

## **Phase 2 Outcome Measure of impact**


**Quality Assurance – Hearing the Voice of the Children Young People and Parent / Carers**
*Understanding the impact of what we do*

**Quality Assurance – Audit Activity**  
*Understanding quality of practice*

Corporate responsibility for the help and protection of children and those in care / care leavers, so this is prioritised and embedded across the council and partnerships.

Our corporate responsibility to children will be evident in our council priorities, policies and development plans

Children and Families will tell us that they believe Herefordshire is a good place to live

Management oversight and grip across the service to include clear structures and service pathways, and regular and effective supervision.

Audits will show an improving picture on the quality and timeliness of managerial decisions

Staff will tell us they benefit from regular and reflective supervision

Practice standards will be in place to guide best practice within and across the services

Monitoring and tracking to prevent drift and delay. This includes the monitoring and tracking of children in the Public law Outline (PLO), permanence planning, children subject to deprivation of liberty orders and those placed in unregistered children's homes

Our care proceedings will be completed in 26 weeks or we will know why not achieved

We will visit children in care in timescales to meet need and see how they live. They will tell us they feel happy and safe with carers

We will have timely and robust managerial oversight and clear best interest decision making for children subject to DoLS and those in unregistered placements.

Children subject to SGO will have good support to promote long term permanence

Timely and effective multi-agency arrangements ensuring children are protected receive care if required.

Repeat Social Work Assessments, children on requiring repeat CP plans will be lower than national

Our protection and care planning meetings and reviews will show timeliness and good multi-agency attendance

Partnership concerns will be addressed through a timely escalation process to resolution

The timely and robust identification of a multi-agency response to children & young people at risk of harm, including, but not limited to, the response to pre-birth children and babies, 16- and 17-year-olds who present as homeless, children living in private fostering arrangements and children who go missing from home and care.

Our contacts, referrals, strategy and assessments will be completed in timescales with full partnership contributions

Visits and assessments to 16/17yr will be completed within timelines and they have made informed decisions about their welfare & accommodation

The partnership will ensure early sharing of information on ~~unborns~~ in need/at risk and assessments and appropriate plans will be in place by birth. Those in care proceedings will have timely progression to permanency, including foster to adopt placements

CYP will have told us why they went missing and we will address this in their plans

The availability of support and services to meet children and young people's needs, including timely access to therapeutic interventions, access to dentistry, life-story work, emotional and mental health support, help for young people to support transitions into

Our children in care will have up-to-date Health Assessments and Dental Checks

They will tell us they have support with their emotional well being

Audit will show we have good quality life story work and letters in place

CYP will tell us they know why they are in care and that they have contributed and understand their plans

The quality of practice including assessments, plans, planning and purposeful visits that are responsive to risk and need

Visits & Assessments will be timely and our QA audits will show an increasing positive trend on the quality of visits and plans and evidence appropriate step up and down as plans progress

CYP and parents will tell us they can access their workers, have contributed to and understand the plans in place

The sufficiency and stability of staff across the workforce, sufficient numbers of Foster Carers, so children receive a timely response to having the service.

Our workforce data will show an improving picture on permanency and stability in agency staff

Children will have fewer changes in social workers

More children will be in family care and their placements stable

Children will tell us they feel happy and safe in care and that they know how to raise their worries and make complaints

Performance and quality assurance arrangements to support and test service improvements.

QA activity embedded across all services areas

A range of opportunities for Children & Young People and Parents to tell us how they have experienced and benefited from our services will be in place

Learning from both shared and developed practices identified

**Quality Assurance – KPIs**  
*Timeliness of workload and workflow*

**Progress is built on partnerships: partnership activities will be delivered through:**

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership: Herefordshire Council Corporate Parenting Board: SEND Partnership: Health and Wellbeing Board: Children's Partnership

Oversight and coordination of this plan is through the Improvement Board  
Evidencing our progress and outcomes will be shared through regular Ofsted monitoring visits

## Ofsted Recommendation

Corporate responsibility for the help and protection of children and those in care and care leavers, so this is prioritised and embedded across the council and partnerships

- Ofsted found that there was a “***stronger understanding and commitment across the council to children who need the support of children's social care and that this was reflected in its corporate plans, priorities and the commitment to developing “Child Friendly Herefordshire”*** and the workforce reported feeling well supported by line managers, colleagues and leaders
- **Your Voice Matters: We Say They Do” group** re-launched for children in care and care experienced young people. YP undertook a ‘take over’ of the Corporate Parenting Board April.25. .
- **Complaints have reduced from 102 (23/24) down to 75 (24/25) and we have received 126 external compliments (now recorded)**
- **Assessment locality teams received 51 families feedback** to evaluate service standards. Feedback indicates that children and families appreciate the support received and understand the reasons for our involvement. As a service we are benefitting from ongoing encouragement the social workers are receiving in this process.
- **Safeguarding locality received 20 families** feedback - All the families said their plan was right one for them, child in need or child protection
- **Support, Benefits and Opportunities for our Foster Carers** - Herefordshire foster carers receive a wide range of support, benefits, include a financial incentive for successful referrals of new foster carers, council tax relief, and new funded Specialist Foster Carer programme launched

## Ofsted Recommendation

The sufficiency and stability of staff across the workforce, including sufficient numbers of Foster Carers, so children receive a timely response to having their needs identified and met across the service

- **Permanency for Social Work Managers** managers 85% (from 70%) **Social Workers** 42% from 29%
- **Associated reduction in the number of agency staff** 81 (January 2024) down to 41 (February 2025)
- **Allocation stability for children in care** 43% from 31% through 24/25
- **Allocation stability index Child Protection** 36% from 29% through 24/25
- **8 new approved mainstream carers.** 12 in assessment. This growth is in contrast to national trends.
- **478 fostering training courses completed through our new provider in three months** compared to 229 in the prior eight months. Feedback new provider course more accessible
- **Children in FC placements 73.2% above SN**
- **Recommissioned Short Breaks.** Evaluation Panel, **including young people**, considered 24 applications received (for over £250k worth of funds). 7 successful applications awarded funds.
- **In 2024-25, 121 fostering enquiries** compared to 50 enquiries the year before. We have improved advertising and better use of digital platforms radio, cinema, social media, Google, YouTube, and electronic billboards.
- **9 young people gave feedback regarding placement moves** and to gain their views on their experiences. Themes that emerged were that they shared 6/9 felt safe in their placement, with 3 expressing they felt unsure at the time of the feedback. All shared they felt supported in their moves and that professionals were working well together

## Ofsted Recommendation

The timely and robust identification and multi-agency response to children and young people who are at risk of harm, including, but not limited to, the response to pre-birth children and babies, 16- and 17-year-olds who present as homeless, children living in private fostering arrangements and children who go missing from home and care.

- **Timeliness** in management of Contacts 97%, Referrals 95% Strategy Discussions 91% – **sustained through 24/25**
- Ofsted found that “*a range of professionals and agencies are involved and make an important contribution to assessments as well as provide the support which families need*” and Child protection “*strategy meetings are well attended by multi agency partners*”.
- **We have increased the number of children we see for welfare return interviews after missing episodes** from home to 196 from 139 the previous year and missing from Care to 176 from 130. Timeliness in completing these also improved to 80% (home) and 74% (care)
- **Repeat referrals have reduced** from 23.5% (EoY 23/24) to 22.4% (EoY 24/25)
- **Strategy discussion and timeliness has been sustained** above 93% year average an improvement on 90% year average in 23/24
- There are stronger working relationships at Pre-Birth Panel which involves timely sharing of information and strengthening support plans for unborn children to care experienced parents
- **Repeat Child Protection has reduced** in year from 27% down to 21%
- **Child Protection Conferences Feedback: 22x parents** said they knew what to expect; had received and understood the Social Worker report; spoken to the Chair; felt listened to and were treated with respect. Participants had a good understanding of the Child Protection Plan and how the Plan could end.

## Ofsted Recommendation

The quality of practice including assessments, plans, planning and purposeful visits that are responsive to risk and need.

- **In year audit evidences improvement in case audit judgements:** Good rising to 43% from 27%, Requires Improvement dropping from 65% to 45% and Inadequate dropping from 9% to 6%
- Ofsted found that “***many social workers developed relationships with parents and children in a skilled way***”
- Ofsted found good quality and timeliness in our social work assessments. *Feb 25*
- **Timeliness of visits to children subject of Child protection** sustained above 95% through 24/25
- **Timeliness of ICPC** a concern mid year and improved under new management Q3/4.
- **Timeliness of RCPC sustained** average through year at 94%
- 99.5% children on Child Protection with an up to date plan in place through 24/25



## Ofsted Recommendation

Timely and effective multi-agency arrangements to ensure children are protected and enter care when required.

- Feb 25 Ofsted found: “**Children received into care appropriately to protect from further harm**”
- **Timeliness of visits to Children in Care sustained 80%**
- Timeliness of Child in Care Reviews at 98.9%
- 100% of children in care with an up to date care plan
- C&YP participated in some way within their Child Looked After Review meeting 100% time.
- **Repeat social work Assessments have reduced from 28% to 23%** which evidences the quality of support is improving and children and families are receiving the right plan of support upon closure.
- **Child Looked After Review meetings, C&YP Feedback** 14x children and young people said they knew what to expect; had spoken to the IRO and knew how to contact their IRO. Shared that they were able to share their views; felt respected, listened to and understood their care plan. All respondents shared positive comments about having choice about their review meeting with regard to venue, time, attendees
- Tracking of multi-agency escalations shows that the multi-agency professional differences policy is being followed, and more escalations are being resolved at earlier stages, and within expected timescales.
- Of 99 families asked 44.5 % said professionals worked “very well” together and 37.5% said “fairly well” Only 18% said not well

## Ofsted Recommendation

Monitoring and tracking to prevent drift and delay. This includes the monitoring and tracking of children in the Public law Outline (PLO), permanence planning, children subject to deprivation of liberty orders and those placed in unregistered children's homes

- Care Proceedings timeliness is in top quartile - **Improved timeliness of Care proceedings in 26 weeks** : Herefordshire averages 24 weeks against national average of 36 weeks
- Restorative Practice has reduced our PLO/ Care Proceedings: 21 new cases issued 24/25 compared to 41 the previous year.
- Six young people placed during the year in an unregistered setting through 24/25 – all short term



## Ofsted Recommendation

The availability of support and services to meet children and young people's needs, including timely access to therapeutic interventions, access to dentistry, life-story work, emotional and mental health support, help for young people to support transitions into independence and sufficient suitable accommodation.

- SEND inspectors found '*children and young people with SEND known to early help services access swift support from education, health and social care teams where appropriate*'.
- SEND inspectors described effective and appropriate support for disabled young people who are leaving care. '*Appropriate support to develop their independence skills for when they reach adulthood, and they are involved in preparing their pathway plan. and 'Disabled children and young people who receive a service from social care are well supported into adulthood.'*
- For kinship carers, most placement losses were due to Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) being granted. While this reduces the number of fostering households, it represents a positive outcome for our children and young people, offering greater permanency within their family networks.
- **Our overall number of children placed in a family-based setting is 73% above national average 71%.**
- The percentage of dental checks has remained stable at 56% on review we have gathered child/young person feedback and understand many as having a reluctance or phobia which prevents them accessing checks. Support to address this is being provided via a joined-up approach by carers, looked nurses and social workers.

## Ofsted Recommendation

**Management oversight and grip across the service to include clear structures and service pathways, and regular and effective supervision.**

- Staff told Ofsted they benefitted from regular and reflective supervision that provides helpful reflection and direction
- KPI timeliness of supervision up from 52% - 82% across the Safeguarding services
- Service Manager Leadership and Management programme delivered to all our Service Managers
- The partnership has established a new multi-agency dataset and auditing schedule with findings regularly reviewed with a focus on action and impact// local and national lens.
- The National Panel has agreed with the recommendations from all Herefordshire Rapid Reviews completed in 2024/25.

## Ofsted Recommendation

Performance and quality assurance arrangements to support and test service improvements.

- *Feb 25 Ofsted found: A wider breadth of quality assurance activity gives leaders a stronger line of sight on the quality of practice. This includes a broader range of targeted audits on areas of service or cohorts of children who are more vulnerable. Feedback from children and parents is much more embedded into audits, which provides more meaningful insight into the experience and impact of practice for those who receive support from children's services. Audits identify issues to improve the service as well as more practice improvement*
- **109 families have given us direct feedback since we introduced service user feedback Sept 24.** Overall this is consistently positive feedback with 87% reporting able to share their views, 80% understanding why they had a social worker and 80% feeling the intervention met all or most of their needs and 80% reporting professionals worked well or "really well" together
- **We have revised our audit processes and tools:** Grade descriptors, moderation and case audit forms.
- **We have developed our overarching QA Framework** and embedded into practice an overarching programme and our Service Area QA programmes.
- **We can see that we have increased the number of cases overall graded as in Good Q1- Q3 and for the first time this year seen Outstanding practice in Q4.**
- Review of our complaint management completed with now all stage 1 complaints being investigated by a QA officer who is independent of the case and each investigation starts with a mtg with the complainant.
- In Early Help we collect regular SU feedback to understand impact; In 2024/25 174 evaluations from parents and 234 evaluations from children. The average increase in score comparing the beginning and end scores was **2.3**.