



Herefordshire Children's Services and Partnership Improvement Plan Phase 2: July 24

Welcome to Herefordshire's Children's Services and Partnership Improvement Plan. This plan builds on the developments and progress of the Children's Services Improvement Plan 2022 that responded to the inadequate judgment arising from the Ofsted *Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services* (ILACS) framework in July 2022.

This plan recognises that whilst there have been evidenced signs of improvement in some services there is much more to do to ensure that best practice is our norm and that all children, young people and families receive the help, support and protection they need.

Our Shared Vision

We believe that children and young people thrive best in their **family care**, within **highly effective schools** and in **flourishing communities**. Our initial plan focused on the immediate actions of response to the priorities identified in the ILACS inspection and we have worked to put in place **systems and processes that support staff to deliver good services** and to develop a stronger Quality Assurance and strategic approach to service development to **ensure we understand how our services are experienced and what difference we are making**.

This plan reflects our collective drive and commitment to increase the pace of improvement focussing on four fundamental foundations of good practice that will make a real difference:

1. **Building Relationships** – ensuring children, young people and families have their views heard and taken into account through purposeful visiting
2. **Quality of assessments** – ensuring children, parents, carers and partner agencies contribute to assessments that build on their strengths
3. **Quality of our plans and planning** – ensuring plans are focused with outcomes for children and young people that are clear and measurable and that reduce risk and achieve permanency in safe, stable, loving care arrangements
4. **Supervision and management oversight** – ensuring staff have the right support, guidance, challenge and conditions to provide good quality services to the children and families they work with.

I hope this plan assures our children, young people and families that we remain fully committed to making the improvements required to our services and I want to thank them for their ongoing engagement with our staff and services.

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**The Herefordshire Council Plan
2024-2028**



Vision

*Delivering the best for Herefordshire
in everything we do.*



What Herefordshire will look like in 2028

We asked people to describe the Herefordshire they would like to see in 2028 in three words. Safe, happy and healthy were the words most commonly used by respondents.

People - Helping the most vulnerable is important - help those who need it

Place - Tackling pollution of the River Wye, making the built environment more attractive

Growth - Road infrastructure needs to happen before employment land is developed to enable growth in a sustainable way

Transformation - Departments working better together, for the customer

Ofsted Recommendations

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

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

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

■ 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.

■ 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.

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

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

Action and Impact 2022 -2024

Herefordshire Children's Services

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). We have strengthened the arrangements and resources in MASH, introduced a robust triaging system to RAG rate contacts to ensure that contacts are progressed according to need and risk, and increased staffing to ensure that contacts/referrals and assessments are responded to quickly and consistently and that the multi-agency response to risk through strategy meetings is effective.

Impact:

- Contacts progressed within 72hrs: 2022/23: 76% increased to 89% for 2023/24
- Referral decision within 24hrs: 22/23: 79% increased to 89% for 23/24
- Number of Strategy discussions held within 48hrs of the referral – 22/23: 96.51% decreased to 92.5% for 23/24
- Timeliness of SWA with 45days : 22/23: 54% increased to 79% for 23/24

Workforce: We committed to improving our sufficiency and stability of staff:

Impact: 23/24 we have increased our social work establishment by an additional 15 Social Workers and 8 newly qualified Social Workers. The Social Work Academy works in partnership with Coventry University to do the SW apprenticeship. By September 2024; 12 apprentices will have completed their apprenticeship and begun their ASYE with us. Six of these have now completed their ASYE with us. We are currently working in partnership with Coventry University and by September 2024 we will have 9 apprentices undertaking their apprenticeship with Coventry in addition to a further three apprentices finishing their apprenticeship programme with the University of Kent.

In September 2024; a further 5 Herefordshire Council employees will begin their apprenticeships.
The number of **permanent Social Workers has increased from 51/124 (41%) to 74/144 (51%)**

Family Based Care: We have increased the support in place for our Foster Carers to ensure our Children in Care can have family based, best quality care and placement stability.

- **March 2022:** 87 Foster Carers households; 43 Connected Care households
- **March 2023:** 104 Foster Carers households; 49 Connected Care households
- **March 2024:** 87 Foster Carers households; 66 Connected Care households – increasing the number of children we care for through connected persons

Training for Foster Carers: 22/23: 339 online training courses were completed.

23 /24: 612 online training courses were completed. An increase of 80.5% on the last year

Quality Assurance – understanding ourselves and the difference we make. We have developed and implemented our QA and performance management reports to ensure we can know ourselves better, monitor the progress and outcomes we are achieving. We have reviewed and revised our practice standards with increased management oversight of case work to ensure staff are supported and guided to delivering best practice and management grip.

Impact: December 2023 – March 2024, we are seeing a higher number of audits graded Requires Improvement versus Inadequate, indicating a positive trajectory towards improving the quality of practice.

- November 2023; 35% of audits were rated as Inadequate, 38% were rated as Requires Improvement and 22% as Good.
- March 2024; 23% of audits were rated as Inadequate, 50% were rated as Requires Improvement and 27% as Good.

Right services at the right time. Through improving partnership working and better management oversight, we have been able to ensure families are provided with support at the earliest opportunity and are effectively protected from harm without delay.

Impact:

- The proportion of **Early Help Assessment** completed by partner agencies has increased from 49% at 22/23 to 67% 2023/24
- The **Children’s Help and Advice Team** (CHAT) opened a telephone help and support line January 2023. Approximately, 50% of the 750 calls to the line in 2023/24 have been from families. They have been supported with signposting or advice and guidance or through an early help assessment being completed or in calls referred to MASH if a safeguarding concern was identified. Receiving the right help at the right time.
- **Supporting Families** in 2022/23 early help achieved 160 payment by results, this is 160 families who achieved all their outcomes and sustained these changes for a minimum of 6 months. In 2023/24 early help supported 225 families to meet their outcomes and sustain them for 6 months, an increase of 65 families
- **Care Proceedings and PLO: 23/24;** 49% of children have concluded PLO in 16 weeks or less compared to 22% during the year 22/23. However our timeliness in Care Proceedings remains a concern with 62 cases in 22/23 with 68% completed in 26 weeks and 50 families in 23/24 where 56% completed in 26 weeks

Practice Model: We have begun our programme of “restorative practice” – this is our chosen model of practice that realises the need to have strong relationships between children, families and practitioners and within families and their networks to bring about change, recognising their strengths and working with them at the lowest level of intervention to safely address need and risk. **To date 500+ staff from across the Children’s Services directorate have been trained**

Impact:

- Children with a Child in Need Plan children has reduced from 105 (2022/23) to 88 (2023/24) per 10,000
- S.47 enquiries has reduced from 371 (2022/23) to 269 (2023/24) per 10,000.
- Children subject to a Child Protection Plan reflects a reduction from 66 (2022/23) to 54 (23/24) per 10,000
- Children in Care has reduced from 121 (2022/23) to 112 (2023/24) per 10,000.
- **Phase 2: Training for our workforce and partners will continue so that families receive a consistent approach to our work with them.**

The Herefordshire Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (HSCP) review has completed setting priorities and aligning the HSCP plan with the Improvement Plan. Key activities completed and Phase 2 progress outlined below:

- A review of **Partnership Professional Differences Escalation process** was completed and new process was successfully used to resolve a number of cases through stages 2/3 and one in stage 4 in year
- A **MASH and multi-agency data set agreed and reports to Quality & Effectives sub group – Phase 2: scrutiny oversight at the Designated Lead Partners forum (Working Together 2024).**

- The **HSCP Child Neglect Strategy** was approved and published May 2024. This strategy strengthens the application of Graded Care Profile 2, and introduces the Understanding Child Neglect training course and additional resources and tools to support practitioners, including a Child Neglect Screening Tool. **Phase 2: we will monitor numbers and outcome for children on children protection due to Neglect**
- The **Get Safe model** for child exploitation and contextual safeguarding was launched on 30 January 2024 and is operational. **Phase 2 will include MA audit of Get Safe identification and outcomes**
- **Trauma-Informed Practice** training was commissioned and will run through 2024. April 2024, 161 learners attended. **Phase 2: target 340 learners will attend the training by the end of 2024.** Roll-out Restorative Practice training to multi-agency professionals, including promotion of Think Family approaches
- **“Section 11” Self-Assessment** was completed in 2023; Check and Challenge sessions with all agencies involved have been completed (Dec 2023 and April 2024). **Phase 2: Tracking of agencies’ actions identified in the self-assessment and check and future challenge sessions.**
- **Multi-Agency Practitioner Forum** April 2024 - attended by 95 delegates. Presentations were on Updates to WT23, learning from Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Recognising and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse.
- **Domestic Abuse training** has been a priority and programme of 15 specialist course developed with training 22-24 attended by 1,318 staff across the partnership over the two years and 15 courses
- **Phase 2: Children’s Services and the partnership will be updating procedures to reflect Working Together 2024 Development and Learning**

Corporate Parenting Board

Herefordshire CPB underwent a peer diagnostic and the board completed a self-assessment with support from the LGA during 2022. This was picked up later in 2023 following delays due to key personal changes and two further workshops and observations facilitated.

- Two “All Member” sessions held in 2023 and a session with Corporate Leadership Team in February 24 – focused on Legislation, Roles and Responsibilities of Corporate Parents and the partnership giving a foundation of understanding and bringing commitment alive.
- There is a full Corporate Parenting plan in place – revised for progress April 24 and will continue through 2024/25

Phase 2 will focus on:

- Capturing the voices of children and young people and feeding this into strategic development.
- Empowering members of the Corporate Parenting Board to use their influence in their organisations, wards and communities to improve outcomes for Looked after Children and Care Leavers.
- Complete the re-refresh and develop measures for what good looks like in Corporate Parenting
- Ensure the Corporate Parenting action plan for 24/25 is recognised and coordinated with the Council overall plan and its mission for 2028

Governance and Monitoring

Improvement Board

The Improvement board is the key partnership body with ownership of the improvement plan and responsibility for oversight of its delivery.

The Improvement Board is made up of strategic representation from partner agencies, working together to agreed terms of reference.

The Improvement Board is chaired by the DfE appointed Children’s Commissioner.

Progress against the Improvement plan will be reported to the Children’s Improvement Board on a six weekly basis.

Reporting will include, reports on the three dimension of our quality assurance programme that tell us, what we are doing, how well we are doing it and what difference it is making. Reports will include:

- A performance DASH board of key indicators linked to the Improvement Plan.
- Audit activity reports including multi-agency audits. Service User feedback reports

The Partnerships

The improvement plan has identified key partnership forums to carry out and oversee aspects of the plan relevant to their forums. These forums are set out below:

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)

Co-ordinates safeguarding across the partnership through the statutory partners as set out in Working Together 2023

Partnership Executive Group

Created with Senior Leaders membership of the three safeguarding partners, LA, Police and Health for the purpose of ensuring any barriers identified in partnership work are removed to ensure delivery of the improvement plan at pace

Corporate Parenting Board

Statutory responsibility to ensure looked after children and young people grow up having the same opportunities as their peers and to support children leaving care to live successful independent lives.

Children & Young People Strategic Partnership

This multi-agency strategic partnership will oversee the delivery of the Herefordshire CYPP supporting, challenging and resolving partnership barriers to delivering good quality services

SEND Partnership – working specifically to ensure children with additional needs are recognised and engaged in service improvement and development

The Monitoring

Partnership forums that will oversee , monitor and support progress reflecting Childrens Services as a priority

Herefordshire Council Directorate and Political Leadership Teams undertakes shared ownership for the coordination and delivery of the council’s plan. The Children’s Improvement plan is a HCC priority

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Undertakes the scrutiny of all Children and Young People services in Herefordshire including monitoring and challenging the progress and implementation of the Improvement Plan

Health & well Being Board and Children and Young People Partnership provides leadership across the partnership to the people, communities, cultures and organisations that are delivering Herefordshire’s vision of *keeping children and young people safe and giving them a great start in life.*

Childrens Corporate Leadership Board will review the progress against the plan quarterly alongside the wider children’s performance and finance monitoring

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

Level 2: Actions and Measures of Progress and Success

Ofsted Recommendation 1		
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.		
Measures of success		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 		
Actions we will take	Person/Forums	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm appropriate funding to support children services improvement against a three year plan 	Herefordshire Council	April 24 - 27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop ways to capture voices of Children and Young people cross services who are subject to children services intervention as Children in Need of Support, Care or Protection and use this to inform future strategic developments for the LA and Partnership 	Corporate Parenting Safeguarding Partnership Integrated Children Partnership (ICB)	Reporting quarterly and annually
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower and challenge members of the Corporate Parenting Board to use their influence in their organisations, wards and communities to improve outcomes for Looked after Children and Care Leavers. 	Cllr Powell/Tori Lynch Corporate Parenting Board	2024 Thereafter qrtly reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the apprenticeship programme for Care Leavers within Herefordshire Council – starting within children’s services and extending apprenticeships opportunities in all areas and major contracts. 	Tori Lynch Childrens Directorate Leadership Team	Aug 24 (Childrens) 12 cross council 24/25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Improvement Plan for Children Services and Corporate Parenting plan for 24/25 is recognised, reported on and coordinated within the Council’s overall plan and its mission for 2028 with measures on outcomes forming part of the Council score card 	Herefordshire Council Childrens Directorate Leadership Team	Sept 24 March 25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Child Friendly Herefordshire – learning from the Leeds initiative develop Herefordshire council plan priorities: People/Place/Growth/Transformation for children and young people. 	Council Leader & Lead Member for Childrens / CEO / DCS - Leeds Partner	2024 - 2027
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture the voices of Children and Young people across Herefordshire and use this to inform partnership priorities and strategic development. 	Safeguarding Partnership CYP Strategic Partnership	24/25/26

Ofsted Recommendation 2		
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		
Measures of success		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 will be stable • Children will tell us they feel happy and safe in care and that they know how to raise their worries and make complaints 		
Actions we will take	Person/Forums	Timescale
Undertake a social work voice of the workforce (VoSW) survey – measure progress against 2022/23 feedback through regular surveys and engage in LGA employee standards health check	PSW - Dylan Harrison	Sept /Oct 24
Develop a workforce board and implement the workforce strategy of Children Social Care with a focus on recruitment of social worker and multi - disciplinary roles that can offer relationship based practice	Rachel Gillott Workforce Board	Sept 24
Develop the CSC communication plan to ensure the improvement plan, it's measures, learning and practice developments are understood and owned throughout the workforce	Luenne Featherstone and CSC leadership	Sept 24
Further develop performance reporting from Mosaic to provide both self-service and provided performance reports to individual and managers to enable effective workload management	Jess Karia Claire Peet	2024/25 Reporting qrtly
Complete training across CSC workforce of the Restorative Practice model of intervention and prepare the service for sustainability in mole through train the trainer	John Maynard & CSC leadership	By Dec 24
Complete partnership training in Restorative practice across the partnership and deliver multi agency delivery in practice workshops – use session to promote Think Family approaches	John Maynard - Leeds	Sept – Nov 24 Dec – Mar 25
Review workforce organisational structure and use of the agency staff to ensure we are achieving best value in terms of outcomes for children in quality and stability and best value in financial costs	Tina Russell - DCS	Sept – Dec 24
Deliver against the Fostering Service strategy and improvement plan June 24 – developing the quality assurance programme to ensure we understand the experiences of our children and carers. Implement key recommendations of the Dfe review of fostering and self-assess our systems and process for recruitment and retention of carers - including a pay comparison review	Adele Odili	June 24 – June 25

Ofsted Recommendation 3

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.

Measures of success

- Our contacts, referrals, strategy discussion and assessments will be completed in timescales and have full partnership contributions
- Visits and assessments to 16/17yr will be completed within timelines and we will evidence these young people have made informed decisions about their welfare and accommodation
- The partnership will ensure early sharing of information on unborn in need/at risk and assessments and appropriate safety plans will be in place by birth of the child. Those subject to PLO and Care Proceedings will have contingency plans and timely progression to permanency, including foster to adopt placements where appropriate
- Children missing from care or home will have told us about the “push and pull” factors that led them to go missing and this will be reflected in their plans

Actions we will take	Person/Forums	Timescale
Implement new Working Together arrangements for 2024 including the Engagement and Participation Framework and Think Family Guidance	Safeguarding Partnership (HSCP)	2024/25
Engage the Herefordshire community of families in workshops and surveys to review and update our Safeguarding Threshold of Intervention : Right Help, Right Time	HSCP	Sept- Dec 24
Review the evaluation of Early Help (People Too) and agree plan for the sustainable future of Herefordshire Early Help offer in a “Think Family” model	Nicola Turvey and EH Partnership	July – Sept 24
Complete a review of the targeted audits for SWA undertaken on 16/17yr old presenting as homeless. Add a further audit as necessary to complete learning and ensure compliance and learning is embedded. Seek YP feedback on their assessments and plans	Christine Wellington	July 24
Review practice standards for managing 16/17yrs old homeless presentations and incorporate learning in this area of practice	Christine Wellington	July/Aug 24
Complete a further audit to review impact on practice and compliance against 16/17yrs homelessness standards	Christine Wellington	Dec 24
Complete a review of processes and timeliness for the management and decision making in Private Fostering arrangements.	Jaz McAndrew	Aug 24

Review practice standards to incorporate learning in this area of practice		
Formalise the Early Help offer in schools throughout Herefordshire and co-ordinate development in Supporting Families' to maximise resources for the benefit of families	Nicky Turvey Service Managers	Sept – Dec 24
Complete an audit to review impact on practice and compliance against Private Fostering practice standards	Adele Odili / Debbie Weissang	Jan 25
Develop an annual programme for Private Fostering awareness raising across the partnership	Fostering Comms, Adele Odili	October 24
Undertake a targeted audit of pre-birth cases where parent are care leavers to review quality and timeliness of information sharing, assessment and plans.	Stacie Edwards / Sophie Roberts	Sept 24
Review all cases open to PLO for pre-birth/birth cases from April 24 to review quality and timeliness of PLO proceedings and evaluate the added impact of the pre-birth panel.	Tess Burgess Rachel Gillott	Sept /Oct 24
Develop and disseminate a combined learning review and revised protocol / practice standards as necessary in relation to findings of the PLO case audits. Repeat audit to review impact and compliance	Tess Burgess Rachel Gillott	Oct 24 Feb 25
Review "Push/Pull" factors, patterns, and trends identified from Welfare Return Interviews for children and young people missing from home and care. Develop and disseminate a combined learning review and revise MA protocol / practice standards and consider Welfare Return Interviews (WRI) function/role as necessary.	Holly Powell Amanda Watkins	Sept/Oct 24 Nov/Dec 24
Develop the WRI reporting mechanisms and information / data sharing within services to ensure SW and IRO /CP chairs have and understanding of and can take into account Review data between LA/Police to ensure we have an accurate picture of children and young people missing from home and care	Tori Lynch / C. Wellington Claire Peet	Sept – Dec 24
Cross ref the profile and findings of missing children returns with the Get Safe profiling to identify any support, prevent or disrupt activities the partnership can take fwd. to reduce children going missing from home or care and their exposure to Get Safe vulnerabilities	Holly Powell & Safe /Missing Children Partnerships	Sept/Oct 24
Undertake an annual community launch of Get Safe across Herefordshire to raise awareness amongst children, young people and the community of signs of concern and support services available	Christine Wellington Nicky Turvey Julie Taylor	Annual – March 25

Ofsted Recommendation 4

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

Measures of success

- Visits, Assessments and planning for all children in need of support, care or protection will be timely against national standards.
- Our QA audits will show an increasing positive trend on the quality of visits and plans
- Children and Young People will tell us they can access their workers and have contributed to and understand their plans
- Parents will tell us they have felt able to share their concerns and views and that they understand the plan in place for their children
- Our Targeted QA audit will evidence appropriate thresholds for plans are in place including escalations and step downs

Actions we will take	Person/Forums	Timescale
Complete the development and implementation of the quality assurance framework in each service area ensuring there is a mix of KPI, Audit and service user feedback informing our understanding of quality, timeliness and impact of work	Dylan Harrison CSC Leadership	July – Dec 24
Continue the delivery of learning workshops and briefings on SU feedback, Audit and KPI outcomes to ensure our workforce know what is working well and where developments are needed to improve or services “end to end” through a child’s journey. Understand this from an individual, team and service level to grip improvements	Dylan Harrison CSC Leadership	Monthly
Complete the locality delivery model to ensure the workforce are enabled to maximise time with children and families – reducing travel time and cost and creating a model that promote relational practice amongst professionals	Rachel Gillott	24/25
Develop a range of opportunities to hear the voice of the child in our work and using Surveys, Audit, CYP feedback through compliments and complaints and create a regular Voice of the Child report as a measure of success against the improvement plan	Dylan Harrison CSC Heads of Service	July 24
Continue reporting and analysis on KPI measures on MASH management of contact, referrals and child protection processes to review progress against self, SN and Eng. on demand and outcomes. Include MA attendance at strategy discussions	HSCP Q&E sub group DCS/Leadership	Internal monthly External qrtly reporting
Deliver against the recommendations as set out in the SafeLives Review including evaluation and compliance with DA training for the partnership workforce	Domestic Abuse Partnership	
Deliver against the Leeds improvement programme	John Maynard - Tina Russell - DCS	2024 /25

Ofsted Recommendation 5

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

Measures of success

- Repeat Social Work Assessments and children requiring repeat Child Protection plans will reduce and be lower than national averages
- 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

Actions we will take	Person/Forums	Timescale
Engage the Herefordshire community of families in workshops and surveys to review and update our Safeguarding Threshold of Intervention to build a “partnership” foundation for working “with” families and agreeing right level of intervention at the right time	Safeguarding Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tina Russell • Helen Wain • Kath Cobain 	Sept- Dec 24
Continuing reporting and analysis on outcome measures at the front door for multi-agency management of contact, referrals and child protection processes to review progress against self/ SN/Eng. In relation to demand and outcomes	Safeguarding Q&E sub group	Internal monthly External qrtly reporting
Auditing to identify patterns and trends that lead to repeat referral/assessment/plans for children and sharing targeted learning to effect change	Dylan Harrison Christine Wellington	Sept – Dec 24
Develop reporting mechanism on Multi Agency contributions to child protection processes and children Strategy discussions through to Child Protection conferences	Claire Peet Amanda Sherrard	24
Monitor use of the new multi-agency Professional Differences Escalation processes for effective and timely outcomes for children	Safeguarding Partnership	24/25 annual reporting
QA Audit programme to include a specific reviews of the multi-agency contribution to assessments and children in need of support protection and care planning	Safeguarding Q&E sub group	Qrtly reporting
Parental feedback systems to be developed to confirm their experiences in working with a multi-agency group of professionals and their engagement in child protection conferences	Dylan Harrison	Qrtly reporting

Ofsted Recommendation 6		
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.		
Measures of success		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our care proceedings will be completed in 26 weeks or we will know why this was not achieved and plans will be in place to address delays • Children and young people in care will tell us they feel happy and safe with their carers and are supported in their education and have contact with family in their best interests • We will have timely and robust managerial oversight and clear best interest decision making for children subject to DoLS and those in unregistered placements that have taken the child and young person's views into account. 		
Actions we will take	Person/Forums	Timescale
Identify and audit cases where PLO timeliness is at risk or not achieved to identify actions to retrieve timeliness or identify patterns and trends for learning and practice improvement. Reporting to LFJB and CSC Exec	LFJB sub grp Tess Burgess Rachel Gillott	Quarterly
Confirm KPI to include identification of children on Child Protection at 15mths - have in place a practice standard for a managerial oversight to address any drift / threshold / direction required to progress the plan and undertake audit of the above as targeted audits for managerial compliance.	Rachel Gillott Catherine Harvey Dylan Harrison	Monthly to service / Qrtly to IP board
A monthly court data report using the Legal Tracker will provide us with outcome and timeliness date for PLO and Care proceedings. This will enable us to identify patterns and trends of concern in practice and or teams	Tess Burgess Rachel Gillott	Monthly data qrtly analysis reports
Liaise regularly with the lead Family Judge to seek proactive feedback on positive and concerning practice in relation to care proceedings including Secure and Dols applications, experienced by the family courts	T. Russell / HHJ Cole Snr Legal/CSC	Qrtly mtgs
Review and develop our practice standards for the management of children in unregistered settings ensuring the wishes and outcomes for the child to inform decisions, managerial decisions on record, snr management notifications made and Ofsted notifications sent in a timely way	Tori Lynch Lisa Dudfield Hayley Doyle	August 24
Review the Dispute Resolution process to ensure it understood by all parties, adding value to identifying and addressing drift and delay where it exists and impacts on outcomes for a child being achieved	Dylan Harrison Debbie Weissang	Sept 24
We will have in place a performance report to support managers to oversee timeliness in visits and planning all cases of YP subject to DOLS.	Rachel Gillott Catherine Harvey	July 24
Develop opportunities to hear the voice of the child and carers to seek their experiences on timeliness of their care and child protection plans - this will be supported by statutory reporting on timeliness of visits/ Conferences and CiC reviews.	Dylan Harrison IRO and CP chairs services	In place by Sept 24
Review Permanence, kinship and reunification process – To include: an LRPC peer review of updated policy and proposals to review process and culture on achieving permanency.	John Maynard CPO Permanency TM	Oct- Dec 24

Ofsted Recommendation 7

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.

Measures of success

- 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
- Children and young people will tell us they know why they are in care and that they have contributed and understand their plans
- More children will leave care to permanency via SGO in a timely way

Actions we will take	Person/Forums responsible	Timescales
Deliver and with children and families evaluate the twelve Community Safety funded projects that deliver Early Help and Support to identify those for future long term funding	Nicola Turvey EH partnership & providers	24/25
Evaluate the “My Family, My School, My Community” project to identify long term sustainability of provision in the partnership funding opportunities	Nicola Turvey EH partnership & providers	24/25
Review the pathway and thresholds between Early Help Chat and MASH ensuring they are understood, promote and support partners to gain consent / complete EH interventions, have clear decision making	Nicola Turvey Christine Wellington	August 24
As a local ICB Children partnership we will use our collective data and feedback to understand gaps in services and use this to inform commissioning of early help and emotional health and well-being services at all levels for children in need of support, care or protection	Children’s ICB partnership	24/25
Provide training in Life Story work and be skilled to deliver this for children in care. Audit the quality of “Later life letters” to inform practice development – undertake a practice workshop and develop tools for practice	Dylan Harrison L&D and QA	24/25 Sept 24
Confirm the Special Guardianship offer to promote permanency through SGO in a timely way with an offer that provides a strong practical, emotional and financial support in permanency	Nicola Turvey Jaz McAndrew	Oct 24
We will confirm data on our children registered with dental practice and Dental checks and raise findings with ICB and in service to ensure all children have these in place and up to date.	Tori Lynch/Rachel Gillott	By Oct 24
Engage in the regional Care Leavers forums to ensure HCC Care Leavers have best practice in suitable accommodation, access to education/employment, finances and wellbeing support to independence	Tori Lynch & CPB	24/25
Appointment of lead for the Meadows Contract and the 1fte psychologist post for Children in Care and for 0.5fte therapist post for Care Leavers. Advertisement Summer 24 appointed persons in post by Oct 24	Sonia Upton/Rachel Gillott	Oct 24

Ofsted Recommendation 8		
Management oversight and grip across the service to include clear structures and service pathways, and regular and effective supervision.		
Measures of success		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our QA audits will show a consistent improving picture on the quality and timeliness of managerial decisions • Staff will tell us they benefit from regular and reflective supervision • Staff will have processes in place to guide best practice in case management through services and between teams – audit will show compliance 		
Actions we will take	Person/Forums responsible	Timescales
Create a supervision audit programme to assure ourselves on the quality of supervision for case holding social workers and social care workers and family support staff delivering early help	Tori Lynch Christine Wellington Debbie Weissang	Sept 24 Audit Oct/Nov
Develop our practice standards for managers on recording decisions in the interests of children with rationale and reference to threshold and outcomes so these decisions are auditable, provide guidance to staff and accountability for practice decisions.	Tori Lynch Christine Wellington Debbie Weissang	24/25
Complete a review of the Complaints and Compliments policy, process and culture to ensure we are getting the best learning from complaints, we are celebrating our compliments and have processes that provide assurance on quality and timeliness	Tilly Page Rachel Gillott Andy Lloyd (Leeds)	Aug / Sept 24
Deliver the management oversight and supervision and decision making training to all managers	John Maynard - Leeds	Aug/Sept/Oct 24
Ofsted Recommendation 9		
Performance and quality assurance arrangements to support and test service improvements.		
Measures of success		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QA activity will be embedded across all services areas – reporting quarterly on progress improvement and impact • A range of opportunities for Children, Young People and Parent's to tell us how they have experienced and benefitted from our services in place • Learning from these will be shared and used to developed practice for individuals, teams and services through the child's journey 		
Actions we will take	Person/Forums responsible	Timescale

Review the use of Power Bi and the CSC case file system to ensure permanence data is both self-service and pushed out to manager to enable them to have timely performance information on which to manage workflow and timeliness of practice – providing a headline for deep dive	Jessica Karia / Tina Russell	Summer 24
Complete the development and implementation of the quality assurance framework in each service area ensuring there is a mix of KPI, Audit and Children and Young People Service user feedback informing our understanding of quality, timeliness and impact of work	Rachel Gillott and CSC Heads of Service	July – Dec 24
Practice standards will be in place to promote consistency and good practice across the services	Dylan Harrison Rachel Gillott	24/25

Paul Walker

Tina Russell

Paul Walker - Herefordshire Council Chief Executive

Tina Russell – Director of Childrens Services (Interim)

Simon Trickett

Rachel Jones

Simon Trickett – Chief Executive ICB

Rachel Jones – Assistant Chief Constable – West Mercia Constabulary