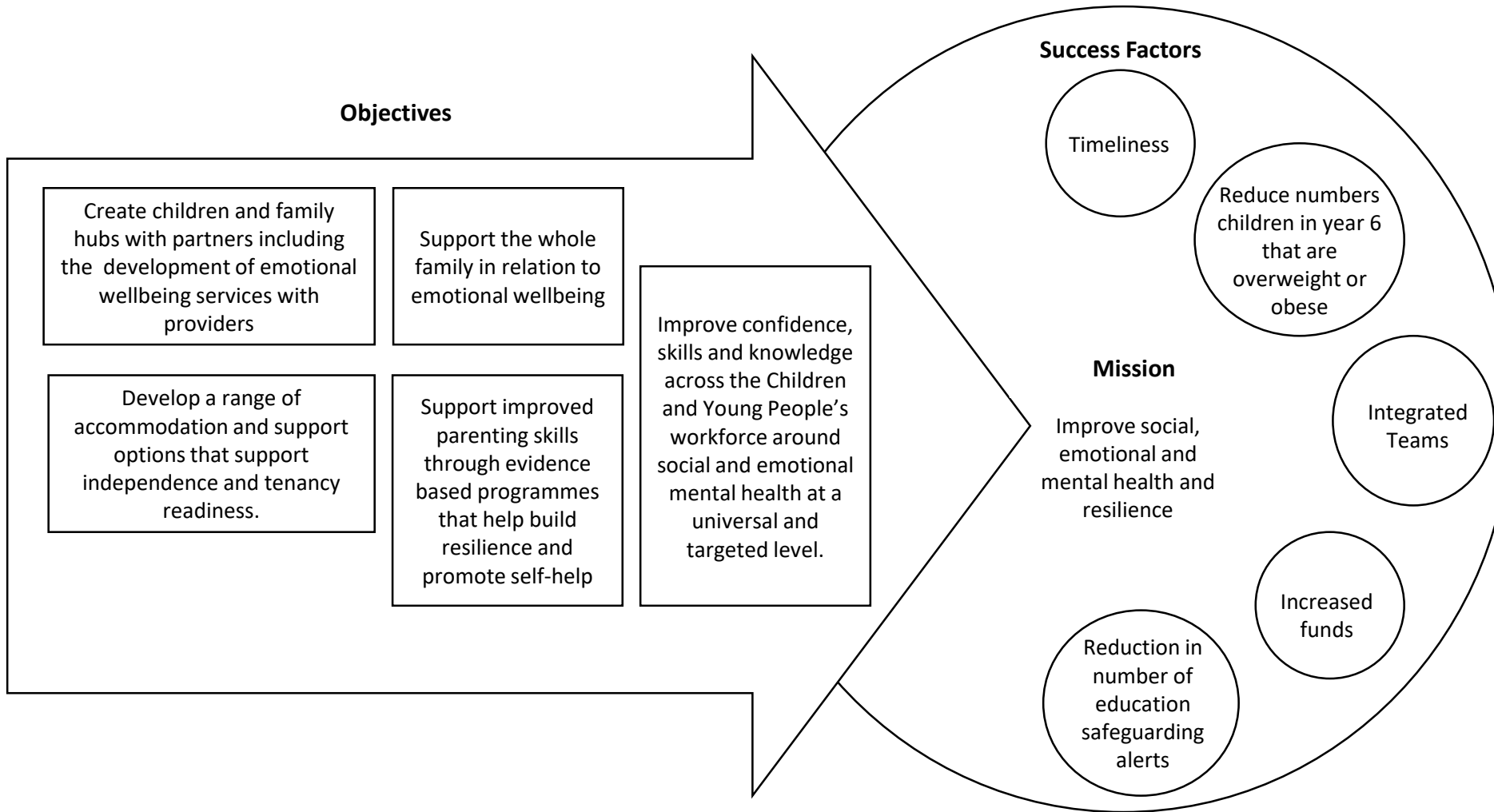
Mission

Improve social, emotional and mental health and resilience

Integrated Teams

Increased funds

Reduction in number of education safeguarding alerts



PRIORITY 4 - Promote health and wellbeing through positive choices

PRIORITY 5 - Improve social, emotional and mental health and resilience

PRIORITY 6 - Reduce health inequalities

Healthy

Objectives

Encourage further integrated partnership working across the children and family hubs.

Ensure timely access to specialist mental health services for children, young people and their families when required.

Ensure positive activities and opportunities for young people that prevent the need for more acute interventions.

Challenge the stigma of poor emotional wellbeing so that no child or young person is disadvantaged or socially excluded because of their experience of mental ill-health

Success Factors

Reduction in exclusions

More parents in work

Mission

Encourage social resilience by reducing health inequalities

Reduction in waiting times and lists for specialist services

Increased uptake of activities for young people

Increase in provision of health services

PRIORITY 7 - Ensure children have access to good provision Appendix 1

PRIORITY 8 - Raise achievement and progress for all

PRIORITY 9 - Equip young people for life and work in a strong Medway economy

PRIORITY 10 - Focused help to where it is needed earlier

Learning

As all schools move towards academy status, the role of strategic coherence to school improvement is vital.

The Local Authority continues to work in partnership with all schools, supporting them to ensure our young people continue to achieve their full potential and aspirations. The educational excellence statutory function required by 1996 Education Act is delivered by the Council's Education teams.

High quality education releases talent, ignites enterprise and endeavour and transforms lives. We want all children and young people to make progress and achieve to the fullest of their ability at every stage of their lives, from their early years through to adulthood. We want this for them because we know that educational attainment has a strong and direct impact on improving their social mobility in life and their consequent health and wellbeing.

What we are doing already

- A trend of KS2 improvement – climbed 19 places from 115/150 to 96/150 in 2018
- Expanding our virtual school to reduce attainment gap.

Learning

PRIORITY 7 - Ensure children have access to good provision

PRIORITY 8 - Raise achievement and progress for all

PRIORITY 9 - Equip young people for life and work in a strong Medway economy

PRIORITY 10 - Focused help to where it is needed earlier

Objectives

Increase the uptake of high quality early education.

Ensure staff trained in evidence-based practice.

Improve system leadership across teaching zones to reduce variations in school performance.

Each area to have a Youth Centre or access to Youth Work provision.

Success Factors

Good sufficiency of school places

Number of schools rated good or better by Ofsted

Mission

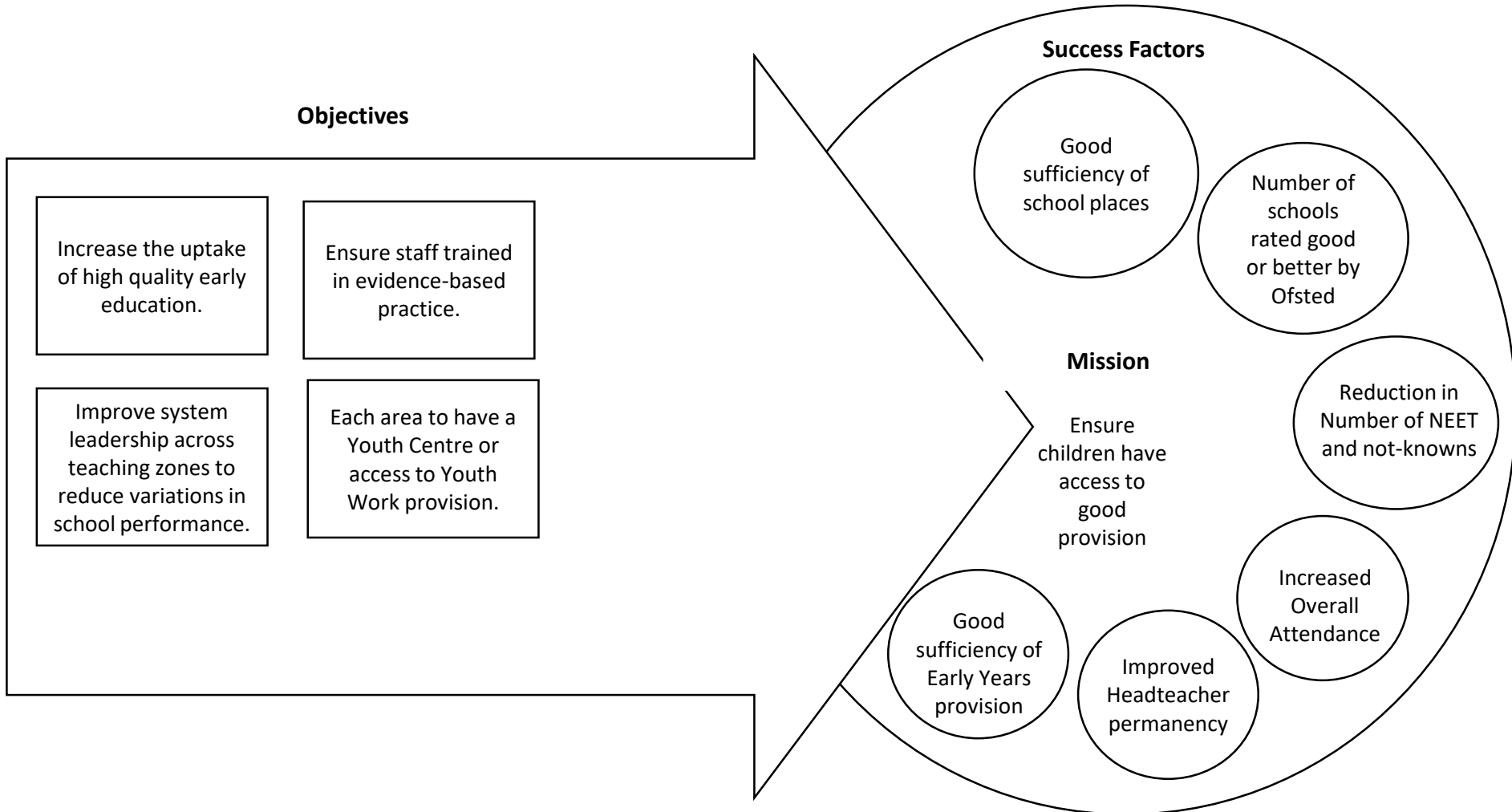
Ensure children have access to good provision

Reduction in Number of NEET and not-knowns

Good sufficiency of Early Years provision

Improved Headteacher permanency

Increased Overall Attendance



Learning

PRIORITY 7 - Ensure children have access to good provision

PRIORITY 8 - Raise achievement and progress for all

PRIORITY 9 - Equip young people for life and work in a strong Medway economy

PRIORITY 10 - Focused help to where it is needed earlier

Objectives

All children should start their education and continue to be educated together (incl. LAC and SEND)

Young People access education, training and employment

Improve achievement at KS2 in all subjects to close the gap with national for all groups

Ensure every LAC's Personal Education Plan outlines their strengths and areas for development and how the school will support

Targeted support to increase care leavers to progress to higher education

Success Factors

Progress 8 score at key stage 2 and 4

Trainee and Employment opportunities increase

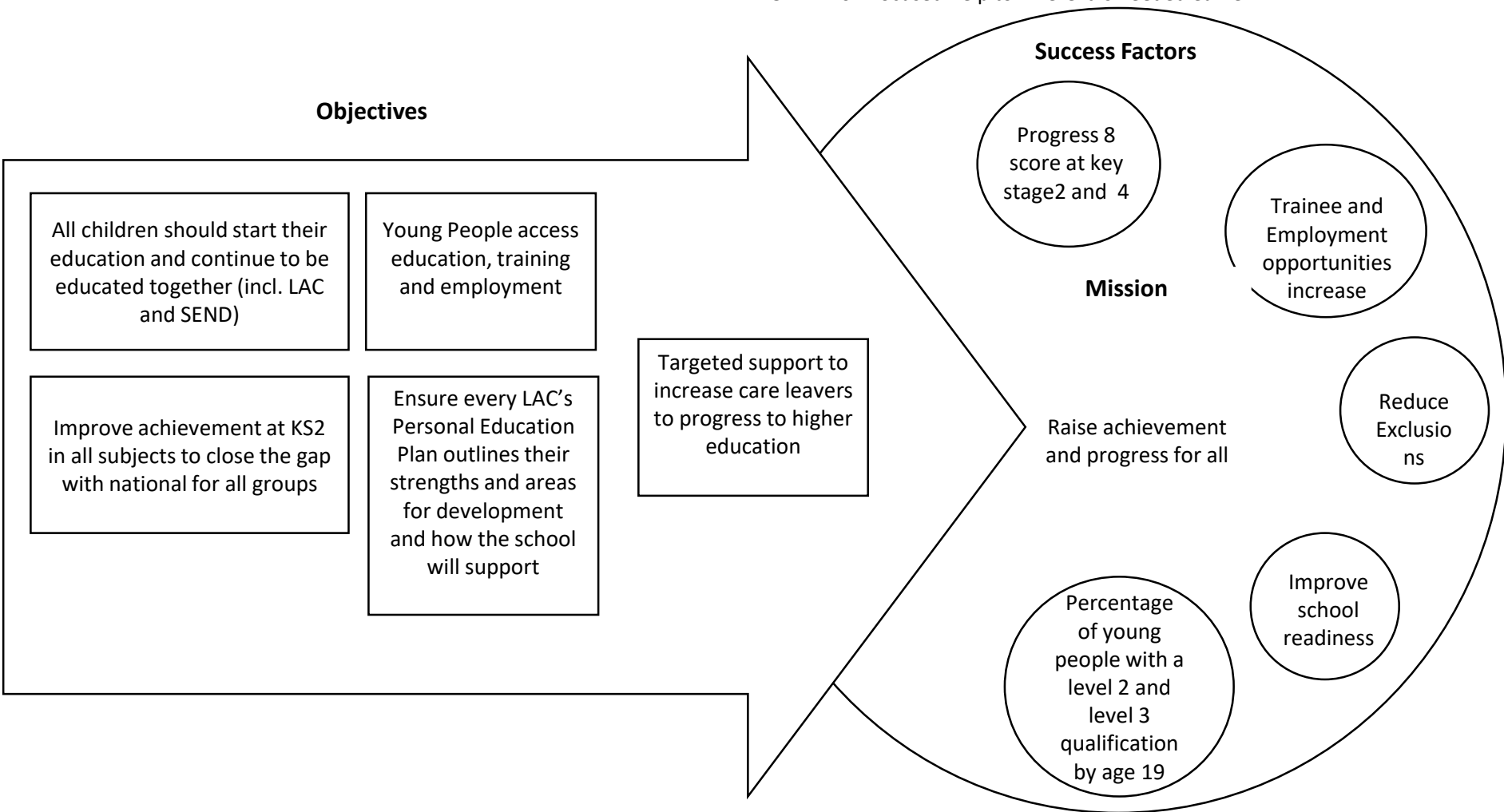
Mission

Raise achievement and progress for all

Reduce Exclusions

Percentage of young people with a level 2 and level 3 qualification by age 19

Improve school readiness



Learning

PRIORITY 7 - Ensure children have access to good provision

PRIORITY 8 - Raise achievement and progress for all

PRIORITY 9 - Equip young people for life and work in a strong Medway economy

PRIORITY 10 - Focused help to where it is needed earlier

Objectives

Young People gaining access to Education, Training and Employment focus on – YOT, SEN, LAC

Ensure a smooth education pathway from childhood to adulthood for children and young people (incl. LAC and SEND)

Work with RCET around Skills and Employability Strategy

Ensure children and young people (incl. LAC and SEND) are provided with opportunities to develop resilience and learn to be as independent as possible as they transition to adulthood

Recognise young people as a valuable assets and create opportunities beyond the school gates that build their skills and knowledge and broaden their horizons

Success Factors

Reduced percentage of young people who are NEET

Improve Apprenticeship / Traineeship

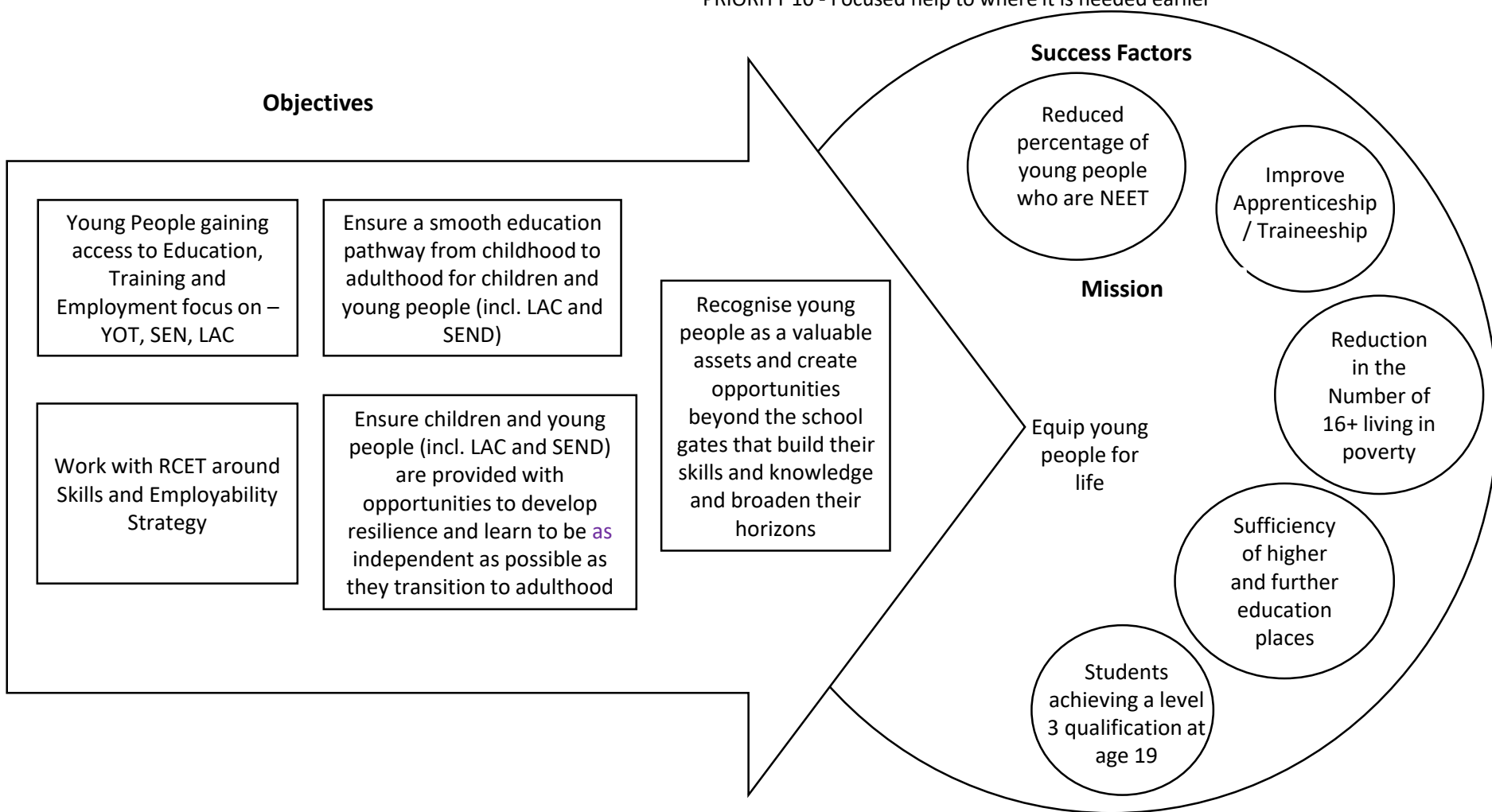
Mission

Equip young people for life

Reduction in the Number of 16+ living in poverty

Sufficiency of higher and further education places

Students achieving a level 3 qualification at age 19



Learning

PRIORITY 7 - Ensure children have access to good provision

PRIORITY 8 - Raise achievement and progress for all

PRIORITY 9 - Equip young people for life and work in a strong Medway economy

PRIORITY 10 - Focused help to where it is needed earlier

Objectives

Good universal offer for children's 0-5 including school readiness

Families able to access Early Help before needs escalate

Encourage parental engagement and enable families to provide strong support for their children's learning to support their development

Coordinated response for families needing support and ensure all children and young people have a safe roof over their heads

Success Factors

Increase EHA in Early Years

Increased Level 2 and 3 activity

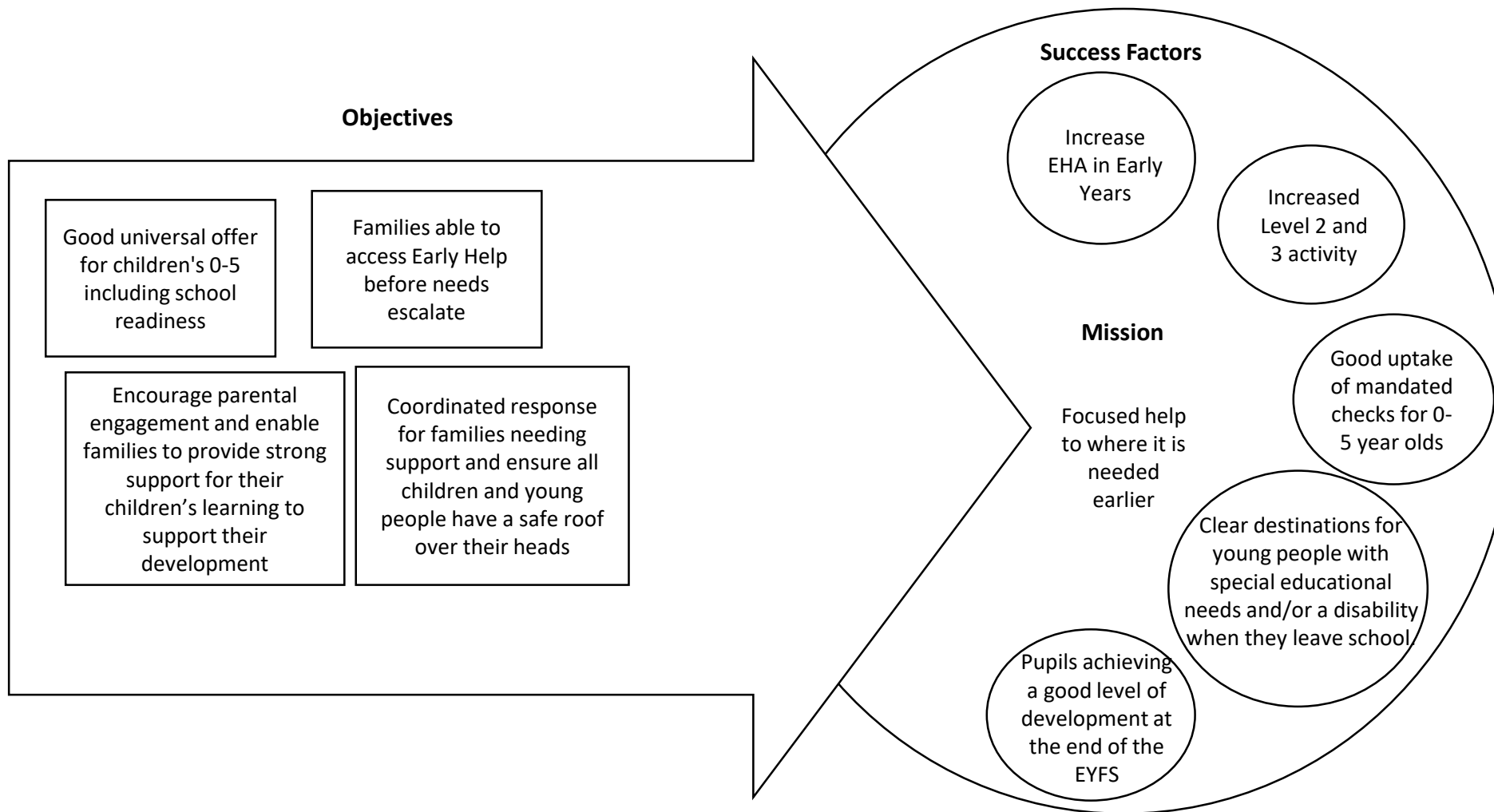
Mission

Focused help to where it is needed earlier

Good uptake of mandated checks for 0-5 year olds

Clear destinations for young people with special educational needs and/or a disability when they leave school

Pupils achieving a good level of development at the end of the EYFS



Medway's Child-Focused Future

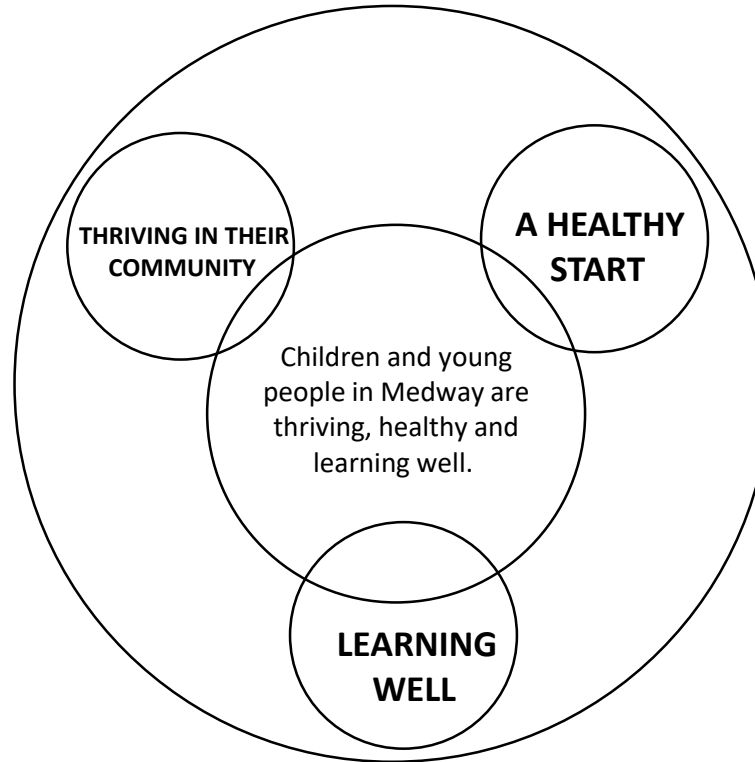
What we'll do:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Empower families to be resilient and economically secure 2. Protect those at risk of harm 3. Have fun growing up and have a voice 	Thriving
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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Promote health and wellbeing through positive choices 5. Improve social, emotional and mental health and resilience 6. Reduce health inequalities 	Healthy
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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Ensure children have access to good provision 8. Raise achievement and progress for all 9. Equip young people for life and work in a strong Medway economy 10. Focused help to where is needed earlier 	Learning
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What the future will be:



How we'll know if we've made a difference:

Higher average household income with fewer children living in poverty	Reduction in Young People excluded
Number of young people who are not in employment, education or training, or whose status is 'not known'	Reduction in EHCP assessments
More young people making healthy behaviour choices	Improved health outcomes and reduction in risk and vulnerabilities
Percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development in Key Stages 1,2,3&4	More young people in education, employment or training
Number of Local Provision rated good or better by Ofsted	Number of children looked after
Number of children and young people subject to a child protection plan	Number of parents experiencing a second or subsequent instance of having a child or children enter care
Number of children and young people with a child in need plan	Infant mortality rates
	Percentage of new school places in good and outstanding schools

What we'll need:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Strong clear leadership •Shared common purpose •Clear, robust, future-proofed structure •Right skills •Right attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Engaged staff that are empowered •Right estates •Right people •Getting the basics right •A good set of service standards
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How we'll act:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will be honest and transparent • We will be creative and innovative • We will speak in a way you want to be spoken to • We will work together in a joined-up way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will care and respect the children and families that we are working with • We will be child-centred • We will ensure value for money appropriately • We will listen and act promptly
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