

# Children's Improvement Plan Phase 3





# Contents

Foreword .....	4
The Four Themes of Improvement .....	5
1. Improving Quality .....	5
2. Improving Implementation of Learning.....	5
3. Improving Tools.....	5
4. Improving Strategic Partnership .....	5
<b>Priority 1</b> – Improving Quality .....	6
<b>Priority 2</b> – Implementation of Learning .....	14
<b>Priority 3</b> – Improving tools .....	18
<b>Priority 4</b> – Improving Strategic Partnerships.....	20

# Foreword

## Working together to improve services for children, young people and their families

### **Welcome to Phase 3 of our Improvement Plan.**

We remain committed to making the change needed to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in Sefton. We know that we cannot deliver sustainable change without working together with our wider partners across Sefton. Organisations from the public sector, schools, voluntary, community and private sector will need to work side by side to provide the support that our children and young people and their families need. It is our collective responsibility to ensure we create the right conditions for vulnerable children and young people to thrive.

As we recognised in earlier versions of our Improvement Plan there is a lot to do and so we are continuing to take a phased approach to our improvement journey. Previous phases focused on getting the conditions right to facilitate improvement and lay down the foundations for continuous improvement in practice, embed a strong Corporate Parenting ethos and most importantly value the voices of children, young people and our workforce in the development and delivery of future plans. This and future phases will build upon this work and everyone will maintain a relentless focus on improving practice.

The partnership Improvement Board will continue to oversee the delivery of the Improvement Plan. Progress will be monitored to make sure that practice meets the 'good' standard set out by the Ofsted framework, that this improvement is sustained and has a positive impact on the life chances of children and young people.

The Lead Members for Children's Services will lead key decisions and the Overview and Scrutiny (Children's Services and Safeguarding) Committee will provide ongoing oversight and challenge.

# The Four Themes of Improvement

## 1. Improving Quality

Ensuring the right staff are in the right place at the right time to deliver a consistent standard of good quality safeguarding services to children and families.

- 1.1 The Workforce
- 1.2 Timely & Appropriate Action
- 1.3 Focused, timely and accurate assessments
- 1.4 Children In Need Plans
- 1.5 Child Protection Plans
- 1.6 Cared for Children Reviews
- 1.7 Domestic & Sexual Abuse
- 1.8 Children with Complex Needs

## 2. Improving Implementation of Learning

Using what we know and learn to continuously improve and enhance the services we deliver for children and families.

- 2.1 Audit Frameworks
- 2.2 Feedback from families, children, staff and partners
- 2.3 Impact
- 2.4 Research

## 3. Improving Tools

Ensuring we have the right tools to enable the workforce to deliver good quality services for children and families.

- 3.1 Documentation
- 3.2 Management and Performance Information


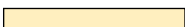

## 4. Improving Strategic Partnerships

Effective partnership working to enable the delivery of common goals and a high quality multi-agency response for children and families.

- 4.1 Corporate Parenting
- 4.2 Vision
- 4.3 Local Safeguarding Partnership
- 4.4 Schools & Settings
- 4.5 Corporate Services
- 4.6 Strategic Commissioning





In addition to the themes of improvement each activity is colour coded to demonstrate strengthening of

### Strengthening

-  Corporate Leadership
-  Governance & Partnerships
-  Practice
-  Enablers & Resources

### RAG Rating

### Progress Status

-  Action complete
-  Action not yet completed, but on track and will be completed by milestone
-  Activity progressing, some issues but realistic plans in place to recover
-  Action not on track, risk to implementation

# Priority 1 – Improving Quality



**Our overall aim for this priority area:** Ensuring the right staff are in the right place at the right time to deliver a consistent standard of good quality safeguarding services to children and families.

How we plan to improve this area of significant weakness – building on the work of previous phases we will:

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	Rag Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
<p>1.1 A skilled, professional, competent workforce with adequate capacity to deliver high quality service to our Children and Young People.</p> <p>Enabling a culture in which professional accountability is evident, leadership is strong, and practice is purposeful.</p>	1.1.1	<p>There is adequate capacity and flexibility within the workforce to deliver high quality services to Children and Young People.</p> <p>That staff remain committed to Sefton and feel that they can develop a fulfilling career.</p> <p>To increase the pace of recruitment activity.</p>	<p>Review the impact of changes to staff terms &amp; conditions relating to car mileage and car usage.</p> <p>Review annual retention payments.</p>	<p>Staff will feedback that leadership listens and that there is improved retention of staff across the workforce.</p> <p>Retention rates will improve.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet complete but on track	January 2024	Recruitment and retention rates improve and contribute to reduction in agency rates in the next 12 months.
			<p>Review existing recruitment processes and redesign related activity.</p>	<p>The new process will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improve the applicant and new starter experience</li> <li>speed up the process to convert from agency to permanent employee</li> <li>reduce the administrative work for Social Work Managers</li> <li>reduce the time from job offer to start date</li> <li>contribute to recruitment rates improving and reduction in the use of agency workers so supporting the delivery of the MTFP.</li> </ul>	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Enablers & Resources	Action complete	March 2023	The pace of recruitment activity will increase.
			<p>Recruit to vacancies.</p>	<p>There will be sufficient capacity and stability across the Help &amp; Protection teams to secure a timely and appropriate response for children and young people.</p> <p>Staff graduating from the Social Work Academy will join teams across Social Care.</p> <p>Social Workers will have manageable caseloads and children will receive a timely, consistent service to meet their needs, including outside of normal office hours.</p>	Assistant Directors	Enablers & Resources	Activity progressing with some issues but realistic plans in place to recover	December 2023	Recruitment rates improve and contribute to reduction in agency rates across the service.  Target to recruit 5 Social Workers per quarter.

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	Rag Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
				<p>There will be resource available to provide the hub for quality assurance and learning activities generated from it, as well as all bespoke practice improvement activity.</p> <p>Feedback from children and families is that they have developed long-term, trusting relationships with their Social Worker.</p>					
		To welcome the International Social Workers to Sefton.	Support the Children's Social Care Management team to welcome and induct international recruits to Sefton.	<p>Support activity will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduce the administrative work for Social Work Managers</li> <li>ensure induction activity is scheduled and completed</li> <li>include communications to welcome the recruits to Sefton.</li> </ul>	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet complete but on track	October 2023	Contribution to a reduction in agency rates.
		As staff graduate from the Social Work Academy their transition to new teams will be smooth.	Children Services managers will work alongside the Improvement team to continue to develop a robust process for ensuring the transfer process for graduating staff runs smoothly.	The staff survey will evidence a smooth transition.	Assistant Director Help & Protection	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	November 2023	<p>Contribution to a reduction in agency rates.</p> <p>2024 staff survey will demonstrate positive feedback.</p>
	1.1.2	All individual staff have the appropriate knowledge, skills and support and enable them to undertake their work in an effective way and to a good standard.	Deliver a Leadership and Management Training Programme for Executive/ Assistant Directors and Service Managers.	There will be a common language across Children's Services, and to allocate tasks/ work dependent on who is the best fit in terms of colour energies.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed but on track	September 2023	Service Managers will benefit from and make use of Insights Discovery Training.
			Develop and deliver a training programme for Team Managers that supports and enables them to manage and develop their teams in an effective way.	The mandatory training programme will equip Managers to deliver good supervision, ensure appropriate consideration of risk, robust decision making, that the voice of the child is strong and to work with their teams to improve practice and deliver continuous improvement.	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet complete but on track	September 2023	There will be a mandatory training and development programme for all Team Managers.

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	Rag Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
	1.1.3	To ensure that families have access to increased and effective targeted early help support to ensure problems are addressed earlier and that Early Help preventative capacity is maximised.	Realign Early Help, Aiming High and Youth Offending resources to Children's Services.	Resources will be realigned to Children's Services.	Executive Director People	Enablers & Resources	Action complete	April 2023	There will be an improved line of sight and a more flexible approach to resource deployment.
			Commission external diagnostic to review the Early Help offer.	The report will present the Council with recommendations for consideration. The recommendations will enable the Council to develop an Improvement Plan that ensures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>these services are effective in preventing escalation of need into targeted and statutory services</li> <li>demand is in line with statistical neighbours.</li> </ul>	Executive Director of Children's Services	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet complete but on track	September 2023	Report.
			Review the recommendations of the diagnostic and develop an Improvement Plan.	There will be a clear and resourced Improvement Plan agreed. The scope of the ongoing systems analysis work will be expanded to cover Early Help Services.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet complete but on track	October 2023	To ensure there is a plan in place to maximise Early Help preventative capacity.



The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	Rag Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
1.2 Social Care action will be focused, timely and appropriate for the current situation within the family.	1.2.1	To improve the out of hours response.	Review and redesign the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) operating model and practice approach.	There will be evidence that the out of hours response is effective.  Management oversight will ensure that children receive a timely, consistent service to meet their needs, including outside of normal office hours.	Assistant Director Help & Protection	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	October 2023	New operating model in place.
	1.2.2	To ensure that senior leaders have clear line of sight on children and young people most at risk.	Develop and embed processes and governance arrangements that track the journey of children and young people.	There will be evidence of strong Transition planning and timely escalation into the Public Law Outline (PLO), as appropriate, which is reviewed and enhanced on a regular basis when circumstances change Times for Public Law Outline length of time on Child Protection Plans will be more appropriate for the needs of children and young people.	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	October 2023	Framework in place.
1.3 Assessments are child focused, timely, monitor and record the impact of services delivered to the child and family and review the help being delivered.	1.3.1	To improve the quality of Assessments.	Review the Assessment model and produce guidance material.	The child's voice will be heard and evidenced in assessments.  There will be evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that the quality of assessments has improved.</li> <li>• of a good understanding of risk and the child's broader needs being met at the earliest opportunity.</li> <li>• of good analysis of history when assessing concerns.</li> <li>• of professional curiosity, and decisions about next steps will be well informed.</li> <li>• of partner information in assessments.</li> </ul> Children and young people will experience improved outcomes.	Assistant Director Help & Protection	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	October 2023	There will be evidence that the timeliness of actions and interventions complies with Practice Standards.

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	Rag Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
1.4 Children In Need (CIN) Plans safeguard and promote the interests of the child or young person, prevent drift and delay.	1.4.1	To improve the quality and impact of CIN Plans.	Review the CIN planning model and produce guidance material.	<p>Practitioners will be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of a child.</p> <p>The child's voice will be heard and evidenced in plans.</p> <p>Children In Need (CIN) Plans meet children's needs through a co-ordinated multi-agency response and clearly articulated expected outcomes.</p> <p>Health partnership will support audits.</p> <p>Audits will evidence good practice.</p> <p>Children and young people will experience improved outcomes.</p>	Assistant Director Help & Protection	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	October 2023	<p>There will be evidence that the timeliness of actions and interventions complies with Practice Standards.</p> <p>Case file and thematic audits demonstrate the variability of quality of Children In Need plans will be reduced.</p>
1.5 Child Protection Plans (CPP) safeguard and promote the interests of the child or young person, prevent drift and delay.	1.5.1	To improve the quality and impact of CPP.	Review the CP planning model and produce guidance material.	<p>Practitioners will be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of a child.</p> <p>The child's voice will be heard and evidenced in plans.</p> <p>Plans will spell out how we will ensure the child or young person has safe and secure care that will help them to grow into healthy, happy and confident adults who can achieve their ambitions, forge positive relationships with others, and look after themselves.</p>	Assistant Director Help & Protection	Practice	Action not yet complete but on track	October 2023	<p>There will be evidence that the timeliness of actions and interventions complies with Practice Standards.</p> <p>Case file and thematic audits demonstrate the variability of quality of CP plans will be reduced.</p>
	1.5.2	To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of critical decision making panels.	Map and review current panels.	<p>Parents and partners attend as appropriate.</p> <p>Critical decisions are multiagency.</p> <p>Minutes accurately capture the meeting and are timely.</p> <p>Case audits will evidence sound and safe decisions making.</p>	Executive Director of Children's Services	Practice	Action not yet complete but on track	October 2023	<p>There will be evidence that the efficiency and effectiveness of critical decision making panels is improving.</p>

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	Rag Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
1.6 Cared for Reviews ensure that plans in place continue to safeguard and promote the overall welfare of the child in the most effective way and achieve permanence for them within a timescale that meets their needs.	1.6.1	To improve the quality and impact of Cared for reviews.	Review the cared for review model.	<p>The child's voice will be heard and evidenced in reviews.</p> <p>Reviews will make decisions, as necessary, for amendments to plans to reflect any change in knowledge and/or circumstances.</p> <p>Every eligible 16-year-old will have a Pathway Plan by the time they are 16 and 3 months. A resettlement passport will be in place to support them to become ready for independent living.</p>	Assistant Director Cared For and Care Experienced	Practice	Action not yet complete but on track	September 2023	There will be evidence that the timeliness of actions and interventions complies with Practice Standards.
	1.6.2		Produce guidance material.	<p>Young people will be involved in developing their plan and will have an increased understanding of the decision-making process.</p> <p>Care experienced young people will be supported to transition into a positive adult life.</p> <p>The young person's voice will be heard and evidenced in reviews.</p> <p>Reviews will make decisions, as necessary, for amendments to plans to reflect any change in knowledge and/or circumstances.</p> <p>Care experienced young people will have the skills and confidence they need to progress to adulthood successfully at a pace that is right for them.</p> <p>Increased awareness of the support available for care experienced young people with the wider children's workforce.</p>	Assistant Director Cared For and Care Experienced	Practice	Action not yet complete but on track	October 2023	Partners and the wider children's workforce will be aware of the support available for care experienced young people and be able to signpost young people to support and associated materials.

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	Rag Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
<p>1.7 That domestic and sexual abuse is viewed and challenged as an unacceptable form of behaviour by all our communities.</p> <p>That victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse and their families in Sefton feel safer in their communities, are protected from harm, and are able to move forward positively with their lives as a result of receiving the support and interventions they need.</p> <p>That the behaviour of perpetrators is effectively challenged, and perpetrators are fully held to account.</p>	1.7.1	To improve the partnership response to domestic abuse.	Review of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors offer including transfer of resource into the MASH.	There will be professional emotional and practical advice, guidance and support to help families to become and remain safe at the front door.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Practice	Action complete	April 2023	Quality Audits will identify improved practice
			Task and finish working group to focus on strengthening both practice and skills.	<p>Social Workers will understand the complexities of domestic abuse.</p> <p>There will be evidence of good analysis of history when assessing concerns and strong safety planning.</p> <p>There will be evidence of professional curiosity, and decisions about next steps will be well informed.</p>		Practice	Action not yet complete but on track	September 2023	
			Strengthen partnership working around domestic abuse.	<p>Social workers and the wider children's safeguarding workforce will better understand the complexity of Domestic Abuse and how to respond.</p> <p>Safety Plans will be multiagency and owned.</p>		Practice	Action not yet complete but on track	October 2023	
		To ensure that there is a range of domestic abuse services in place for children, victims and perpetrators based on local need and the workforce is aware of these and how to access them.	Pilot a new model for the Perpetrator Programme.	To deliver proof of concept to inform wider commissioning activity.	Executive Director People	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet complete but on track	May 2023	Analysis of pilot will inform future commissioning activity.
			Progress the Domestic Abuse Action Plan to ensure the domestic abuse response is sufficiently prompt and robust in all cases and there are appropriate specialist services in place.	<p>There is a range of domestic abuse services in place for children, victims and perpetrators based on local need and the workforce is aware of these and how to access them.</p> <p>Service user voice and feedback shows services meet the needs of children, victims and perpetrators.</p>				Action not yet complete but on track	May 2024
1.8 Children with Complex Needs and their families have access to effective and timely support	1.8.1	To ensure that there is integrated service delivery to support children with complex needs.	Work with colleagues and partners to develop and implement a 0 to 25 Service.	Children with Complex Needs and their families feedback that they have access to effective and timely support.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Governance and Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	May 2024	A joined up service that provides a range of statutory social care to meet the needs of Disabled Children within their families.

## Action 1 Milestone & Measures

Reference	Milestone/Target that we will monitor	Frequency	July 2023		October 2023 3 Months		January 2024 6 Months	
			Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
1A	Recruit to Social Work vacancies	Quarterly	5		5		5	
1B	Frequency of Supervision	Quarterly	65%		70%		75%	
1C	Rate of social work assessments per 10k towards the statistical neighbour rate of 622	Quarterly	887		800		730	
1D	% of assessments completed in 45 days move towards the statistical neighbour rate of 89%	Quarterly	60%		72%		84%	
1E	Rate of Section 47 enquiries per move towards the statistical neighbour rate of 207	Quarterly	315		280		250	



## Priority 2 – Implementation of Learning



**Our overall aim for this priority area:** Using what we know and learn to continuously improve and enhance the services we deliver for children and families.

How we plan to improve this area of significant weakness building on the work of previous phases we will:

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	Actions we are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	RAG Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
2.1 Audit frameworks and reviews are effective and there is evidence that learning from audit improves practice and influences service delivery.	2.1.1	To improve the consistency in quality of good social work practice, and improve adherence to Children's Social Care procedures and 'Working Together'.  Improve the quality, consistency and timeliness of case recording.	Review the Quality Assurance Framework ensuring it is aligned with the journey of children and families through the services they receive, experience and the outcomes achieved.	The Quality Framework drives practice improvements and improved outcomes for children and young people.	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance Practice	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	September 2023	Refreshed Children's Social Care Quality Assurance Framework
			Develop and implement an audit framework for Early Help Services.	Learning from audit will improve practice within Early Help Services.	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	September 2023	Early Help Audit Framework
			Make use of performance data and audits to monitor the frequency, recording of and quality of supervision.  Put in place actions required to improve the frequency, recording of and quality of supervision.	Staff surveys will demonstrate a greater satisfaction of management support and in care planning.	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance	Practice	Action not yet complete but on track	October 2023	Improved frequency, recording of and quality of supervision.  2024 Staff Survey evidences that staff feel more supported.
			To embed My Sefton, My Space the Council's Performance Development Review (PDR) process.	Staff surveys will demonstrate that staff have the time and space for a more in-depth and enhanced conversation about the previous 12 months, future aspirations, performance and development requirements for the following year.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Practice	Action not yet complete but on track	October 2023	All staff have PDR.

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	Actions we are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	RAG Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact	
	2.1.2	To ensure that lessons learnt are embedded into good practice across the Safeguarding Partnership.	Ensure that learning is disseminated across the Safeguarding Partnership.	There will be evidence that lessons learnt are embedded in practice across the Safeguarding Partnership.  Multi-agency safeguarding procedures will be updated to reflect any changes. Partners will have access to latest procedures.	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2024	Partnership can evidence learning.	
2.2.2 Feedback from children, families, staff and partners shapes how and what services we deliver, both at an operational and at a strategic level.	2.2.1	There is unambiguous evidence of how feedback from children, families, staff and partners has influenced and shaped the delivery of operational and strategic services.	Undertake second annual staff survey and share outcome with workforce.	Staff surveys will demonstrate that the feel included in shaping change.  There will be increased evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>that impactful QA is informing practice and improving outcomes for children and families.</li> <li>of how suggestions from operational staff have positively impacted on service development and improvement.</li> <li>that staff feel that their training and development needs are recognised and have opportunities to develop so enabling them to deliver effective services for children, young people and their families.</li> </ul> Actions are identified to effect change.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	October 2023	Leaders and managers will have feedback that enables them to consider and inform the priorities for change from a workforce and cultural perspective.  Actions following the annual staff survey will demonstrate a learning culture.	
	2.2.2		Ensure that practice and processes actively seek feedback from children and families in relation to new or revised processes or practice approaches and considered in full.	Processes / systems / working practices will be adjusted appropriately in response to feedback from families.  Families will receive a response to their feedback.	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance			Action not yet completed, but on track	October 2023	Feedback from families is recorded and evidence of the impact of feedback can be seen in case file audits and at service management team levels.
	2.2.3		Review the Children Services children and young people's participation offer.	There will be a plan that puts in place a solution where participation resources will ensure that participation is - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encouraged across Children's Services</li> <li>celebrated</li> <li>accessible and inclusive</li> <li>integral part of commissioning plans and quality monitoring.</li> </ul>	Executive Director Children's Services			Governance & Partnerships	Action complete	July 2023

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	Actions we are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	RAG Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
	2.2.4		Prepare second annual Voice of Child report to Council.	An annual report to Council will demonstrate and how children, young people and their families influence change in Sefton.  The report will provide examples of how the Council and partners have engaged children and young people when making decisions and changes to services.	Executive Director Children's Services	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2024	Report to Council.
2.3 To understand the impact of changes made in previous phases of the Improvement Plan and identify further opportunities for improvement.	2.3.1	To assess the impact of changes made in previous phases of the Improvement Plan.	Review the impact of introducing Targeted Family Support.	There will be evidence of improved outcomes for children and families.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	December 2023	There will be evidence of learning and case studies will be produced to demonstrate good practice.
			Review the impact of changes made to Children with Complex Needs.	There will be evidence of improved outcomes for children and families.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	January 2024	The Service Plan will reflect any further actions required.
			Review the impact of introducing My Space.	There will be evidence of improved outcomes for children and families.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	February 2024	The Service Plan will reflect any further actions required.
2.4 Research improves practice and influences service delivery.	2.4.1	Appropriate staff regularly undertake research, and there is evidence of learning and actions plans to implement changes identified.	Identify resources and research methods.	There will be evidence of where research has influenced service delivery.	Executive Director Children's Services	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	November 2023	Research will inform practice.



## Action 2 Milestone & Measures

Note actions delivered as part of Phase 1 will be progressed and part of embedding Practice Standards and Quality Assurance processes alongside performance monitoring. The Improvement Board will receive regular reports that triangulate performance, quality assurance and practice.

Reference	Milestone/Target that we will monitor	Frequency	July 2023 6 Months		October 2023 9 Months		January 2024 12 Months	
			Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
2A	Staff Survey	Annual			Report to & Action Plan to be produced			
2B	Feedback from Families	Bi annual				Report to Improvement Board		



## Priority 3 – Improving tools



**Our overall aim for this priority area:** Ensuring we have the right tools to enable the workforce to deliver good quality services for children and families.

How we plan to improve this area of significant weakness building on the work of previous phases we will:

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	Actions we are taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	Rag Rating	Milestones	Output/Impact
3.1 Documentation supports and enables consistent and effective social work practice.	3.1.1	To produce a suite of documents that support the workforce and children and families.	Use the completed gap analysis and combine this information with the output of the Early Help diagnostic to develop a suite of process maps to improve case management.	There will be a suite of process maps and related documents that support the workforce and maps the child's journey.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	December 2023	Process Maps available for staff and shared on TriX.
			Coproduce with children and families a range of documents that support them.	There will be a suite of process maps and related documents that support children and families. The website will be family friendly.		Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	December 2023	Documents and refreshed pages on website.
3.2 Social Care managers have access to appropriate, live management and performance information in a format that is meaningful and useful for managing resource, shaping service planning and addressing risks and issues in a timely way.	3.2.1	To ensure that the Leadership and Management teams have Performance Management tools that support them to improve the quality of services and to identify opportunities for improvement, change and innovation.	Create and develop a supported environment for the Data Warehouse testing environment.	A supported infrastructure Data Warehouse environment is in place.	Policy & Performance Service Manager	Enablers & Resources	Action Complete	April 2023	Supported environment in place.
			Commission external support to work with the Council team to develop new data models.	There will be additional support to deliver the required development work.	Policy & Performance Service Manager	Enablers & Resources	Action Complete	May 2023	There will be additional resource to support the development of Power Bi.
			Ingest model and analyse data directly from Liquid Logic application.	There will be new data models that will provide a much greater level of granularity specifically "drill through" in Power Bi reports. This will allow users to explore child level related data by clicking on Power Bi visualisations.	Policy & Performance Service Manager	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	July 2023	Leaders and managers will be able to quickly drill down when investigating areas of concern.

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	Actions we are taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	Rag Rating	Milestones	Output/Impact
			Further develop the Data Warehouse Power Bi to extend to covering reporting requirements for Early Help.	Power Bi dashboards will enable managers to drill down to child level data.	Policy & Performance Service Manager	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	September 2023	Leaders and managers will be able to quickly drill down when investigating areas of concern including Early Help.



# Priority 4 – Improving Strategic Partnerships



**Our overall aim for this priority area:** Effective partnership working to enable the delivery of a high quality multi-agency response for children and families.

How we plan to improve this area of significant weakness building on the work of previous phases we will:

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	Actions we are taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	Rag Rating	Milestones	Output/Impact
4.1 The Council and partners are ambitious, aspirational and active Corporate Parents.	4.1.1	To ensure that elected members, employees and partner agencies are aspirational and ambitious for cared for children and young people and care experienced young people supporting them to make a success of adult life.	Embed and strengthen the collective responsibility of elected members, employees, and partner agencies, for providing the best possible care, educational standards and safeguarding for the children who are cared for.	<p>Elected members, Council employees, and partner agencies will have a shared understanding of their duties as Corporate Parents and are active, strong and committed in this role.</p> <p>There will be evidence of strategic and operational change that focuses on implementing change that will improve outcomes for children and young people. This will include prioritisation of education.</p> <p>The Corporate Parenting Board will continually explore and implement opportunities to improve outcomes for cared for children and young people and their carers.</p>	Assistant Director Cared for Children Lead Member Children's Social Care	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	December 2023	The Corporate Parenting ethos will be embedded across the Council and partner agencies.
						Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	September 2023	Children and young people in care and care experienced young people will be clear about what they can expect to receive from their Corporate Parents.
			Embed the seven principles for Corporate Parenting and refresh Corporate Parenting Strategy.	There will be a strong ethos of corporate parenting across the partnership.	Assistant Director Cared for Children Lead Member Children's Social Care	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	December 2023	Cared for and care experienced children and young people will benefit from good corporate parenting.
			Further develop the Caring Business Charter.	The scope of the Caring Business Charter will be expanded to include further opportunities for children.	Executive Director Place	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	January 2024	Cared for and care experienced children and young people will benefit from the Charter.

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	4.1.2		Deliver the Action Plan to strengthen the work of the Virtual School and Virtual School Governing Body.	Council and partners will demonstrate that they are aspirational and ambitious for cared for children and young people and care experienced young people and promote the importance of education as a key factor in supporting them to prepare for success in adult life.	Assistant Director for Education	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	September 2023	The Virtual School and governing body will work with others to raise standards and improve educational outcomes for children and young people.
4.2 The vision for Children's Services is articulated in key Council documents.	4.2.1	To ensure staff, partners, and communities are aware of what Sefton's ambitions are for children and young people and for Children's Services.	Develop and agree a Corporate Plan.	<p>The Corporate Plan will articulate priorities for the next three years.</p> <p>The Corporate Plan will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be politically owned</li> <li>• services will be focused on achieving corporate priorities and there will be a shared understanding of areas of priority work across the Council</li> <li>• inform Service Plans</li> <li>• play a part in individual performance reviews.</li> </ul>	Chief Executive	Governance & Partnerships	Action complete	April 2023	Corporate Plan document articulating the vision for Children's Services.

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	Actions we are taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer	Strengthening	Rag Rating	Milestones	Output/Impact
4.3 That the improvements in practice are supported by the Local Safeguarding Partnership.	4.3.1	That partner agencies provide active support where required to the achievement of the Improvement Plan.	Work with partners to agree priorities and communicate them for the Safeguarding Partnership.	<p>The statutory leads will agree partnership priorities. The wider children's workforce will be aware of the priorities and how they can contribute to achieving agreed outcomes.</p> <p>There will be evidence of partners delivering against agreed priorities.</p> <p>There will be evidence of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effective multi-agency contributions to improving outcomes for children and young people.</li> <li>good communication, information sharing and the application of thresholds and, where appropriate, ensure that escalation processes are followed.</li> </ul>	Executive Director of Children's Services	Enablers & Resources	Action complete	May 2023	Safeguarding Partnership Away Day.
						Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	July 2023	Safeguarding Partnership prioritised plan shared across partners.
						Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	December 2023	Partners will be able to evidence multiagency working is delivering change.
4.4 Schools and settings provide the care and support to meet the needs of children and young people and improve life chances.	4.4.1	To ensure that children and young people have a sense of belonging in schools and other settings.	Develop an Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan for schools and settings.	There will be an agreed strategy and action plan that aims to ensure that children and young people have a sense of being somewhere where they can be confident that that they will fit in and feel safe in their identity.	Assistant Director of Education	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2024	Strategy & Action Plan.
4.5 Corporate Services, systems and mechanisms contribute directly to enabling good social work practice and the delivery of effective Safeguarding services in Sefton.	4.5.1	Finance actively support Children Services in delivering effective services, and support budget reviewers and holders in managing limited resources effectively and efficiently within the current climate.	Develop and agree the Medium Term Financial Plan.	Council agree a Medium Term Financial Plan which commits to recurrent additional investment for a three-to-five-year improvement programme.	Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Corporate Leadership	Action complete	March 2023	Council approve budget. Director of Children's Services included in budget planning process.
			Deliver "how the Council Works" training to Children's Social Care.	<p>Managers will be trained on budget management, decision making, procurement and audit and risk management.</p> <p>There will be robust financial controls in place.</p> <p>Financial planning activity will consider sufficiency, workforce strategy and the Improvement Plan.</p>	Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Corporate Leadership	Action not yet completed, but on track	October 2023	Managers will own and understand their responsibilities, be accountable and be able to manage corporate processes effectively.

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	4.5.2	Scrutiny arrangements for Children's Services are robust and effective.	Identify and deliver additional training for members of Overview and Scrutiny committees.	Scrutiny arrangements for Children's Services are robust and effective.	Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	December 2023	The Local Government Association deliver tailored training to Overview & Scrutiny.
	4.5.3	To ensure that children and young people's voice, and engagement and co-production with families is a central tenet of Council and partner strategies.	Review the Consultation & Engagement Framework.	The Public Engagement & Consultation Framework will demonstrate the partnership commitment to ensuring that children and young people's voice, and engagement and co-production with families is a central tenet of Council and partner strategies.	Chief Executive	Governance & Partnerships	Action complete	January 2023	New Consultation & Engagement Framework.
			Put Council decision to consider care experience as a protected characteristic into operation.	Council will approve a new Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy.  Council report templates will be amended to include impact of decisions on children and young people.  When making key decisions Cabinet and Council will consider care experience as a protected characteristic and also the wider implications on all children and young people.	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Governance & Partnerships	Action complete	April 2023	Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy Agreed.  Report templates updated.
4.6 Commissioned services provide sufficient care and support to meet the needs of children and young people and enable continuous improvement in order to increase the positive outcomes achieved.	4.6.1	To ensure that services provide sufficient care and support to meet the needs of and improve outcomes for children and young people.	Refresh the Cared for Children Sufficiency Strategy and develop a Delivery Plan.	The Council and the market understand the need for and the approach to securing sufficient accommodation that meets the needs of cared for children.  This will include a flexible 16+ offer to improve the flexible accommodation choice available to care experienced young people.	Joint Sefton NHS Place Director and Executive Director Social Care and Health	Governance & Partnership	Action not yet completed, but on track	July 2023	The market understands the need for and the approach to securing sufficient accommodation that meets the needs of cared for children.
			Commission external support which will compliment and accelerate strategic commissioning plans regarding the use of internal and external residential care homes for our cared for children.	External support is available to scope activity.  Council will receive a proposal on future work.  High quality, value for money residential placements and a clear plan with our external market which addresses financial sustainability.	Joint Sefton NHS Place Director and Executive Director Social Care and Health	Governance & Partnership	Action complete	April 2023	External support will be available to provide advice.

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	4.6.2	To provide high quality, value for money residential placements.	Mobilise the Sefton Framework for Residential Provision, Wrap Around Services and Fostering Services.	<p>The Council will have greater control of the local market and associated costs.</p> <p>There will be improved working relationships and practice with 13 local providers.</p> <p>From May 2023 the Placements Team will have additional local opportunities to work with.</p> <p>Local children will benefit from improved joined up working from private providers, Social Workers and health providers.</p>	Joint Sefton NHS Place Director and Executive Director Social Care and Health	Governance & Partnerships	Action complete	June 2023	Framework operational.
			Review the impact of the Sefton Framework for Residential Provision, Wrap Around Services and Fostering Services.	There will be an increase in local children in local placements.	Joint Sefton NHS Place Director and Executive Director Social Care and Health	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet complete but on track	June 2024	Impact Assessment.
	4.6.3	To minimise the use of unregulated placements.	Review all unregulated placements with a view to identifying suitable regulated placements for children.	<p>Local children will benefit from improved joined up working from private providers, Social Workers and health providers.</p> <p>There will be analysis that identifies where housing providers could meet local need.</p> <p>There will be an action plan developed to address local need and future proof commissioning activity.</p> <p>Cared for young people will have greater choice and control over where they live.</p>	Assistant Director of Cared for Services	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet complete but on track	October 2023	Fewer unregulated placements.



## Action 4 Milestones & Measures

Reference	Milestone/Target that we will monitor	Frequency	July 2023		October 2023 3 Months		January 2024 6 Months	
			Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
4A	Referral rate per 10k	Quarterly	785		700		650	
4B	Re-referral rates in line with statistical neighbour rate of 21%	Quarterly	26.5%		24%		22%	
4C	Number of children placed in unregulated settings (H5,Z1,P2)	Quarterly	37		33		28	



