



KNOWSLEY CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN

April 2025



**KEY:**

ASYE	Assessed and Supported Year in Employment
AED	Assistant Executive Director
CfC	Cared for Children
CP	Child Protection
CAFCASS	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
CIN	Children in Need
CSC	Children's Social Care
CWD	Children with Disability
DfE	Department for Education
ED	Executive Director
HoS	Head of Service
HR	Human Resources
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
PAs	Personal Advisors
PLO	Public Law Outline
QA	Quality Assurance
RI	Requires Improvement
SDQs	Strength and Difficulty Questionnaires
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

FOREWORD

Children and families in Knowsley deserve the very best services and support across all areas of our work. The Ofsted inspection that took place in November 2024 identified areas where practice is inadequate and that is not acceptable for our children and families.

Knowsley Council's priority is to make the changes and improvements necessary to our services for children and families.

Since the inspection, we have undertaken individual case reviews, made changes to practice and teams and strengthened management oversight. We are implementing extensive training and recruiting additional staff who will support us to meet demand and lower caseloads. We are also adopting a whole Council approach to making the required improvements. Our Improvement Plan is the product of stabilisation and recovery work planned for the next 12-18 months.

We are committed to change that delivers safe and positive outcomes for children and their families. This starts with addressing the weaknesses identified in the inspection – and beyond that in building a service that is resilient, child-focused and offers the highest standards of care for our most vulnerable children and families.

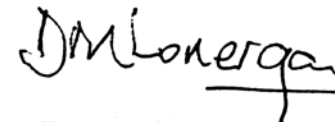
This plan is a call to action for everyone involved in Children's Social Care, the wider Council and the Knowsley Better Together Partnership. This will be a challenging journey; it will take time and many of the issues we face are not within our own power to resolve. Crucially, a priority is to build a permanent stable workforce. Ofsted Inspectors recognised the dedication and commitment of our staff who are trying – in incredibly difficult circumstances – to do their best for children and families. Inspectors did highlight areas of good practice including our Early Help offer, MASH and support for children on the edge of care which must not be overlooked.

Transparency and accountability will be an important part of this improvement journey, and we will work closely with our partners, professionals and children and young people themselves to drive progress. Together we are confident that we will be able to make the improvements needed and that we will be able to provide the services and support children and families need and deserve.



Cllr Graham Morgan

Leader of Knowsley Council



Cllr David Lonergan

Cabinet Member for Children's Services



James Duncan

Chief Executive



Hilary Brooks

Interim Executive Director for Children's Services



OUR IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY AND VISION

To support us to drive forward on our improvement journey, we have re-set our vision and ambition for our children and families, our workforce and our relationship with partners in order that children can grow up happy and healthy and safe from harm in their homes and communities with people who love, cherish and nurture them. Children and families in Knowsley will benefit from purposeful relationships with practitioners that help create opportunities for change. This will support children and young people to make the most of their life chances whilst feeling safe and supported in their community. We are extremely ambitious for our children and their families, to support and empower them to be the best they can be and to have the best start in life. We want to ensure throughout this journey that all children's views and wishes will be heard and involved in decisions about their future.

Leadership across Children's Services has been strengthened. Our improvement plan is based on putting children first in everything we do and improving the quality of practice. We have developed six overarching objectives, providing a framework for our plan to address the findings from the Ofsted inspection. The child's voice and their lived experience is a golden thread throughout and will form part of our measures to indicate change and positive outcomes. The Improvement Plan will be underpinned by detailed workstream action plans that sit within our reporting framework for both quality assurance and performance management.

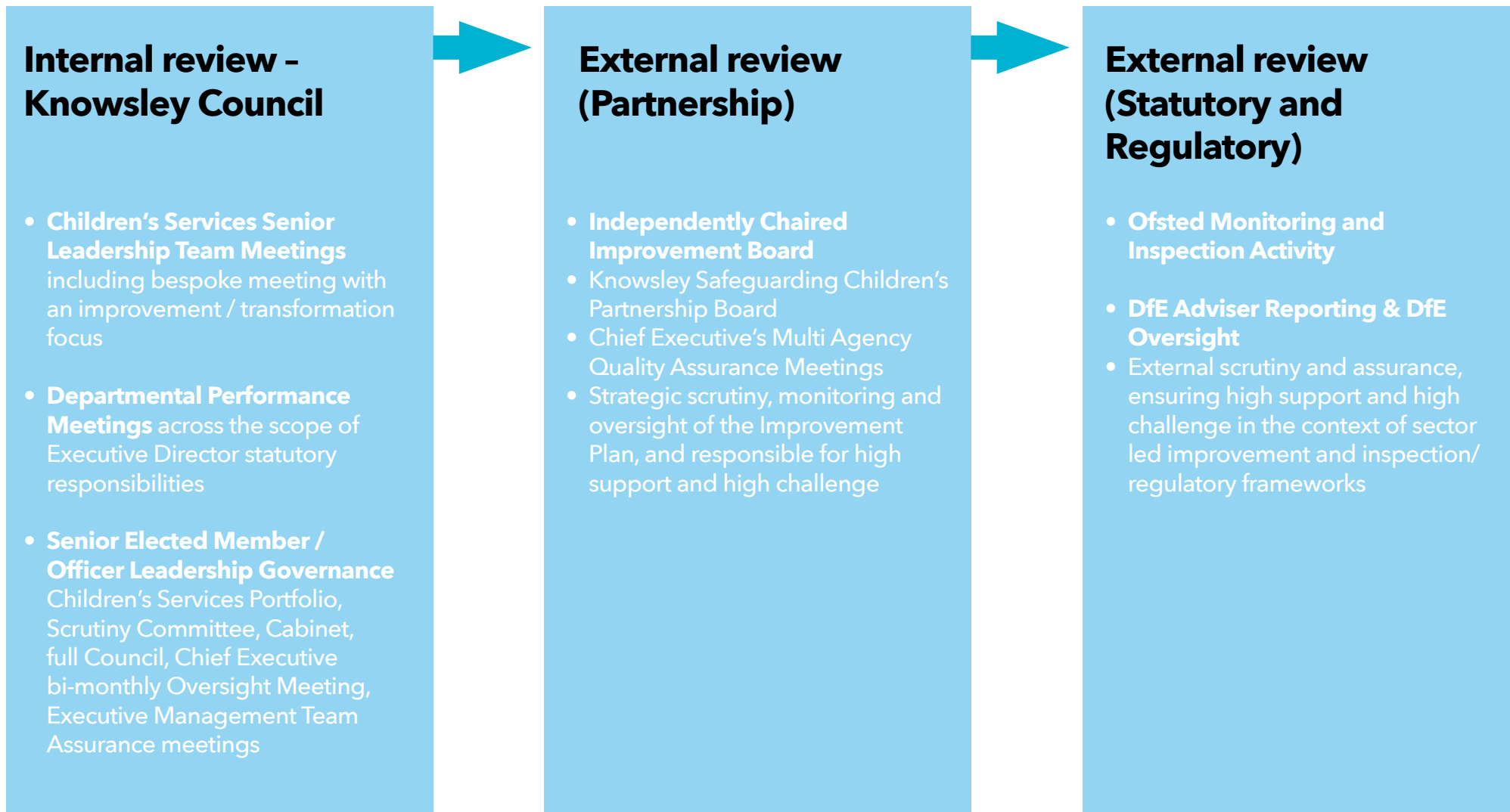
Progress against the Improvement Plan will continually be reviewed with target dates set for completion and progress monitored by our Improvement Board which is chaired by our DfE Improvement Adviser. Each workstream will have cross Council and partnership representation.

The Improvement Plan will be updated in October 2025 after our first Monitoring Visit.

Through this improvement plan, we are committed to continuous development, accountability, and meaningful change, ensuring that children's services are responsive, effective, and capable of delivering the best possible outcomes for children and their families.



GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS – SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW OF THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN



PERFORMANCE AND ASSURANCE CYCLE



OFSTED OUTCOME

JUDGEMENT

GRADE

The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families

Inadequate

The experience and progress of children who need help and protection

Inadequate

The experiences and progress of children in care

Requires improvement to be good

The experiences and progress of care leavers

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate



WHAT NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED

Listed below are the key areas of improvement identified within the Ofsted ILACS report (20 January 2025). This plan and associated service plans provide further detail about how the areas for priority improvement will be addressed.

1. The leadership capacity of social work practice which meets professional and practice standards, to drive the quality of social work interventions with children.
2. The identification of, and response to, risk by social workers in relation to children in need and children subject to child protection plans.
3. The quality of social work practice and management oversight for disabled children.
4. The quality of social work practice, specifically assessments, plans and planning.
5. The social work response to domestic abuse and neglect.
6. The quality of help and support for children with vulnerabilities, specifically young carers and children aged 16 and 17 years who present as homeless.
7. The quality of visiting and direct work with children and young people, including life-story work.
8. The quality of support, advice and guidance for care-experienced young people, including those with additional vulnerabilities, to ensure that this is timely, consistent and responsive to levels of need, up to the age of 25.
9. The caseloads of personal advisers (PAs), to enable them to provide timely advice, support and guidance to care-experienced young people.
10. The quality of supervision and management oversight of social workers and PAs, so that children and young people receive a timely and consistent service that is responsive to their needs.

In addition to the ten improvements underpinning all priorities, Ofsted identified that improvements need to be made in staffing stability and experience across the workforce, as this has been a significant barrier to improving the quality of social work practice, with a high dependency on agency workers.

OBJECTIVES - THE WORKSTREAMS BELOW SET OUT OUR OVERARCHING PRIORITIES WHICH WILL BE THE GOLDEN THREAD.

PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST OBJECTIVES:	LEADERSHIP OBJECTIVES:	QUALITY OF PRACTICE OBJECTIVES:	WORKFORCE OBJECTIVES:	PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:	PERMANENCY OBJECTIVES:
All children are safe from harm and grow up in loving homes	Strong Leadership and governance are able to support and safeguard children and, in time, to reach an 'outstanding' level	Children and families are supported through analytical and reflective practice with clear assessment and plans	A sufficient stable and skilled workforce who understand the needs of children	Partners are fully engaged and participating in the improvement journey	Effective permanence is in place to ensure the full range of permanence options are achieved in a timely way for all cared for children
Children have the best start in life with a happy, healthy and fun childhood	Senior Leaders and elected Members are engaged in the improvement journey	We have a shared, strong and robust social work practice model	All children have a high-quality consistent social worker, PA or lead professional in their lives	The right support is available at the right time and is delivered by all partners	All children receive life story work
Being brilliant at the basics	Partners, Stakeholders and senior Leaders to undertake corporate parenting responsibilities	Leaders, managers and staff have an accurate understanding and oversight of practice, values and behaviours required to drive forward improvements needed	Proactive recruitment, including a grow your own Social Work Academy, ensuring career development in order to build our permanent stable and skilled workforce	An excellent response to Domestic Abuse	Children have permanence at the earliest opportunity
All children's views and wishes are heard and children are involved in decisions regarding their future	Permanent skilled stable workforce	Improved assessment and practice with consistent application of threshold	Improved staff engagement and communication	High quality and effective multi-agency responses to all safeguarding	A choice of good quality placements within the borough
Our children and young people receive the right help at the right time ensuring this brings a positive difference to their lives	A strengthened and developed working practice with children and young people so they feel valued and heard	QA and reflective learnings provide opportunities for staff to evidence their continuous improvements	Effective and skilled line management	Shared commissioning priorities	We will encourage aspiration through education and reduce NEET levels
We are open, honest and working in partnership with children, young people and families – transparent in decision-making			Strengths-based and inclusive culture		Care Experienced People are supported to develop their independence skills and reach their full potential

PUTTING CHILDREN
FIRST OBJECTIVES:

- All children are safe from harm and grow up in loving homes
- Children have the best start in life with a happy, healthy and fun childhood
- Being brilliant at the basics
- All children’s views and wishes are heard and children are involved in decisions regarding their future
- Our children and young people receive the right help at the right time ensuring this brings a positive difference to their lives
- We are open, honest and working in partnership with children, young people and families – transparent in decision-making

PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST – LEAD OFFICER: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
(TRANSFORMATION, FAMILY HELP AND PROTECTION)

Ofsted told us that improvements need to be made in:

- The quality of social work practice, specifically assessments, plans and planning.
- The quality of visiting and direct work with children and young people, including life-story work.
- The identification of, and response to, risk by social workers in relation to children in need and children subject to child protection plans.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Outcomes (How will we know we have made a difference?)
1.1	Fully adopt and embed a ‘Being Brilliant at the Basics’ approach, putting children at the heart of everything that we do: - Assessments - Plans - Visits - Management oversight - Lived experience of the child - Supervision	June 2026	AED (Transformation, Family Help and Protection) and AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency)	Children will benefit from improvements in the quality and consistency of practice. Children who require intervention have robust assessments and child centred plans. Management oversight is on children’s records and shows a defined contribution to decision making and evidence of improved outcomes.
1.2	Review and strengthen practice standards.	September 2025	Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager	Children and young people’s views are evidenced and captured in assessment, plans and visits. Simplifying the professional task to make it more accessible and manageable whilst still improving compliance and quality.
1.3	Embed the revised practice standards to improve the quality and consistency of practice.	June 2026		
1.4	Identifying the enablers of rapid improvement in accordance with Being Brilliant at the Basics and feedback from audits and deep dives.	September 2025		

Measure	Target	Baseline (Feb 25)
Audits showing Requires Improvement or better	90%	82%
% of assessments in timescale.	90%	82%
Stat Visits:		
% CIN	90%	61%
% CP	90%	81%
% CfC	90%	92%
% of Initial Child Protection Conferences within timescales	90%	97%
% of Child Protection reviews within timescales	90%	98%
% of re-referrals	20%	15%
% of cases with management oversight	90%	73%
% of cases with supervisions undertaken	80%	62%

LEADERSHIP OBJECTIVES:

LEADERSHIP – LEAD OFFICER: INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- Strong Leadership and governance are able to support and safeguard children and, in time, to reach an 'outstanding' level
- Senior Leaders and elected Members are engaged in the improvement journey
- Partners, Stakeholders and senior Leaders to undertake corporate parenting responsibilities
- Permanent skilled stable workforce
- A strengthened and developed working practice with children and young people so they feel valued and heard

Ofsted told us that improvements need to be made in:

- The leadership capacity of social work practice which meets professional and practice standards, to drive the quality of social work interventions with children
- The quality of supervision and management oversight of social workers and PAs, so that children and young people receive a timely and consistent service that is responsive to their needs.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Outcomes (How will we know we have made a difference?)
2.1	Senior leaders are visible and accessible within the service so that front-line staff feel inspired, motivated, that risks are shared and that they are included in a joint improvement programme.	April 2025	ED – Children’s Services	Ensure all senior managers have regular and genuine engagement with front line staff.
2.2	Continuous staff engagement is established as a culture including monthly sessions with the whole staff group to deliver updates and progress, hear feedback and implement changes.	March 2025		Staff feel heard and listened to, engaged and part of the improvement journey.
2.3	Secure continuous support from the wider Council to ensure our Corporate Parenting responsibilities are fulfilled and enable tangible improvements for children and young people.	February 2025	Chief Executive ED – Children’s Services	Whole Council approach is in place and the Elected Member and Officer Leadership of the Council recognise and prioritise the needs of children and this is reflected in corporate decision making, scrutiny activities and activity of the Improvement Board.
2.4	Maintain relationships with the wider Council and establish robust mechanisms with support services and wider departments who are front-line facing and contribute to delivering improvements.	March 2025		
2.5	Review the priorities of the Corporate Parenting Board with Cabinet Member.	February 2025	AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency)	Partners are aware and actively contribute to their corporate parenting responsibilities, and services for children in care and care experienced improve as a result of the strategic overview of corporate parenting board.
2.6	Ensure appropriate staffing structures, roles, functions are fit for purpose.	May 2025	AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency) and AED (Transformation, Family Help and Protection)	The Children’s workforce is predominately permanent staff. Social workers have manageable caseloads and are able to undertake quality work with children and families. Children do not have multiple changes of social worker.
2.7	Ensure a clear link between Children’s Improvement Plan and Safeguarding Partnership Board to improve outcomes for children. Review effectiveness of the Safeguarding Board.	June 2025	ED - Children’s Services Chair of Safeguarding Partnership Board	Strategic links in place achieved by clear governance. Appropriate policies will be in place. Multi-agencies working in partnership to implement policies.
2.8	Establishment of an Improvement Board.	February 2025	ED – Children’s Services and DfE Adviser	There will be clear governance and accountability for service improvement and the Improvement Board adds its own value.

Measure	Target	Baseline (Feb 25)
Number of staff engagements / forums held in a year	12	2
Undertaking staff wellbeing surveys in a year	3	0
% of positive responses to staff surveys	Continually increasing	Data not available

QUALITY OF PRACTICE OBJECTIVES:

- Children and families are supported through analytical and reflective practice with clear assessment and plans
- We have a shared, strong and robust social work practice model
- Leaders, managers and staff have an accurate understanding and oversight of practice, values and behaviours required to drive forward improvements needed
- Improved assessment and practice with consistent application of threshold
- QA and reflective learnings provide opportunities for staff to evidence their continuous improvements

QUALITY OF PRACTICE – LEAD OFFICER: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (QUALITY, PERMANENCE AND SUFFICIENCY)

Ofsted told us that improvements need to be made in:

- The quality of social work practice, specifically assessments, plans and planning
- The quality of visiting and direct work with children and young people, including life-story work
- The quality of social work practice and management oversight for disabled children
- The quality of supervision and management oversight of social workers and PAs, so that children and young people receive a timely and consistent service that is responsive to their needs

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Outcomes (How will we know we have made a difference?)
3.1	Review the practice and outcomes of the children with disabilities service and beginning to transform performance, safety, consistency and quality of services.	May 2025	AED (Transformation, Family Help and Protection) HOS – SEND Head of Permanence & Sufficiency	Children with a disability are beginning to receive an improved service and social workers are confident in using communication tools to understand the child’s lived experience. Audits evidence how planning for children with disabilities supports good outcomes.
3.2	Embed the escalation process for IRO’s and CP chairs to ensure challenge and scrutiny is embedded and supporting positive change for children.	June 2025	Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager	Evidence that challenge has improved outcomes for children. Evidence that escalation is used appropriately but sparingly because issues are resolved as early as possible and that escalation of a child’s needs is welcomed and responded to by senior leaders.
3.3	Review and strengthen the participation strategy across Children’s Social Care.	September 2025	Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager	Improved attendance and engagement at Children in Care Council.
3.4	Ensure parents, carers, children & young people’s feedback and engagement is central to our understanding to how effective our frontline work is.	September 2025	AED (Transformation, Family Help and Protection) and AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency) Intelligence and Insight Manager	Children’s surveys indicate their voice is heard and making a difference to their lives and the way services are delivered. Children and young people will say they feel listened to and regularly meet with leaders to share their lived experience. Young children receive the same level of support even though their voices are not as loud.
3.5	Review the QA framework ensuring the auditing of supervision is captured and implement dip sampling.	July 2025	Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager	Senior leaders and managers have detailed understanding of the quality of practice and use this to drive service improvement.
3.6	Ensure mechanisms are in place to integrate learning from QA activity in supervision.	July 2025	QA Team Manager	Improvement in the quality of practice.
3.7	Develop a training programme for staff and managers on how to complete a good and effective audit to support shared ownership and understanding.	July 2025		Good understanding of performance data to identify/ underpin where qualitative analysis is needed.
3.8	Develop a programme of workshops with managers and front-line staff to regularly share learning from quality assurance activity and identify further improvements required.	July 2025		Reducing inadequate audits and increasing RI. Good or outstanding audits evidencing improvements in practice.
3.9	Re-establish monthly performance support meetings with CSC management team.	April 2025		

QUALITY OF PRACTICE OBJECTIVES:

QUALITY OF PRACTICE – LEAD OFFICER: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (QUALITY, PERMANENCE AND SUFFICIENCY)

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- The quality of supervision and management oversight of social workers and PAs, so that children and young people receive a timely and consistent service that is responsive to their needs

Measure	Target	Baseline (Feb 25)
Actions completed following audits	90%	84%
Audits showing Requires Improvement or better	90%	82%

- Children and families are supported through analytical and reflective practice with clear assessment and plans
- We have a shared, strong and robust social work practice model
- Leaders, managers and staff have an accurate understanding and oversight of practice, values and behaviours required to drive forward improvements needed
- Improved assessment and practice with consistent application of threshold
- QA and reflective learnings provide opportunities for staff to evidence their continuous improvements

WORKFORCE OBJECTIVES:

WORKFORCE – LEAD OFFICER: HEAD OF WORKFORCE

Ofsted told us that improvements need to be made in:

- Staffing stability and experience across the workforce, as this has been a significant barrier to improving the quality of social work practice, with high dependency on agency workers.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Outcomes (How will we know we have made a difference?)
4.1	Refresh and re-launch a revised workforce action plan focused on recruitment and retention of staff, linked to the wider Knowsley People Strategy.	June 2025	Head of Workforce	The service has sufficient, suitably qualified staff to deliver high quality services for children and families.
4.2	Explore recruitment of international Social Workers.	April 2025		Morale of staff is high, and feedback is positive.
				New staff have a positive candidate experience and onboarding journey.
4.3	Introduce relevant training programmes to ensure good practice.	October 2025	AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency)	Children will benefit from improvements in the quality and consistency of practice by practitioners throughout Children’s Services.
4.4	Review the Supervision Policy to ensure an improved standard.	July 2025		
4.5	Launch People performance management including performance, wellbeing and feedback discussions.	April 2026	Head of Workforce	
4.6	Review and embed social worker progression policy, allowing for opportunities for upwards as well as sideways progression.	December 2025	AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency)	
4.7	Establishment of a dedicated Practice Improvement team to support the understanding of the quality of practice and support social workers and Personal Advisors in improving the quality and consistency of practice.	February 2025		
4.8	ASYES and social workers who are requiring additional support to be identified and supported through the QA framework.	May 2025	AED (Transformation, Family Help and Protection) and AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency) QA Team Manager	
4.9	Development of a Social Work Academy.	April 2026		

Measure	Target	Baseline (Feb 25)
Vacancies under offer	NA	3
Sickness – average working days lost	8.5	10.8
Turnover Rate – percentage of workforce leaving	12%	11.5%
% of ASYE progressing in planned timescales	90%	81%
Experienced Social Workers in post	64	27
Social Worker agency rate	15%	38%
Social Worker vacancy rate	15%	30%
Social Workers holding 20+ cases	0	24

PARTNERSHIP AND
ENGAGEMENT
OBJECTIVES:

- Partners are fully engaged and participating in the improvement journey
- The right support is available at the right time and is delivered by all partners
- An excellent response to Domestic Abuse
- High quality and effective multi-agency responses to all safeguarding
- Shared commissioning priorities

PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT – LEAD OFFICER: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
(TRANSFORMATION, FAMILY HELP AND PROTECTION)

Ofsted told us that improvements need to be made in:

- The quality of social work practice and management oversight for disabled children.
- The social work response to domestic abuse and neglect.
- The quality of help and support for children with vulnerabilities, specifically young carers and children aged 16 and 17 years who present as homeless.
- The quality of support, advice and guidance for care-experienced young people, including those with additional vulnerabilities, to ensure that this is timely, consistent and responsive to levels of need, up to the age of 25.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Outcomes (How will we know we have made a difference?)
5.1	Training programme to be implemented across the wider partnerships regarding identification of risk and keeping children safe.	November 2025 after full consultation and engagement with partners in a co-production	AED (Transformation, Family Help and Protection) and AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency)	Improved understanding of safeguarding and the lived experience of children who have a disability.
5.2	Improve multi agency response to domestic abuse, in collaboration with the Community Safety Partnership and contribute to the development of the new Domestic Abuse Strategy, and the Violence Against Girls and Women Strategy, focusing on timely and effective early intervention as well as long-term prevention.	December 2025	Head of Family Help and Protection Head of Community Safety	Children and other survivors of domestic abuse in all its forms receive timely intervention and identification of risk and impact. Any ‘missing male/s’ is/are identified and considered in assessments and planning.
5.3	Evidence of Domestic Abuse specialist services involvement are active part of children’s plans.	December 2025	Domestic Abuse Strategic and Commissioning Lead	Effective safety plans are in place to protect children and families.
5.4	Care Experienced Young People have improved outcomes in relation to health, housing and education/employment.	November 2025	Head of Permanence and Sufficiency	All Care Experienced Young People are in suitable accommodation, have right levels of support. Increase of Care Experienced Young People in education, employment and training. Care Experienced Young People have appropriate mental health support.
5.5	Engage partners to review and agree a shared vision in keeping children safe.	June 2025	Corporate Parenting Board ED – Children’s Children’s Safeguarding Partnership	
5.6	The Safeguarding Partnership have identified a shared priority of supporting families at risk of Neglect. An agreed approach and plan will be developed to ensure that families who are at risk of neglect are identified and supported by all partners.	September 2025		Whole system approach to neglect strategies in place that are effective and impact positively on children and families. Clear offer of preventive and supportive programmes in place for neglect
5.7	Strengthen practitioners understanding and response of children at risk of homelessness to reduce the number of children and young people presenting as homeless and ensuring that young people understand their rights.	June 2025	Head of Family Help and Protection Head of Housing & Property	Increased number of successful interventions that prevent homelessness. Improved access to stable housing for Care Experienced Young People
5.8	Relaunch and embed the 16-17 homeless protocol.	September 2025		

PARTNERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:

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- Shared commissioning priorities

PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT – LEAD OFFICER: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (TRANSFORMATION, FAMILY HELP AND PROTECTION)

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Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Outcomes (How will we know we have made a difference?)
5.9	Undertake a review of the referral system and performance systems to monitor waiting lists for young carers to reduce waiting times for support.	May 2025	Head of Prevention and Interventions & Head of Family Help and Protection	Improved outcomes for young carers.
5.10	Explore additional back up capacity within the young carers service when required to ensure children’s needs are assessed in a timely manner.	July 2025		
5.11	Produce the information that will be provided to children and families at the point of referral to Early Help or intervention services to give children and families the relevant advice, support or guidance prior to allocation.	June 2025	Head of Prevention and Interventions Service Manager Prevention and Transformation	Children and Families will have access to support, advice and guidance in a timely manner.
5.12	The SEND Partnership Board and Education Partnership Board will have shared priority for school absence and educational neglect with key focus on children with a social worker and vulnerable cohorts.	September 2025	Head of Education Head of Inclusion Head of the Virtual School	Improved attendance levels.
5.13	School leaders engaged to ensure children and young people are effectively safeguarded and supported.			

Measure	Target	Baseline (Feb 25)
% NEET Improved for Care Experienced People	45%	46%
% of care experienced young people in suitable accommodation	95%	97%
% SDQs completed in time.	95%	73%
% Of Dental checks	95%	63%
% Of immunisations	95%	56%
% Of Health assessments	95%	91%

PERMANENCY OBJECTIVES:

PERMANENCY – LEAD OFFICER: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (QUALITY, PERMANENCE AND SUFFICIENCY)

Ofsted told us that improvements need to be made in:

- The quality of visiting and direct work with children and young people, including life-story work.
- The quality of support, advice and guidance for care-experienced young people, including those with additional vulnerabilities, to ensure that this is timely, consistent and responsive to levels of need, up to the age of 25.
- The caseloads of personal advisers (PAs), to enable them to provide timely advice, support and guidance to care-experienced young people.
- The quality of supervision and management oversight of social workers and PAs, so that children and young people receive a timely and consistent service that is responsive to their needs.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Outcomes (How will we know we have made a difference?)
6.1	Review and refresh Panels for measuring and monitoring permanency planning and transitions.	December 2025	Head of Permanence and Sufficiency	Every child/young person has a permanence plan at the earliest opportunity. Children and young people will have a clear understanding of their plan for their future and will have co-created and co-produced their own plan to the degree possible for every child.
6.2	IRO to monitor progress of children achieving permanency as per statutory requirements.			
6.3	Implement the tracking systems for children PLO and Permanence.			
6.4	Increase the number of Personal Advisors (PAs) to support Care experienced children.	July 2025		Children receive timely support prior to reaching adulthood and report feeling supported through their transition to becoming an adult. Plans for children when they reach 18 are implemented in a timely manner and with the involvement of the Young Person and all Care Experienced Young People up to 25 feel well supported.
6.5	Care experienced children are supported by a PA at 16 and have an up-to-date pathway plan in place.			
6.6	Ensure pathway plans are purposeful, outcome focused and co-produced with young people to drive best outcomes for their futures.	September 2025		
6.7	All plans to include clear evaluation of educational attainment and progress and identify the steps being taken to improve overall outcomes for children and young people.	March 2026	Head of Education Head of the Virtual School	Virtual school and health partners are a visible part of a child's network. Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are done within required timescales and are of good quality. Children and young people who are Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) will have robust NEET planning Care Plans, PEPs and EHCP planning process are all aligned.
6.8	Establish task and finish group for Care Experienced Young People. This will focus on improvements and developments of the service and the wider partnerships support. This will be co-produced with Young People. Relational practice will be evident with all Care Experienced Young People.	March 2026	Head of Permanence and Sufficiency	Care Experienced Young People will be in touch with their PA and developing skills for independence. Care Experienced Young People will feel emotionally supported through effective relational practice. Care Experienced Young People will understand their entitlements and receive appropriate support from partner agencies including health, housing and education.

PERMANENCY
OBJECTIVES:

PERMANENCY – LEAD OFFICER: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
(QUALITY, PERMANENCE AND SUFFICIENCY)

- Effective permanence is in place to ensure the full range of permanence options are achieved in a timely way for all cared for children
- All children receive life story work
- Children have permanence at the earliest opportunity
- A choice of good quality placements within the borough
- We will encourage aspiration through education and reduce NEET levels
- Care Experienced People are supported to develop their independence skills and reach their full potential

Ofsted told us that improvements need to be made in:

- The quality of visiting and direct work with children and young people, including life-story work.
- The quality of support, advice and guidance for care-experienced young people, including those with additional vulnerabilities, to ensure that this is timely, consistent and responsive to levels of need, up to the age of 25.
- The caseloads of personal advisers (PAs), to enable them to provide timely advice, support and guidance to care-experienced young people.
- The quality of supervision and management oversight of social workers and PAs, so that children and young people receive a timely and consistent service that is responsive to their needs.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Outcomes (How will we know we have made a difference?)
6.9	Fostering task and finish group to be established to streamline the foster carer recruitment process, accelerate the recruitment and assessment of foster carers and ensure the foster care offer is competitive for the local market.	March 2026	Head of Permanence and Sufficiency	Timeliness of the assessment and approval process will improve. Knowsley will have a competitive offer to new and existing foster carers.
6.10	All children receive life story work consistent with good practice expectations which is evidenced on children's files.	December 2025		Participation work with children and young people evidences the impact of life story work.

Measure	Target	Baseline (Feb 25)
% Placement stability short term - placement moves	10%	8%
% Placement stability long term - placed 2yrs+	70%	65%
% of care experienced children with a PA allocated	100%	99%
% of care leavers with a pathway plan in place	95%	90%
PEPS are done within required timescales	95%	75%
% of care experienced children in suitable accommodation	95%	97%
% of care experienced children who are NEET	45%	46%
Number of foster carers approved at panel	15	4



