



Children and Young People First

East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Children & Young People's Support & Safeguarding

Services Practice Improvement Plan 2022-23



Practice that counts
FOR children



Practice that
works
WITH children



Practice that
learns
FROM children

Our Commitment - doing the right things for children and young people

Everyone in the East Riding of Yorkshire Council and our partners are committed to ensuring that children and young people are at the heart of decisions and that their needs and views are properly understood and used to inform what happens in their lives.

We are clear that the positive change we want to achieve for our children and young people will require everyone to work together. Partner agencies, councillors and corporate colleagues have a vital role to play in creating the environment where good early help, targeted support and social work can flourish.

By working together, we will ensure that we deliver high standards so that children and young people consistently receive the right services delivered in a timely way, by the best placed people to meet their needs at the right level. For children in need of help, care, and protection we will work with their networks to enable the best possible outcomes.

We know that to achieve this we need to drive longer term cultural change which accepts and values the scrutiny which comes with high challenge and high support. We are keen that our practice is good so that we **'do it once and do it well'**. This means that we want to minimise the amount of times and the number of people that families have to tell their story to, we will be professionally curious in order to do good assessments and we will work with families to make purposeful plans and intervention to support long term positive change.

In April 2020 the Department for Education appointed Steve Walker as our Improvement Advisor to help achieve our intentions. Steve Walker chairs a multi-agency Improvement Board with a remit to offer independent and rigorous scrutiny of our arrangements and progress of improvement.

We are more ambitious than to limit our response to the recommendations set out by Ofsted in our 2019 ILACS report and the whole practice system is on the journey to excellence. The service experienced by children, young people and their families will be more responsive to need, will help identify what they need and how urgently and how they feel assistance can be best delivered.

We know that regardless of which part of our system practitioners work from, that it is the quality of their relationships and the purposefulness of their work that makes a difference to children and families. We will support and encourage relational practice and work with our communities and partners to reduce the need for statutory intervention by further building on our local capacity to meet need at the earliest possible time.

Our next stage of development adopts an inclusive approach to improvement and is intended to create the system wide conditions to support best practice. Central to this ambition is coaching and support to all managers and practice leaders, systematic monitoring of our quality of practice,

maintaining a strong line of sight on our performance, embedding our model of practice, recruiting and retaining a confident and competent workforce and inviting external scrutiny of our practice system to help us learn and grow. The actions outlined in this plan are designed to give frontline staff, partners, managers, and leaders the focus around what needs to improve to achieve sustainably good outcomes.

Each of the recommendations in this plan has associated overarching actions which are underpinned by several milestones as outlined in our detailed operational improvement plan. The overarching actions and recommendations are grouped into four themes:

- 1) Data, Quality and Culture,
- 2) Workforce,
- 3) Sufficiency, Engagement and Integration,
- 4) Communication Leadership and Governance.

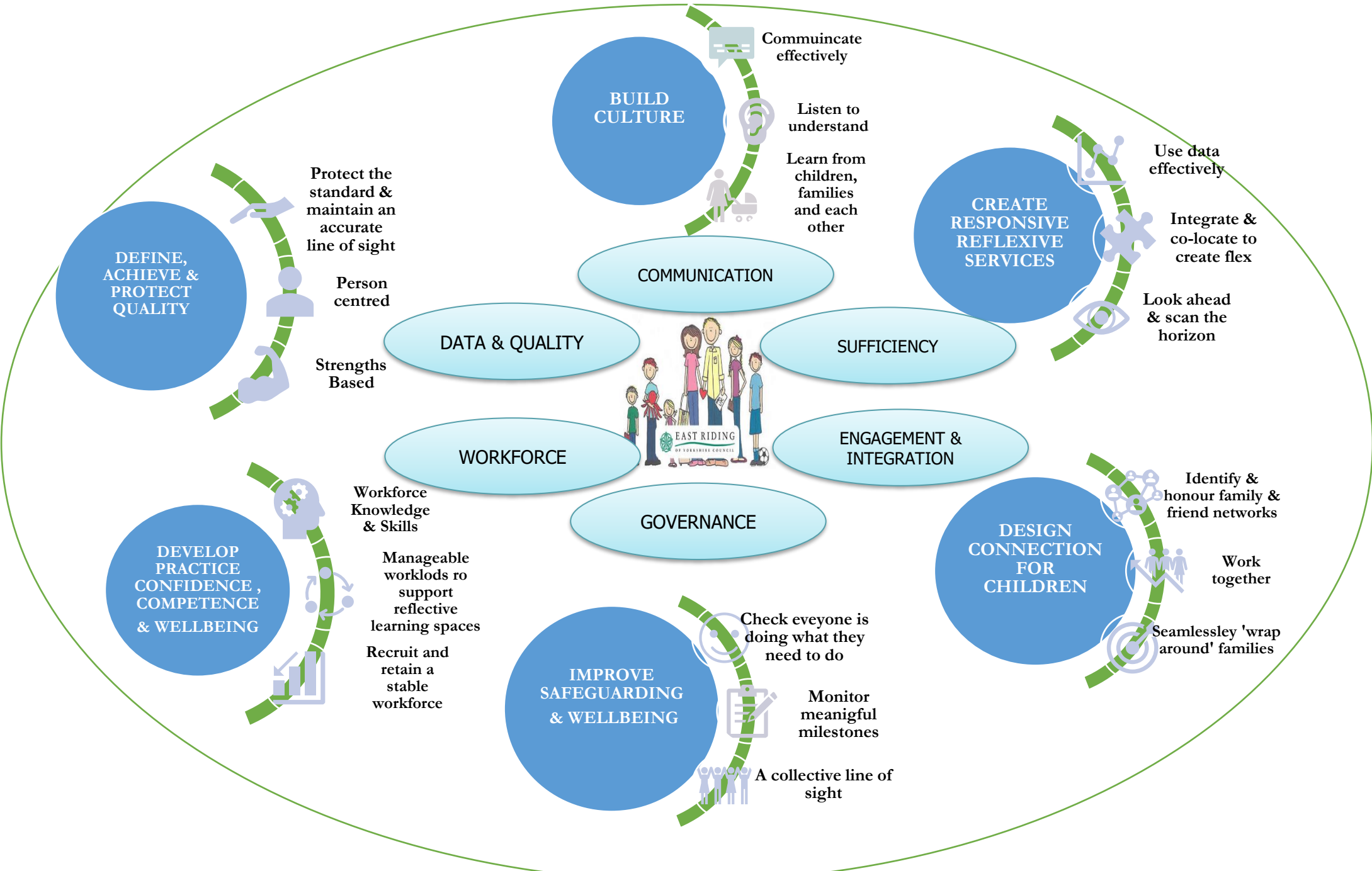
Data, quality of practice and culture is the theme which contains the actions we have taken, or will be taking, that relate to the quality of practice and intervention, which include how we assure ourselves by increasing the systematic application and impact of quality assurance processes. This involves the triangulation of performance data, quality of practice as understood through audit and the impact of our work as described by our children and families. The actions focus on our intervention during the journey of the child and the impact on outcomes including those relating to our model of practice and intervention.

Workforce is the theme which connects the actions to ensure we have a stable workforce with the knowledge and skills to undertake their work in a confident and competent manner. The actions target those required to support recruitment, retention, learning and practice growth.

Sufficiency, Engagement and Integration (responsive and connected services in the right place and right time) is the theme which links a range of actions which will mean children and families experience timely intervention from the area of service best placed to meet their needs. How we ensure that the application of thresholds is consistent and does not prevent timely intervention and response sits within the actions linked to this theme.

All of the action taken under the first three themes will be supported by the actions contained within **Communication, Leadership and Governance**. These actions will lead to strong scrutiny, leadership, and challenge to progress of the plan, and the outcomes for children, young people and families from senior leaders and members.

Supporting Our Journey to Excellence – 6 Priorities 6 Goals



The ILACS in December 2019 identified 12 recommended areas for improvement

Recommendation 1	Improve the line of sight on practice and performance at all levels to ensure the accuracy of the self-evaluation in order that senior leaders and elected members have sufficient detail to provide a clear understanding of the practice children experience, service strengths and what needs to improve.
Recommendation 2	Develop the understanding and application of thresholds to children's social care by partner agencies referring to the front door arrangements, ensuring consistency of application so that referrals are appropriate, and that parental consent is sought.
Recommendation 3	Strengthen the quality and oversight of social work assessments and plans for children in need of help and protection.
Recommendation 4	Improve the quality of risk assessment and planning where children are at risk of exploitation.
Recommendation 5	Improve the quality of analysis and action planning following strategy meetings.
Recommendation 6	Ensure that pre-proceedings work is timely, sets out expectations in easy to understand language and is effective.
Recommendation 7	Improve the timeliness and quality of assessment and planning for disabled children.
Recommendation 8	Improve the effectiveness of scrutiny and management oversight by managers and leaders at all levels of help and protection work to enable a better understanding of practice.
Recommendation 9	Ensure that quality assurance arrangements are effective.
Recommendation 10	Improve the effectiveness of the Local Authority Designated Officers.
Recommendation 11	Ensure the quality of assessment and planning for children subject to private fostering arrangements improve.
Recommendation 12	Develop and improve the availability and access to training for all social work staff and foster carers.

Data, Quality and Culture

Recommendation	Overarching action
Recommendation 1, 8 & 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Embed the updated quality of practice framework to provide comprehensive triangulation of performance data, quality knowledge and feedback from children, family and practitioners. ■ Further develop the design of performance dashboards to ensure that they deliver an accurate and reliable user experience which supports the identification of trends and exceptions. ■ Provide team level diagnostic reviewed through fortnightly practice clinics so all practitioners understand how the performance of the team relates to the experiences of children, young people and families ■ Engage external scrutiny and peer review to test revised systems and further inform self-assessment, helping to provide sufficiently detailed and accurate information to the Chief Executive, Portfolio Holder and elected members.
Recommendation 2, 5 & 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Regularly audit the decisions made on contacts that do and don't progress to a social care referral to ensure children are receiving the intervention they need in a timely manner. ■ Embed understanding of levels of effective intervention guidance across all levels of the practice system and partner agencies. ■ Further strengthen the Multi-Partner PitStop relationships to ensure conversations of high support and challenge that ensure children are directed to the best pathway to meet their needs. ■ Ensure all people making decisions at key points in a child's journey are supported to make evidence informed decisions the rationale of which is consistently recorded on children's records. ■ Regular dip sampling of decisions and the quality of recording and planning from strategy meetings.
Recommendation 3.4.5,7 & 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improve the quality of assessments so that children and families receive responsive support for as long as is required. ■ Improve practice relating to domestic abuse and neglect to reduce the impact upon children and young people but ensuring timely intervention. ■ Improve planning for children in need and in need of protection so that children's need for help and protection is addressed as Implement the model of practice across children's services which will mean we work with families and their networks in a way which is consistently strengths based, restorative, respectful and solution focused. ■ Monitoring of statutory visits and assessment timeliness to have an increased impact on performance ■ Embed the revised supervision arrangements and planning panel arrangements to reduce drift and delay for children.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implement the re-shaping social work structure to deliver a bespoke assessment offer and help ensure practitioners are able to spend enough time with children and families to build trusting relationships.
Recommendation 7, 9 & 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Embed learning from the peer reviews to ensure that practice continues to improve. ■ Implement the action planning for children with disabilities that has been derived from the quality of practice activity. ■ Develop the experience and confidence of managers in key roles to ensure robust support and challenge when practice falls below expectation.
Recommendation 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extend the work of the Practice Improvement and Innovation service to share learning, support system wide best practice, improve reflective learning and drive development. ■ Embed the workforce wellbeing and the learning and development offers.

Workforce

Recommendation	Overarching Action
Recommendation 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recruit to social work vacancies so that the number of permanent social workers increases. ■ Use of agency social workers is to be reduced through the implementation of the recruitment and retention strategy which includes financial market supplements for social work roles. ■ A system of over establishment in locality teams operate for 12 months to provide flex to support newly qualified worker learning and enable access for continuing learning development for all staff. ■ Impact of the 'grow our own' apprenticeship route is to be measured and reviewed at year 2. ■ Recruitment of temporary family coordinator support. ■ Continuation of a strong social work student offer. ■ Go live if the social work academy model to support both the ASYE and CPD programme. ■ Covid business continuity arrangements are deployed to ensure vulnerable children are visited. ■ Wellbeing strategy launched and subject to review and reporting of impact in the summer 2022
Recommendation 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Embed social work career pathways and progression between gradMAC and targeted.

Recommendation 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Embed learning and development regarding Achieving Best Evidence practice. ■ Develop analysis and knowledge of risk management methods.
Recommendation 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CWDT specific learning offer. ■ Implement action plan and embed learning following the peer review.
Recommendation 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LADO training, development, and peer review

Theme – Sufficiency, Engagement and Integration

Recommendation	Overarching Action
Recommendation 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure the step-across process results in children and families receiving the level of support they require. ■ Quality Assure the step-across process to ensure children and families are receiving the support they require.
Recommendation 3, 6, 7, 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Further develop the existing care and permanence planning to ensure that senior leaders adopt the values and behaviours of the model of practice to create the conditions for responsive and shared risk decision to be made in a high support and high challenge space. ■ Improve the design of performance information to ensure that it provides reliable and timely information to support managers and leaders in their oversight of practice to take timely and responsive action – this includes the ambition to work from live data.
Recommendation 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Embed the Making a Change team offer to provide outreach and intensive multi-agency support to ensure that they are working with the children and young people most at risk of exploitation. ■ Further develop the plans for children at risk of exploitation to ensure that there is one plan that is understood and owned by the young person and the personal and professional network. ■ Further develop the multi-agency Vulnerable Adolescent Risk Panels (VARPs) to ensure timely multi-agency interventions to hold and manage risk at the right level, escalating as necessary. ■ Develop a mentoring offer for children at risk of exploitation.
Recommendation 6, 7 & 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that Social Workers and Managers are given support and training so that children who need to move into the pre-proceeding's arena do so promptly. ■ Child Protection Conference Chairs will be supported to ensure children subject to plans do not experience delay in pre-

	<p>proceedings work being progressed, with the introduction of new conferencing model supported by Essex.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Further develop the impact and quality of pre-proceedings work ensuring evidenced senior leadership oversight and regular review so that any outstanding work is addressed promptly to prevent children experiencing harm when alternative action could be taken. ■ Implement the pre-proceedings intensive offer for all children held within this framework with a family group conference and lifelong network support to be in place at the start of all PLO work.
<p>Recommendation 2.3, 4.8 & 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Further improve senior leadership oversight of care planning for children in council run and independent children homes, to ensure that these children receive good quality care, effective review and safe exit planning when required. ■ Develop local sufficiency to enable children out of area to return to a setting that will meet their, care, education and health needs. ■ Embed the tracking and review systems to ensure that manager and leadership oversight identifies and responds to any indication of drift and delay for children. ■ Continue to report quality of practice activity quarterly. The reports will make more explicit the link between findings and the experience of children and families in order to support practitioners across children's services to improve the experiences of children and families. ■ Implement learning from the Children With Disabilities Peer Review ■ Quality of Practice Framework to be embedded across the whole system to include dip sampling of all decision making in relation to contacts, referrals, children open 9+ months and case closures. This will ensure the right decisions are made consistently so that children, young people and families receive timely response from the right service area. ■ Improve planning for children in need and in need of protection so that children's need for help and protection is addressed as quickly as possible and their level of need reduces as quickly as possible. ■ North Yorkshire Partner in Practice support will go live in February to help build on and embed the improvement work across key areas.
<p>Recommendation 9, 10 & 11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Embed systems to ensure timely response and quality of decisions. ■ Develop multi-partner peer review systems to offer support and challenge on actions.
<p>Recommendation 5 & 10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Change process so that children do not experience delays in decision making and planning to address risk and harm as part of these section 47 processes. ■ With partner agencies work to further improve strategy meeting recording and planning. ■ Improve the quality of section 47 enquiry and assessment.

Communication, Leadership and Governance

Recommendation	Overarching Action
Recommendation 1 & 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that line of sight meetings deliver focused updates regarding performance and quality of practice, areas of vulnerability and requests for additional resource that is informed by valid and reliable information. ■ For the needs of vulnerable children and their families to remain a priority for council investment to ensure responsive and decisive collective action to respond to practice vulnerability. ■ Give assurance that current performance measures are robust and accurate and will ensure we are able to know the impact of practice upon children, young people and families. ■ Improvement board and Line of Sight Meetings to receive a suite of information to support scrutiny. ■ Improvement Board to offer scrutiny and challenge so that progress towards improving outcomes for children is swift. ■ Retain capacity for elected members to offer scrutiny to progress improvements and to ensure they have the information they need to offer challenge to officers. ■ Develop leaders so that they can offer high support and high challenge in a restorative and effective manner. ■ Ensure managers and leaders with the right skills set and value base in line with the model of practice are deployed to positions where they can influence and drive practice change.
Recommendation 2-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide team level diagnostic so all managers and practitioners understand how the performance of the team relates to the experiences of children, young people and families. ■ Embed fortnightly performance clinics with managers and develop peer support and challenge activity. ■ Further develop performance dashboards, dip sampling and decision spaces to ensure a direct line of leadership oversight.
Recommendation 3.4, 7 & 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Monitoring of statutory visits to have an increased impact on performance. ■ Monitoring of supervision and the implementation of the new supervision framework to have an increased impact on performance and quality.

- Findings of the inspection and resultant plans have been shared with all practitioners and managers through multiple forums.
- An external diagnostic of the front door arrangements was commissioned, and a new model launched in September 2020.
- A systematic series of conversation spaces have been created to increase the visibility of leaders and to provide an offer for the whole workforce to ask questions, share best practice, concerns and ideas.
- Practice standards have been created and revised to ensure that all social workers and managers are clear regarding expectations.
- External auditing of child in need arrangements reviewed thresholds and impact of interventions.
- Some additional funding and service reconfiguration has facilitated the development of a Practice Innovation and Improvement Service has been created to deliver the 'engine room' to support managers and leaders in driving standards and practice improvement.
- A new Model of Practice has been launched which includes a brand identity designed by practitioners and families.
- A new family feedback model has been created.
- The Quality of Practice framework has been revised to ensure that practitioners are engaged in reflective spaces to explore the quality of practice.
- A new children's recording system has been launched.
- Arrangements for care planning and permanence have been revised to introduce senior manager panels to drive consistent and child focused decisions.
- Partner in practice review of the LADO, auditing, supervision and Private Fostering arrangements has been completed.
- Reconfiguration of the Strategic Lead portfolios has been completed and new personnel appointed.
- Additional area manager capacity was deployed to support the implementation of system changes.
- Investment to create additional posts supported the Children's Disability Team, Corporate Parenting, LADO arrangements and frontline social work team.
- Service realignment has supported the development of the Making a Change service to specifically work with children most at risk of exploitation.
- Additional temporary management capacity has been put in place to support consistency of decision making at the point the public and partners make contact.
- Networks with Police colleagues and other Local Authorities has supported the development of additional partner training regarding strategy, meetings and ABE activity.
- clearer PLO offer has been shaped which includes family friendly letters.

Priority Timeline

This section highlights the timescale for the completion of overarching actions, which underpin the operational plan and the achievement of anticipated outcomes over a 12-month period.

January 2022		July 2022
	Continued dip sampling of decisions made to take no further action on contacts to ensure children are receiving the intervention they need.	
	Ensure all people making decisions at key points in a child's journey are supported to make the right decision consistently across children's services – this will be through manager development sessions and PCFSW and Principal Practice Lead support and challenge activity.	
	Review all permanence planning for children and ensure reunification planning is in place for children who can safely return to the care of their family networks.	
	Validate all data migration and exceptions to finalise performance dashboards and embed them within practitioner, team and area manager practice.	
	Improvement board and partnership governance structure to receive the Line of Sight scorecard and quality of practice report to support continued scrutiny.	
	Continued senior leadership dip sampling, reflective space conversations and chairing of performance clinics.	
	Embed understanding of practice and process within the Azeus system to ensure that data is reliably reportable and so that children do not experience delays in decision making and allocations.	
	Implement the re-shaping social work phase I to deliver an assessment service.	
	Reset and embed the reflective space activity in line with the quality of practice framework, ensuring that findings are shared and used to drive improvement.	
	Implement the Child with Disabilities Team specific action plan.	

April 2022	Implement the new child protection conference and review model and ensure review of children on repeat child protection plans.	July 2022
January 2022	<p>A dedicated Principal Social Worker and Practice Lead will support social workers and managers to improve how they work with families to improve outcomes.</p> <p>Partner in Practice support across key practice areas including PLO, Supervisions, Signs of Safety Implementation, Assessment, Planning and Private Fostering which will include a practice and performance diagnostic, learning offer and ongoing evaluation.</p> <p>Continuing review how, and where, children in need receive assessment, help and support to ensure they receive it in a timely and responsive manner.</p>	December 2022

Governance Structure

Summary

- Improvement Board (IB)
- Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel
- Practitioner and parent carer shadow improvement board
- Monthly Line of Sight meeting to include the Chief Executive, Portfolio Holder, Director, Head of CYPSSS and Strategic Lead for Practice, Improvement, and Innovation
- Children's Services Directorate Management Team will monitor the risk and progress of improvement activity

Improvement Board – membership will be made up of the following representatives:

- Chief Executive
- DfE appointed Advisor
- Independent Scrutineer
- Portfolio holder – Children's Services
- Director for Children's Services
- Head of Probation
- Head of CCG
- Police Chief Inspector
- Chair – LSCB
- Head of CYPSSS
- Head of Schools and Education
- Head of Specialist Services

Measuring Success

Quality of Practice Standards and Measures of Improvement

Children will experience timely, good quality and consistent intervention from a named practitioner at a level which best meets their needs. Visits will be timely and purposeful with accurate records maintained.

Changes of worker will be minimised, intervention will be relational beginning from a position of family as expert of their story and solutions. Children's voices will be heard and evidenced in assessments, plans and intervention with a good understanding of their lived experiences and family history.

Plans will be co-produced and, in all circumstances, utilise the knowledge and skills of the family and friend network. Strong practice that will be able to identify and take appropriate, timely action when dealing with children who experience any level of harm, including neglect.

Management oversight and supervision will be evident on all records and show the rationale for decisions.

Standard Reference	Practice Standard	Performance Data Measure	Qualitative Measure
I.1	Partner agencies will make timely and appropriate contacts to the Safeguarding and Partnership Hub (SaPH) which are in line with the levels of need guidance.	% partner contacts to social care referral	Monthly multi agency dip sampling findings
I.2	Children will be directed to the right pathway to respond to their need in a timely manner.	% of referrals responded to within 24 hours	Dip sampling identifying correct and defensible decision

Standard Reference	Practice Standard	Performance Data Measure	Qualitative Measure
I.3	Children will be allocated by the receiving social work or early help team and children will be seen in a timely manner that is proportionate to the indicated level of need and harm.	% of allocation within 48 hours & % seen within 5 days	Dip sampling identifying purposeful and meaningful visiting
I.4	Levels of need will be well understood and consistently applied by the CYPSSS practice system and step across meetings will take place at the right time and result in evidence-based decision making.	% step across meeting where outcome is to move service	Quarterly dip sampling of step across activity
I.5	The criteria for children with disabilities will be well understood and consistently applied to ensure that they are held by the right part of the practice system and their needs met.	% assessments in time % QA where meet practice standards	Quarterly dip sampling of CWDT step across activity and reflective space observations
I.4	Strategy meetings will be timely, include all partners and relevant practitioners and will provide clear decision-making rationale with SMART planning.	Number of strategy meetings and conversion to S47	Dip sampling and reflective space themes
I.5	Where LADO notification is identified as necessary, engagement will be timely and LADO enquiries will be thorough and evidence based with proportionate and appropriate outcomes.	Number of LADO enquires and % outcomes	Manager dip sampling and quality of practice peer review activity
I.6	Section 47 enquiries will be timely, joint with police and social care where agreed and provide evidence-based rationale for decision regarding outcome.	% S47 conversion to ICPC	Dip sampling and reflective space findings Police vulnerability tracker information
I.7	Assessments will be undertaken within 45 days which will have oversight by team managers to ensure they meet the expected standards as set out in the Quality of Practice Framework.	% 45-day completion rate	% Reflective Spaces where standard met

Standard Reference	Practice Standard	Performance Data Measure	Qualitative Measure
I.8	Visits will be undertaken in line with quality of practice standards and will demonstrate purposeful and meaningful to support the ongoing and assessment of the circumstances surrounding the child.	% visits undertaken in time	Quality of practice dip sampling and reflective space findings Family Feedback
I.9	Children will be included in assessments and their voice used to understand their lived experience and inform actions.	% children seen in assessment	Exception dip sampling and reflective space activity themes
I.10	Plans will include SMART actions that respond to assessed needs and will be easy to understand. The family and friend network will be well understood and included in making the plan.	% of plans completed	Quality of practice dip sampling and reflective space themed activity
I.11	Management oversight will provide clear direction and practice oversight which combined with reflective supervision that meets practice standards will prevent drift and delay.	% supervisions within 30 and 90 days	Quality of practice dip sample and RSA findings CISRO feedback
I.12	Children who are known to be in private fostering arrangements will be assessed and visit in line with practice standards.	Number of referrals and arrangements	PII review and oversight
I.13	Where children need to become looked after prompt action will be taken and there will be clear decision making by senior leaders.	Number of children presented to care planning panel	Themed dip sampling will evidence in most situations' senior manager decisions
I.14	Children and families who are held in Public Law Outline arrangements will be offered a family group conference and will have a clear and easy to understand offer which provides them the best chance of diverting from court.	Number of PLO that divert from proceedings	Dip sampling and peer review of the arrangements will demonstrate that PLO arrangements comply with all elements of the practice standards
	A stable and experienced social work workforce will be developed, recruited and retained.	% of agency use in SW posts % SW vacancy rate % ASYE % SW with 3+yrs	Social worker health checks and pulse survey feedback

Risk Impact

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	General Control Measures
Increased staff absence due to Covid-19 will make harder to focus beyond critical business and will impact on availability to attend training and engage with reflective space activity	High	High	Staff redeployment to critical visiting functions
Sickness rates and vacancy increase may result in reduction of visits for children in need by social work qualified staff will impact online of sight of vulnerable	High	Medium	Management oversight of visit quality and risks – regular review by Strategic Leads
Increased use of agency staff will impact on the ability to drive forward the practice standards and culture change	High	Medium	Will avoid use of project teams due to the associated poor quality of work and impact on staff morale = ensure balance of agency social work is balanced across teams to mitigate impact=weekly review
Increased vacancies and agency use may impact on the pace of improvement	High	High	Increased mentoring through PII directly in teams
Increased use of newly qualified may mean less experienced social workers undertaking work at a higher level of intervention	High	High	Oversight and supervision by managers and leaders
Performance across may reduce with increased absence and vacancy	High	Medium	Continued review and line of sight on trends and dip sampling by managers and leaders – focus on core functions.
Increased national challenges regarding availability of placements may increase placement instability and increase unregulated placement use	High	Medium	Risk assessments and increased visiting Support from commissioning will be required to review
Non-ABE trained social workers undertaking interviews with Police colleagues	Medium	Medium	Close liaison with Police colleagues to ensure joint QA
Increased complaints and elected member enquiries	High	Medium	Other parts of the council will need to support