



KNOWSLEY CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN REFRESH

November 25



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FOREWORD

The Ofsted inspection that took place in November 2024 identified areas where practice was inadequate. The Council immediately accepted responsibility that this was not good enough for children and families in Knowsley. In April 2025, Knowsley Council made transforming Children’s Social Care and the delivery of the improvement plan its number one priority to ensure the right changes and improvements necessary were made as soon as possible.

As we progress on our improvement journey, we have reviewed our vision and ambition for our children and families to ensure we are always Putting Children First and that all children are Safe, Happy and Healthy.

Our Improvement Plan, overseen by our Improvement Board Chair and DfE Advisor Anthony Douglas (CBE) has been in place since April 2025. During this time progress has been made which was reflected during our first Monitoring Visit from Ofsted in September 2025.

Children’s Services in Knowsley has improved over the past six months, with a newly settled senior team and enhanced staffing, management, and policies fostering greater collaboration and relational and restorative practice. While investment in staff and leadership continues to show evidenced improvement, we know that further improvements are necessary to reach expected standards and to deliver stronger outcomes for children and families.

Quotes from Children and Families - illustrating the impact we are starting to make and which we plan to build on:

Young person
I absolutely adore (Social Worker). She’s just helpful, been there for me mentally. Helps a lot with my mental health and can always talk to her...she has always done what she said she would do.

Child
My social worker supports me and is always there if I need to talk with her.

Parents - current social worker
is the best we have ever had” with parents reporting they feel listened to.

Foster Carer - described Social Worker as attentive -
Seems like she is here for the children and not just filling paperwork in. Child

Foster Carer
Social Worker is always contactable, open and honest and has always felt listened to them.

To our readers, we promise this is only the start.....

Graham Morgan
Cllr Graham Morgan
Leader of Knowsley Council



David Lonergan
Cllr David Lonergan
Cabinet Member for Children’s Services



James Duncan
James Duncan
Chief Executive



Mark Mirfin
Mark Mirfin
Executive Director for Children’s Services





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

OUR TRANSFORMATION PLAN

During the first 6 months of our improvement journey, we have sought to improve our understanding of where things aren't working across Children's Social Care and use this learning along with feedback from our first monitoring visit to review and refresh the Improvement Plan and the priorities within the plan.

Phase 2 refresh sets out the priorities within our improvement journey up to July 2027. This refresh also includes an outline multi-agency framework until 2030 so that as well as focusing on the next phase up until July 2027, we have added in a longer timeline to set out where we want our improvement journey to end up and reach.

Our improvement activity is supported and driven by strengthened performance management and quality assurance arrangements, with clear lines of accountability that are overseen by a single and multi-agency governance arrangements via Knowsley's Safeguarding Children Partnership which reports into our Improvement Board. As a partnership our mission statement is **"We will work together to safeguard and protect children in Knowsley to enable them to grow up safe, be healthy, feel listened to and given the right opportunities to achieve their potential"**.

In order to achieve this, we will remain focused on the following outcomes:

- The voice of children is fully embedded in practice and service planning.
- All practitioners working with children have the skills needed to help and protect children, are well supervised and well managed.

- All children and their families receive consistent support and are fully involved in making decisions about their lives.
- Front line social work practice is consistently good and effective.
- There is effective multi-agency delivery of early help.
- All partners work together effectively to support and protect the most vulnerable children and families.

Evidencing Improvement Activity and Impact

Improvement priorities set out in this plan will be measured in terms of progressing the pace of improvement activities via a BRAG rating to determine if the progress of improvement activity is on track. This will show the status of the activity being undertaken both in terms of its timeliness and progress.

Details of the BRAG descriptors are as follows:

Blue ratings will indicate when activity has been completed according to agreed plans.

Green ratings will indicate when activity has started, is on track and progressing according to agreed plans.

Amber ratings will indicate where activity has started and although some issues have been identified these are being dealt with but are causing some delay.

Red ratings will indicate where activity has not started, has stalled or stopped due to unresolved issues which are preventing progress, causing delay and presenting significant risks.



PHASE 1 IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE


November 25






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	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
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 child / Supervision	Jun 2026	AED (Transformation, Family Help and Protection) and AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency)		Training has been delivered to staff around the areas of 'Being Brilliant at the Basics' and data is showing compliance has improved significantly meaning most children have up to date assessments and plans with management oversight noted on children's files and children and families receive visits when required. Staff also receive timely supervisions which is providing a platform for learning, reflection, and receiving constructive feedback, which helps with the development of staffs skills and knowledge. Audit activity has demonstrated some improvements in quality of 'Being Brilliant at the Basics'. This priority has been reworded and carried forward to phase 2.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
1.2	Review and strengthen practice standards.	Sep 2025	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead		The Practice standards have been reviewed, strengthened and launched to the service. During phase 2, the Practice Standards will be embedded, and impact will be evidenced.
1.3	Embed the revised practice standards to improve the quality and consistency of practice.	Jun 2026			
1.4	Identifying the enablers of rapid improvement in accordance with Being Brilliant at the Basics and feedback from audits and deep dives.	Sep 2025			Audit activity completed has identified areas of rapid improvement, actions plans have been developed which are being delivered by the Practice Improvement Team supporting the service to ensure delivery of a service with 'Bring Brilliant at the Basics' at the core.

Measure	Target	Feb-25	Oct-25
Audits showing Requires Improvement or better	90%	82%	83%
% of assessments in timescale	90%	82%	87%
Stat Visits:			
% CIN	90%	61%	77%
% CP	90%	81%	89%
% CfC	90%	92%	94%
% of Initial Child Protection Conferences within timescales	90%	97%	93%
% of Child Protection reviews within timescales	90%	98%	94%
% of re-referrals	20%	15%	17%
% of cases with management oversight	90%	73%	90%
% of cases with supervisions undertaken	80%	62%	75%

LEADERSHIP – LEAD OFFICER: INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN’S SERVICES

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	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
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.	Apr 2025	ED - Children’s Services		Senior leaders have regular and genuine engagement with frontline staff via floor walking, staff engagement events and attendance at team meetings with 98% of those surveyed feeling they are supported in their involvement of the improvement journey.
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.	Mar 2025	ED - Children’s Services		Monthly staff engagement sessions are held with attendance from across Children’s Services with 97% of those surveyed rating the sessions as good or above. Mechanisms have been established to collate staff suggestions and a ‘you said, we did approach’ has been developed for feeding back to staff.
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.	Feb 2025	Chief Executive / ED - Children’s Service		Cross Council support from all ED’s has been sought as well as Elected Members. Children’s Services improvements has been agreed as the Council’s number one priority in the revised Corporate Plan.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
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.	Mar 2025			There has also been significant financial investment secured to support improvements. In addition, there has been a review of non-Social Worker tasks and additional support which is supporting to create additional capacity resulting in Social Workers have increased capacity to work with children and families.
2.5	Review the priorities of the Corporate Parenting Board with Cabinet Member.	Feb 2025	AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency)		Priorities have been reviewed and agreed by the re-established Corporate Parenting Board. The group has met and agreed the workstreams which will sit under the Board which are: Health and Wellbeing, Education and Opportunity, Accommodation and Sufficiency and Participation and Effective Planning. The workstreams will now drive forward the priorities to improve outcomes for our cared for and care experienced young people. The workplan for each of the workstreams aligns with the priorities within phase 2 of the Improvement Plan.
2.6	Ensure appropriate staffing structures, roles, functions are fit for purpose.	May 2025	AED (Transformation, Family Help and Protection) / AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency)		Structures have been reviewed and refreshed to ensure they meet the requirements with additional capacity added in which has supported greater management oversight and additional capacity to support operational delivery and quality work with children and families. This has resulted in a structure which is fit for purpose and will ensure the necessary improvements are made.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
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.	Jun 2025	AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency) / Chair of Safeguarding Partnership Board		The Safeguarding Board has been refreshed with clear strategic links between the Improvement Board and the Improvement Plan. Priorities and workplans within the Safeguarding Board now align with the priorities within the Improvement Plan. This work demonstrates the strong links and ownership with our strategic multi agency partners.
2.8	Establishment of an Improvement Board.	Feb 2025	ED - Children's Services / DfE Advisor		The Improvement Board has been established and provides clear governance and includes representation from across the Council including the Leader and Elected Members, Police, Health and Education and meets bi-monthly. The Improvement Board ensures services are accountable and progress against the Improvement Plan are reported alongside data and partner updates which is aiding to remove any blockages and drive forward improvements.

Measure	Target	Feb-25	Oct-25
Number of staff engagements / forums held in a year	12	2	10
Undertaking staff wellbeing surveys in a year	3	0	2
% of positive responses to staff surveys	Continually increasing	Not available	51%

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	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
3.1	Review the practice and outcomes of the children with disabilities (CWD) service and beginning to transform performance, safety, consistency and quality of services.	May 2025	AED (Transformation, Family Help / Protection) / HOS - Family Help and Protection		Quality of practice within the CWD service has been reviewed and an action plan implemented with evidence through some audits that services are beginning to improve with improved outcomes and quality of service for this cohort. Further work is planned in phase 2 in this area to ensure practice is fully embedded and the quality of services are consistent for all CWD.
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.	Jun 2025	AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency)		Work has commenced to review current processes with new Practice Standards to be launched in November 26 and training planned to support the escalation process to be embedded. Early evidence that escalation is demonstrating that issues are being resolved as early as possible and that escalation of a child's needs is welcomed and responded to by senior leaders. This priority has reworded and carried forward to phase 2.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
3.3	Review and strengthen the participation strategy across Children's Social Care.	Sep 2025	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead		The Participation Strategy has been reviewed and relaunched with support from the Corporate Parenting Board. Feedback is now collated as part of the quality assurance and audit process which informs practice and service delivery. Impact of this work will be evidenced in phase 2 when the Participation Strategy is embedded.
3.4	Ensure parents, carers, children & young people's feedback and engagement is central to our understanding to how effective our frontline work is.	Sep 2025			
3.5	Review the QA framework ensuring the auditing of supervision is captured and implement dip sampling.	Jul 2025			The QA framework has been reviewed and relaunched and audits are completed by the Practice Improvement Team on a thematic basis. The audit process is now providing Senior Leaders with a greater insight into quality of practice and areas for further improvement which is supporting targeted support. Audits are providing an enhanced line of sight on practice and training as delivered by the PI Team is linked back to findings from audit activity.
3.6	Ensure mechanisms are in place to integrate learning from QA activity in supervision.	Jul 2025			Via the audit process, actions are identified and are discussed as part of supervisions and further support is provided where needed. The Practice Improvement team identify trends and areas from audit activity and additional training is delivered tailored to the areas identified which is supporting improvements in quality of practice.


Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
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.	Jul 2025	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead		Delivery of audit training to all team managers, IRO's and CP chairs has taken place to clarify purpose and scope of collaborative audits, setting expectations for frequency and engagement in QA activity. Managers now have an improved understanding of how to complete effective audits.
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.	Jul 2025			Bitesize sessions have been delivered with learning from thematic audit being disseminated. In addition, audits are now a standard agenda item for all team meetings to ensure Team Managers are sharing thematic findings from collaborative and dip sample audits with their teams.
3.9	Re-establish monthly performance support meetings with CSC management team.	Apr 2025			Monthly performance meetings are now starting to take place providing an opportunity to review data, identify where improvements are needed and identify actions which are reviewed as part of the performance cycle.






Measure	Target	Feb-25	Sep-25	Oct-25
Actions completed following audits	90%	84%	93%	89%
Audits showing Requires Improvement or better	90%	82%	70%	83%

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	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
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.	Jun 2025	Head of Workforce		An action plan has been developed and is being monitored monthly. A recruitment video highlighting the benefits of working in CSC has been created and distributed via social media. The recruitment web page and social work academy page are currently in the process of being updated to draw attention to social work vacancies. The HR team have started working with external agencies to proactively find suitable permanent social workers. The leadership team has also been stabilised. The service is beginning to have sufficient, suitably qualified staff to support the delivery of high-quality services for children and families. Moving forward activities will focus on retention of staff, as well as to continuing to build of recruitment activities.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
4.2	Explore recruitment of international Social Workers.	Apr 2025	Head of Workforce		Recruitment of international Social Workers has been explored, however is now on hold due to proposed policy changes to international recruitment visas.
4.3	Introduce relevant training programmes to ensure good practice.	Oct 2025	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead		Training programmes have been developed and are being delivered based on audit findings. The training plan will evolve as the improvement journey continues. Audit activity is beginning to demonstrate improvements in quality and consistency of practice.
4.4	Review the Supervision Policy to ensure an improved standard.	Jul 2025	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead		The supervision policy has been reviewed and will be relaunched in November with further supervision training being provided to managers. This priority has been rephased carried forward to phase 2.
4.5	Launch People Performance Management including performance, wellbeing and feedback discussions.	Apr 2026	Head of Workforce		People Performance Management is a corporate approach with activity progressing well. The proposed approach has been shared with senior leaders with four areas across the council trialling the proposed 1-2-1 approach. Specifically, to CSC, discussions have been ongoing to ensure the new approach compliments the supervision process and does not duplicate work.
4.6	Review and embed social worker progression policy, allowing for opportunities for upwards as well as sideways progression.	Dec 2025	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead		The social work progression policy is in the process of being reviewed. This priority has carried forward to phase 2.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
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.	Feb 2025	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead		A Practice Improvement Team has been established with the key aim of improving quality of practice via audit activity, training, targeted support. ASYE's and Social Worker requiring additional support are identified via audit activity. Where there are repeat inadequate audits, this is escalated and further dip sampling on individual caseloads takes place. Support and intervention with families is beginning to improve with more consistency. Consistent audit activity is providing a greater line of sight and enabling the PI Team to provide targeted and specific training in response to findings from audit activity.
4.8	ASYE's and social workers who are requiring additional support to be identified and supported through the QA framework.	May 2025			
4.9	Development of a Social Work Academy.	Apr 2026			The principles of a Social Work Academy have been agreed, with financial costings being considered in December 25. If funding agreed recruitment will commence in May 26 with the academy going live in July 26. This priority has been rephased and carried forward to phase 2.

Measure	Target	Feb-25	Oct-25
Vacancies under offer	NA	3	6
Sickness - average working days lost	8.5	10.8	12.66
Turnover Rate - percentage of workforce leaving	12%	19%	22%
% of ASYE progressing in planned timescales	90%	81%	93%
Experienced Social Workers in post	64	27	31
Social Worker agency rate (within establishment)	15%	25%	22%
Social Worker vacancy rate (within establishment)	15%	25%	22%
Social Workers holding 20+ cases	0	24	21



- Vacancies under offer - October data includes 2 agency workers who are transferring to permanent contracts.
- Turnover rate - involuntary turnover has contributed to the recent rise in figures.






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	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
5.1	Training programme to be implemented across the wider partnerships regarding identification of risk and keeping children safe.	Nov 2025	AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency) / AED (Transformation, Family Help and Protection)		The Children's Safeguarding Partnership have developed and implemented a training plan. A clear multi agency working agreement has been co-produced by all multi agency partners supported by the Independent Scrutineer which will create a more consistent, effective, and accountable safeguarding and support system for children and families.
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.	Dec 2025	AED (Transformation, Family Help and Protection) / HoS Family Help and Protection / HoS Prevention and Intervention / HoS Permanence and Sufficiency		There has been development of a Thrive intervention to ensure consistent quality of interventions and alignment with Social Worker plans linking in with the Domestic Abuse Safer Communities intervention to respond to domestic abuse. In 24 - 25 the service worked with 84 children and 52 parents. In that period 41% of thresholds within cases decreased, and 46% of thresholds remained the same (did not

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
			Head of Community Safety Domestic Abuse Strategic and Commissioning Lead		increase in need). Audits have taken place and actions developed to improve quality. There has also been recruitment of a dedicated Domestic Abuse advocate in MASH to contribute expertise in decision making and additional audits to identify further areas for improvement. This priority has reworded and carried forward to phase 2.
5.3	Evidence of Domestic Abuse specialist services involvement are active part of children's plans.	Dec 2025			Training has been delivered from the Safer Communities Team regarding the Domestic Abuse pathway as well as safety planning training. Dip sampling of cases where domestic abuse is evident has taken place to understand where further support is needed. This priority has reworded and carried forward to phase 2.
5.4	Care Experienced Young People have improved outcomes in relation to health, housing and education / employment.	Nov 2025	HoS Permanence and Sufficiency / Corporate Parenting Board		Corporate Parenting Board has been refreshed to ensure there is multi agency input and oversight for all aspects of health, wellbeing and attainment for cared for and care experienced young people via four newly developed workstreams. Work has also developed at pace to increase accessibility to the local offer via the development of bespoke pathways from the new Care Experienced Hub which is providing care experienced young people with a dedicated facility to work with their PA and access services. This priority has reworded and carried forward to phase 2.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
5.5	Engage partners to review and agree a shared vision in keeping children safe.	Jun 2025	AED (Quality, Permanence and Sufficiency) / Children's Safeguarding Partnership		Partners have reviewed and agreed the Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements. Key multi agency partners have worked together effectively to enhance learning and review over significant safeguarding incidents. Recent Rapid reviews have received positive feedback from National Panel. There has been a review and agreement to increase capacity within the safeguarding partnership. This will be to enable active learning reviews to be undertaken when frontline practitioners are dealing with issues of significant multi agency complexity. This priority has rephased and carried forward to phase 2.
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.	Sep 2025	AED (Transformation, Family Help and Protection)		In April 25, the first Neglect alternative task and finish group meeting took place in partnership with ICB and St Helens Council. An assessment tool and revised strategy is in development. Once launched there will be a whole system approach to neglect strategies in place that are effective and impact positively on children and families and 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.	Jun 2025	HoS Family Help and Protection		A revised homeless protocol and pathway have been developed and relaunched to the service with bitesize training. Dip sampling has taken place to identify further improvements and actions needed.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
5.8	Relaunch and embed the 16-17 homeless protocol.	Sep 2025	HoS Family Help and Protection		As a result of this work, practitioners now have a strengthened understanding of the 16 - 17 homeless protocol and young people have an improved understanding to support them to make an informed choice. Dip sampling taken place on all children / young people who have presented as homeless in a 6-month period has shown that 80% became Section 20. This priority has been rephased and carried forward to phase 2.
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	HoS Prevention and Intervention		A review was completed of the capacity of young carers to ensure backlog doesn't occur and the throughput and processes to ensure Young Carers are supported into targeted or universal services for ongoing support.
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.	Jul 2025			A plan for back up capacity has been established should it be required resulting in improved outcomes for Young Carers.
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.	Jun 2025	HoS Prevention and Intervention / Children's Prevention and Transformation Lead		A directory of services has been produced that professionals will use to support 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. This has resulted in children and families having the access to support, advice and guidance in a timely manner.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
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.	Sep 2025	HoS Education / HoS Inclusion / Head of Virtual School		Shared attendance data is now being reported from a single, consistent data source to the Virtual School Governing Body, SEND Partnership Board, Education Partnership Board, and Children's Social Care Improvement Board and is supporting an improvement in attendance levels.
5.13	School leaders engaged to ensure children and young people are effectively safeguarded and supported.	Sep 2025			Targeted training is being delivered to schools, focusing on safeguarding, managing absence, and making timely referrals to other services during the 25/26 academic year. This will result in a safer learning environment, which leads to better outcomes for young people and a more resilient school community. This priority has been rephased and carried forward to phase 2.



Measure	Target	Feb-25	Oct-25
% NEET Improved for Care Experienced People	45%	46%	49%
% of care experienced children in suitable accommodation	95%	97%	94%
% SDQs completed in time	95%	73%	70%
% Of Dental checks	95%	63%	60%
% Of immunisations	95%	56%	39%
% Of Health assessments	95%	91%	90%





- Processes have been reviewed to support improved timeliness around dental checks and immunisations particularly around consent and information sharing with health.




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	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
6.1	Review and refresh Panels for measuring and monitoring permanency planning and transitions.	Dec 2025	HoS Family Help and Protection / HoS Permanence and Sufficiency		There has been a review of the current cohort and a current 'as is' position develop as well as a review and refresh of Permanency Panel a multi-agency Transition Panel (16 plus). This is now supporting every child / young person to have a permanence plan at the earliest opportunity.
6.2	Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) to monitor progress of children achieving permanency as per statutory requirements.		HoS Permanence and Sufficiency		Within the Safeguarding Unit there has been strengthened capacity to respond to increased demand and recruitment of experienced permanent Service Manager. In addition, strengthened process around case conference timescales and safety planning. A process has been developed and data dashboard to monitor key 'footprint' activity including midpoint checks and escalations. There is also strengthened IRO oversight of those children placed in unregistered settings and new practice standards to be launched Oct 2025.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
		Dec 2025			This priority has reworded and carried forward to phase 2.
6.3	Implement the tracking systems for children for Public Law Outline (PLO) and Permanence.		HoS Family Help and Protection / HoS Permanence and Sufficiency		The PLO and Permanence trackers have been reviewed and there are ongoing plans to develop a legal workspace to include all areas of the PLO / permanence and transition process and develop a combined Permanency, Transition and PLO tracking panel. This will result an improvement in timeliness for permanence, greater management oversight and a more informed decision making. This priority has been rephased and carried forward to phase 2.
6.4	Increase the number of Personal Advisors (PAs) to support Care experienced children.	Jul 2025	HoS Permanence and Sufficiency		An additional 7 PA posts and 1 Team Manager post have been established and recruited to, which is supporting children and young people to have a clearer understanding of their co-produced plan for their future.
6.5	Care experienced children are supported by a PA at 16 and have an up-to-date pathway plan in place.				Increased capacity of additional PA's means that all children are now routinely allocated a PA at 16. Work is currently underway to specify roles and responsibilities of PAs and SWs. Weekly performance meetings ensure there is sufficient management oversight of completion of pathway plans within teams. This priority has been reworded and carried forward to phase 2.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
6.6	Ensure pathway plans are purposeful, outcome focused and co-produced with young people to drive best outcomes for their futures.	Sep 2025	HoS Permanence and Sufficiency		A task and finish group is currently in operation which is led by the PI team to ensure the pathway plan document is fit for purpose. This will be accompanied by training and practice guidance which will also support practitioners to ensure Pathway Plans are SMART, have multi agency input and are co-produced. This priority has been reworded and carried forward to phase 2.
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.	Mar 2026	HoS Education / HoS Inclusion / Head of Virtual School		Verified educational outcomes are now reported in the Virtual School Head Teacher annual report and the Virtual School Governing body provide a strategic view, act as critical friend, and ensure accountability for cared for children to achieve their potential. This priority has been reworded and carried forward to phase 2.
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.	Mar 2026	HoS Permanence and Sufficiency		All activity for cared for / care experienced young people has now been reviewed and apportioned into the four multi agency sub-groups that feed into Corporate Parenting Board. The subgroups are Health & Wellbeing, Education and Opportunities, Right Place to Live and Planning for Change. All Corporate Parenting Board activity is underpinned with support and influence from the participation team. This priority has been rephased and carried forward to phase 2.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	BRAG	Progress / What difference have we made
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.	Mar 2026	HoS Permanence and Sufficiency		The fostering task and finish group has completed the first set of actions and will now feed directly into the Sufficiency Action Plan (overseen by the Right Place to Live workstream). Work continues at pace to develop the offer which includes the launch of the specialist offer for foster carers. This priority has been reworded and carried forward to phase 2.
6.10	All children receive life story work consistent with good practice expectations which is evidenced on children's files.	Dec 2025	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead		Training is planned for November to January 26 to support Social Workers to incorporate life story work into all children's files. This priority has been rephased and carried forward to phase 2.

Measure	Target	Feb-25	Oct-25
% Placement stability short term - placement moves	10%	8%	6%
% Placement stability long term - placed 2yrs+	70%	65%	66%
% of care experienced children with a PA allocated	100%	99%	99%
% of care leavers with a pathway plan in place	95%	90%	91%
PEPS are done within required timescales	95%	90%	91%
% of care experienced children in suitable accommodation	95%	97%	94%
% of care experienced children who are NEET	45%	46%	59%
Number of foster carers approved at panel (Apr - Mar)	15	4	3

- The numbers of foster carers approved is significantly lower than the target, a comprehensive marketing and recruitment campaign has been developed to supplement the regional work with Foster4 to support an increase in the number of Foster Carers.



PHASE 2 IMPROVEMENT PLAN REFRESH

November 2025 - July 2027



PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST – LEAD OFFICER: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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	Progress / What difference have we made
1.1	Ensure every Social Worker adopts the 'Being Brilliant at the Basics' approach, by putting first at the heart of everything that they do to ensure children are safe, happy and healthy. Being Brilliant at the Basics will be seen throughout: Assessments / Plans / Visits / Management oversight / Lived experience of child / Supervision	Jul 2026	AED	All children will benefit from improvements in the quality and consistency of practice and all those who require intervention have robust assessments and child centred plans. Management oversight is evident on children's records and informs decision making and drives improved outcomes. All children and young people's views are evidenced and captured in assessment, plans and visits. Team managers are confident in providing reflective supervision that encourages professional curiosity and is analytical and drives forward outcomes for all children. Outcomes will be monitored a strengthened performance management and QA framework.
1.2	Embed the revised practice standards to improve the quality and consistency of practice.	Jun 2026	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead	All children and young people's views are evidenced and captured via actions in assessment, plans and visits.
1.3	Children's voice, actions and behaviours are responded to and acted upon, which is evidenced in assessments and plans.	Jun 2026		
1.4	Develop the future Family Help and Child Protection model to respond to the Families First Partnership Programme.	Jun 2027	AED / Children's Prevention & Transformation lead	Children will have a single Family Help worker who will support and provide consistency of relationship.

Measure	Target	Baseline Feb-25	Oct-25
Audits showing Requires Improvement or better	100%	82%	83%
% of assessments in timescale	100%	82%	87%
Stat Visits:			
% CIN	100%	61%	77%
% CP	100%	81%	89%
% CfC	100%	92%	94%
% of Initial Child Protection Conferences within timescales	100%	97%	93%
% of Child Protection reviews within timescales	100%	98%	94%
% of re-referrals	20%	15%	17%
% of cases with management oversight	90%	73%	90%
% of cases with supervisions undertaken	90%	62%	75%
% of MASH contacts with decision made within 24 hours	85%	80%	50%



LEADERSHIP – LEAD OFFICER: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN’S SERVICES

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	Progress / What difference have we made
2.1	Improve outcomes for our corporately parented young people via the newly established Corporate Parenting Board to improve oversight and partnership working.	Jul 2027	AED	Partners 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.
2.2	Knowsley Council will develop ‘a family business’ model for children in care and care leavers offering a range of employment / work experience and apprenticeship opportunities both internally and with partners.	Jun 2026	Education and Opportunity CPB Workstream Leads	Delivery of a fully functioned and sustainable ‘Family Business model’ for our cared for and care experienced young people. Increase in the numbers of Care Experienced Young People EET.
2.3	Knowsley will develop a shared partnership vision for the future that aligns to the ambition of the Families First Partnership Programme and clearly sets out the future way of working.	May 2026	AED	Partners will know and understand the direction of travel and how they can contribute to the future.

Measure	Target	Baseline Feb-25	Oct-25
Number of workforce forums held in a year	12	2	10
% of positive responses to staff feedback	Continually increasing	Not available	51%
% EET improved for Care Experienced Young People	65%	52%	51%

QUALITY OF PRACTICE – LEAD OFFICER: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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	Progress / What difference have we made
3.1	The quality of practice within the CWD service demonstrates evidence of improved outcomes for children.	Jun 27	HoS Family Help and Protection	All children with a disability receive a good service evidenced by a reduction in complaints from families. 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	Implement the revised Participation Strategy, ensuring parents, carers, children and young people’s feedback and engagement is central to our understanding to how effective our frontline work is.	Jul 26	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead	Improved attendance and engagement at Children in Care Council. Children’s surveys indicate their voice is heard and making a difference to their lives and the way services are delivered and all children and young people will say they feel listened to and regularly meet with leaders to share their lived experience. All children and young people will receive the same level of support even though their voices are not as loud.
3.3	Strengthen and develop robust safety plans for all children and their families when risks are identified.	Dec 26	HoS Family Help and Protection / Head of Prevention and Intervention /	All children will have clearer and more consistent safety plans recorded on their file and improved quality and impact of safety planning will be evidenced through audit activity.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Progress / What difference have we made
			Head of Permanence and Sufficiency	Relational working will be at the heart of how families are supported, and the wider family network will be considered to help keep children safe and thrive.
3.4	Ensure the Safeguarding Unit is providing effective planning and scrutiny to drive planning for children.	Apr 26	HoS Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	Evidence that challenge has improved outcomes for all children open on a child protection plan for a cared for person.
3.5	Ensure categories of abuse are consistently applied and harm outside the home is considered.	Jul 26	HoS Safeguarding and Quality Assurance / HoS Prevention and Intervention	Evidence that the resolution process is used appropriately. Creation of specific categories which will reduce the risk of suffering of significant harm to support robust planning.
3.6	Implement and embed the Supervision Policy.	Aug 26	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead	All children will have evidence of outcome focused supervision that improves their daily lived experience. Team managers are confident in providing reflective supervision that encourages professional curiosity and is analytical and drives forward outcomes for all children.
3.7	Embed the mechanisms to integrate learning from QA activity in supervision to close the loop.	Sept 26		Senior leaders and managers have detailed understanding of the quality of practice and use this to drive service improvement and quality of practice.
3.8	Training to be delivered to staff on how to complete a good audit and reflect on key learning from previous audit activity.	Jul 26		Good understanding of performance data to identify / underpin where qualitative analysis is needed. Reducing inadequate audits and increasing RI.
3.9	Implement and embed self-regulation across the CSC system to support continuous improvement.	Apr 26	AED	Good or outstanding audits evidencing improvements in practice.

Measure	Target	Baseline Feb-25	Oct-25
Actions completed following audits	90%	84%	89%
Audits showing Requires Improvement or better	100%	82%	83%

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	Progress / What difference have we made
4.1	Ensure learning from training is evidenced in practice via completion of audits and QA.	Jun 2026	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead	All children will benefit from improvements in the quality and consistency of practice by practitioners throughout Children's Services.
4.2	Launch People performance management including performance, wellbeing and feedback discussions.	Apr 2027	Head of Workforce	
4.3	Review and embed social worker progression policy, allowing for opportunities for upwards as well as sideways progression.	Jun 2026	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead	
4.4	Development of a Social Work Academy.	Jul 2026		ASyEs and social workers are supported, confident and valued with clear progression routes. Support and intervention with families is improved and consistent.
4.5	Improve the stability of the workforce to support reduction in the number of changes in Social Worker for children via the recruitment of a permanent workforce.	Jun 2026	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead Strategic HR Business Partner	The service has sufficient, suitably qualified staff to deliver high quality services for all children and families with minimal changes in Social Workers for children and families. Reduction in number of Social Worker changes for a family.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Progress / What difference have we made
4.6	Development of Family Help Lead Practitioner and Lead Child Protection Practitioners roles as part of the Families First Partnership Programme to develop the ongoing workforce development plan.	Dec 2026	AED / Principal Social Worker / Prevention and Transformation Lead	New role descriptions will be developed in consultation with the workforce. Workforce development and training will be in place to support new ways of working.

Measure	Target	Baseline Feb-25	Oct-25
Sickness - average working days lost	8.5	10.8	12.66
Turnover Rate - percentage of workforce leaving	12%	12%	22%
% of ASYE progressing in planned timescales	90%	81%	93%
Experienced Social Workers in post	64	27	31
Social Worker agency rate (within establishment)	15%	25%	22%
Social Worker vacancy rate (within establishment)	15%	25%	22%
Social Workers holding 20+ cases	0	24	21
Number of unfilled posts	0	0	0

PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT – LEAD OFFICER: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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	Progress / What difference have we made
5.1	Improve the effectiveness, consistency, and impact of interventions where domestic abuse is a feature, ensuring families receive timely and coordinated support.	Jan 2027	Head of Community Safety / Domestic Abuse Strategic Group	All children and other survivors of domestic abuse in all its forms receive timely intervention and identification of risk and impact with an increase early identification of domestic abuse in CSC cases. Any 'missing male/s' is/are identified and considered in assessments and planning. Audit outcomes demonstrate clearer and more consistent safety plans are in place to protect children and families and evidence of multi-agency working and integrated planning. Reduction in children experiencing repeat incidents of domestic abuse. Positive feedback from all children and families about the support provided where domestic abuse is a factor.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Progress / What difference have we made
5.2	Launch the revised Neglect Strategy and Toolkit.	Mar 2026	AED	<p>A coordinated and effective multi-agency response to child neglect, through consistent identification, assessment, and intervention, leading to improved outcomes for children and families, and a reduction in the severity and duration of neglectful situations. All children will receive more effective and timely interventions, and the strategy will reduce the number and duration of child protection and "child in need" plans related to neglect. Reduce the number of children being stepped up as concerns will be identified and addressed at the earliest possible stage, preventing situations from escalating to the point of needing statutory intervention.</p> <p>A shared understanding and consistent practice as the revised strategy and will toolkit create a common language and set of procedures for all partners which leads to greater consistency and confidence among professionals when identifying and responding to neglect. Better information sharing and coordination as the neglect panel will facilitate a coordinated multi-agency response by improving communication, information sharing, and joint decision-making between agencies.</p>
5.3	Implement and embed the revised Neglect Strategy and Toolkit and develop a neglect panel tracking progress, completion and quality of assessments across the partnership.	Sep 2026		
5.4	School leaders engaged to ensure children and young people are effectively safeguarded and supported.	Jul 2026	HoS Education	<p>Improved attendance levels.</p> <p>Improved persistent absence rates.</p>

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Progress / What difference have we made
5.5	Enhance the partnership working between Children Services and Youth Justice Services.	Jul 2026	HoS - Prevention and Intervention	<p>Performance data demonstrating an increased offer for children at the earliest opportunity via the Vulnerable Children Meeting performance data. (Youth Prevention pilot).</p> <p>A streamlined process in relation to the Youth Justice out of court disposal decision making process and Knowsley Early Help offer.</p> <p>An increase in Youth Justice consultation / advice to professionals for children who present with serious youth violence and persistent anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Alignment of plans for Youth Justice and Children Services when responding to high risk.</p> <p>Reduction in the number of cared for children within the Youth Justice System.</p>
5.6	Develop and fully implement a digital solution to support families to access support, advice and guidance via an online platform.	Mar 2027	Children's Prevention and Transformation Lead	<p>All children and families will have access to support, advice and guidance in a timely manner.</p> <p>Self help pathways will be available to ensure families are able to access support digitally.</p>
5.7	Develop and implement an app for Care Experienced Young People.	Jun 2027	Children's Prevention and Transformation Lead / HoS Permanence and Sufficiency	<p>Increased capture of family feedback via the digital tool to support evaluation and co-design of services.</p> <p>Care leavers will be able to access support in one central place.</p>
5.8	Effective and impactful safeguarding arrangements, supported by an appropriately resourced Safeguarding Partnership.	Aug 2026	HoS Safeguarding and Quality Assurance / Children's Safeguarding Partnership	<p>Appropriate policies will be in place and multi-agencies will be working in partnership to implement the policies.</p>

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Progress / What difference have we made
5.9	Strengthen our response for children and parents in relation to substance misuse.	Mar 2027	HoS - Prevention and Intervention / HoS Family Help and Protection	Children Services have an informed understanding of the problem profile in relation to substance misuse to inform service delivery requirements for families. Audits that demonstrate that professionals are consistently identifying and addressing the impact of parental substance use and/or children's own use.
5.10	Strengthen the response for all children subject to Private Fostering arrangements.	Apr 2026	HoS Permanence and Sufficiency	All children in Private Fostering arrangements will receive a good service. Audits evidence how effective Private Fostering arrangement supports good outcomes.
5.11	Strengthen collaborative learning practices throughout the partnership.	Jul 2026	HoS Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	Partners consistently engage in collaborative learning activities that lead to shared best practices and measurable improvements in service delivery
5.12	Engage partners to review and agree a shared vision in keeping children safe. This vision will incorporate the future multi-agency Child Protection team approach as set out in the Families Frist Partnership Programme.	Apr 2026	HoS Safeguarding and Quality Assurance / Children's Safeguarding Partnership	Partners agree on and adopt a vision for safeguarding children, ensuring alignment across all services and decision making. Better lived experiences and outcomes for all children. New multi-agency Child Protection team approach will be defined and agreed.

Measure	Target	Baseline Feb-25	Oct-25
% of care experienced children in suitable accommodation	95%	97%	94%
% SDQs completed in time	95%	73%	70%
% Of Dental checks	95%	63%	60%
% Of immunisations	95%	56%	39%
% Of Health assessments	95%	91%	90%
% Private Fostering assessments completed in timescale	100%	50%	100%

PERMANENCY – LEAD OFFICER: ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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	Progress / What difference have we made
6.1	Improved quality of care or pathway plans to ensure they set out the detailed, incremental steps that are necessary to achieve their goals and aspirations.	Jul 2027	HoS Permanency and Sufficiency / Education and Opportunities CPB Workstream Leads	All children and young people will be supported to achieve their full potential and will benefit from regularly updated SMART plans (based on up to date assessments) that are aspirational about their futures. Quality assurance and audit will evidence virtual school and health partners are a visible part of a child's network. Personal Education Plans (PEPs) will be completed timely and to a high standard and PEPs and EHCP planning processes will be aligned. Improvement in care planning / pathway plan completion data. Improvement in employment, education and training figures and school attendance. Attainment targets as identified in PEPs will be met and children / young people will achieve in school / college / university.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Progress / What difference have we made
				All children out of borough will receive comparable support to those within Knowsley (or in close proximity) as identified via audit activity. NEET Tracker will evidence partnership / PAs tenacity to support young people into positive destinations.
6.2	Strengthen the mechanisms to improve access and engagement of physical, emotional, mental and dental health services for Cared for / Care Experienced Children.	Jul 2027	HoS Permanency and Sufficiency / Health and Wellbeing CPB Workstream Leads	Initial Health Assessment / Review Health Assessment / dental check and SDQ data will evidence improved performance via new CPB dashboard. Health input in care plans and health passports will be on all young people's ICS records at 18 as evidenced by QA / audit activity. Barnardo's will provide evidence of reach and impact from commissioned work with children and young people. School attendance and EET will improve. Social Workers will ensure children will benefit from timely Initial Health Assessment / Review Health Assessment and have regular dental checks and be fully immunised. All children will have swift access to emotional and mental health support at the point of need.
6.3	All children and young people will be supported to achieve permanence at the earliest opportunity. Young adults will be fully supported to achieve physical and psychological permanence in adulthood.	Jul 2027	HoS Permanency and Sufficiency / Right Place to Live CPB Workstream Leads	Effective oversight of permanence arrangements ensuring children remain in the care of the Local Authority for the period their needs require. Adoption numbers will increase and care orders revoked where appropriate. Audits will evidence that visits to children are purposeful and will drive care planning forward. Evidence of direct work tools and life story work prevalent on all children's files. Refreshed and revised sufficiency strategy and associated action plan.

Ref	Priority (what we will do)	By When	Officer(s) Responsible	Progress / What difference have we made
6.4	Children and young people will be supported to make a successful transition to adulthood and will benefit from a range of accommodation options post 18.	Jul 2027	HoS Permanency and Sufficiency / Planning for Change CPB Workstream Leads	Increase in numbers of young people remaining open post 21. Hub will evidence footfall and files will evidence regular attempts to keep in touch with young people who have qualifying status / those who have closed to the service between 21-25yrs. Surveys / participation will evidence improved reach, accessibility and care leaver satisfaction with local offer.
6.5	Review panels and tracking systems for measuring and monitoring permanency planning, transitions and Public Law Outline (PLO).	Nov 2026	HoS Family Help and Protection / HoS Permanence and Sufficiency	Every child / young person has a permanence plan at the earliest opportunity. All 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.
6.6	Cared for Children and Care Experience Young People better understand their life story, which is supported by staff who are able to deliver this work using a range of methods and tools and is evidenced in the child's file.	Dec 2026	Principal Social Worker / Social Work Academy Lead	Participation work with all children and young people evidences the impact of life story work.

Measure	Target	Baseline Feb-25	Oct-25
% Placement stability short term - placement moves	10%	8%	6%
% Placement stability long term - placed 2yrs+	70%	65%	66%
% of care experienced children with a PA allocated	100%	99%	99%
% of care leavers with a valid pathway plan in place	95%	75%	91%
PEPS are done within required timescales	95%	90%	91%
% of care experienced children in suitable accommodation	95%	97%	94%
% EET improved for Care Experienced People (18 plus)	65%	52%	51%
% EET improved for Care Experienced People (16/17-year-olds)	90%	67%	86%
Number of foster carers approved at panel (Apr - Mar)	15	4	3
% of care for children living with foster carers	70%	59%	57%
Number of care orders discharged	Increasing	N/A	51



- KEY:**
- AED Assistant Executive Director
 - ASYE Assessed and Supported Year in Employment
 - CfC Cared for Children
 - CP Child Protection
 - CPB Corporate Parenting Board
 - 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
 - CIN Children in Need
 - MASH Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
 - NEET Not in Employment, Education or Training
 - EET Employment, Education or Training
 - PAs Personal Advisors
 - PI Practice Improvement
 - PLO Public Law Outline
 - QA Quality Assurance
 - SDQs Strength and Difficulty Questionnaires
 - SEND Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

