

Children’s Improvement Plan – Phase 2

Foreword

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

Welcome to Phase 2 of our Improvement Plan.

The Four Themes of Improvement

1. Improving Quality	2. Improving Implementation of Learning
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 Practice Standards and Quality Assurance Framework 1.3 Ofsted Specific Concerns (note actions delivered as part of Phase 1 will be progressed and part of embedding Practice Standards and Quality Assurance processes alongside performance monitoring.)	Using what we know and learn to continuously improve and enhance the services we deliver for children and families. 2.1 Feedback from families, children and young people, staff and partners 2.2 Internal and external audits 2.3 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 Technology & IT systems 3.2 Management and Performance Information 3.3 Effective, user friendly systems & processes that support the task 3.4 Corporate Services & Organisational Support – plans, policies and cultural change	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 Local Safeguarding Partnership 4.3 Corporate Services 4.4 Strategic Commissioning 4.5 Schools and settings 4.6 SLIP arrangements

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

	Strengthening
	Corporate Leadership
	Governance & Partnerships
	Practice
	Enablers & Resources

Progress Key

RAG Rating	Progress Status
	Action complete
	Action not yet completed, but on track and will be completed to milestone
	Activity progressing with 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 phase 1 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(s)	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>Review the Council's market position within the region and sub-region regarding pay and benefits for new and existing staff.</p>	<p>The Council will benchmark the Council's market position within the region and sub-region regarding pay and benefits for new and existing staff.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Corporate Leadership	Action not yet completed, but on track	March 2023	There will be a clear analysis of current position, where possible, compared to neighbours.
			<p>Review staff terms & conditions relating to car mileage and car usage.</p>	<p>Staff will feedback that leadership listens and that there is improved retention of staff across the workforce.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Corporate Leadership	Action complete	January 2023	Changes agreed to Essential Car User, mileage and retention payments
			<p>Review annual retention payments.</p>		Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	January 2024	Recruitment and retention rates improve and contribute to reduction in agency rates in the next 12 months
			<p>Recruit to vacancies in Help & Protection.</p>	<p>There will be sufficient capacity and stability across the Help & 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 Help & Protection.</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> <p>Feedback from children and families is that they have developed long-term, trusting relationships with their Social Worker.</p>	Assistant Director Help & Protection	Enablers & Resources	Activity progressing with some issues but realistic plans in place to recover	October 2023	<p>Recruitment rates improve and contribute to reduction in agency rates in Help & Protection</p> <p>Target 85% Team Managers by October 2023</p> <p>Target 70% Social Workers by October 2023</p>
			<p>Recruit to vacancies in</p>	<p>The performance and quality assurance</p>	Assistant	Enablers &	Activity	March	Practice

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer(s)	Strengthening	RAG Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
			Safeguarding, Review and Quality Assurance including Practice Improvement Managers.	<p>arrangements to support practice improvements, including managers, conference chairs and independent reviewing officers' (IROs) oversight and challenge will be improved.</p> <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>	Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance	Resources	<p>progressing with some issues but realistic plans in place to recover</p> <p>Activity progressing with some issues but realistic plans in place to recover</p>	<p>2023</p> <p>October 2023</p>	<p>Improvement Manager completed by March 2023.</p> <p>Vacancy rate in Safeguarding, Review and Quality Assurance will reduce and there will be reduced reliance on agency staff Target 100% Practice Improvement by June 2023</p> <p>Target 85% Other roles by October 2023</p>
			Recruit to vacancies in Cared For and Care Experienced.	<p>There will be sufficient capacity and stability across the Cared For and Care Experienced teams to secure a timely and appropriate response for children and young people.</p> <p>Staff graduating from the Social Work Academy will join Cared For & Care Experienced team</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> <p>Feedback from children and families is that they have developed long-term, trusting relationships with their Social Worker</p>	Assistant Director Cared For and Care Experienced	Enablers & Resources	<p>Activity progressing with some issues but realistic plans in place to recover</p> <p>Activity progressing with some issues but realistic plans in place to recover</p> <p>Activity progressing with some issues but realistic</p>	<p>October 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>January 2024</p>	<p>Recruitment activity will secure required resources.</p> <p>Target 70% Team Managers by October 2023</p> <p>Target 85% Social Workers by October 2023</p> <p>Vacancy rate in Cared For and Care Experienced will reduce and there will be reduced reliance on agency staff</p> <p>Feedback from audits will evidence that managers have sufficient</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(s)	Strengthening	RAG Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
							plans in place to recover		capacity to oversee and support practice so that services can be delivered effectively.
			Consider the recommendations from review of Business Support capacity within Children's Social care and implement required change.	There will be a Business Support team that supports the service to deliver good practice and monitor performance and risk.	Children's Leadership team	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	June 2023	Business Support capacity will be reconfigured.
							Action not yet completed, but on track	October 2023	Business Support team supports the service to deliver good practice and monitor performance and risk.
			Realign Early Help resources to Children's Services	Resources will be realigned to Children's Services.	Executive Director People	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	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 to ensure its preventative capacity is maximised and resources aligned to Children's Services.	Early Help services would adopt a new Family Help Model with teams of multi-disciplinary workers supporting families and individuals together working alongside other partners.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	September 2023	Diagnostic to be completed by April 2023. Change Plan developed 2023.
			Develop an Action Plan to implement Change.						
	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 complete	December 2022	Executive/Assistant Directors will benefit from and make use of Insights Discovery Training
							Action not yet completed, but on track	May 2023	Service Managers will benefit from and make use of Insights Discovery Training There will be a common language across Children's Services, and to

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									allocate tasks/work dependent on who is the best fit in terms of colour energies.
			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 completed, but on track	May 2023	There will be a mandatory training and development programme for all Team Managers
						Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	May 2023	The quality of supervision will improve and the child's voice will be strong across Children's Services. Case file audits will identify there is an effective management footprint and supervision on case files preventing drift and delay.
1.2 Practice Standards & Quality Assurance Framework Social care case work will be focused, timely and appropriate for the current situation within the family. The views of children and families will be taken into account in all of	1.2.1	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.	Maintain a relentless focus on embedding the Practice Standards. To embed relational and restorative practice across Children's Services.	Children are helped and protected in a timely manner. Plans are SMART, reflect the views of the family and child(ren) and evidence multi-agency engagement in the plan. Children and young people plans will have specific actions with clear timescales. There will be evidence of securing parental consent prior to information-sharing in the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH). There will be evidence of analysis of history when assessing concerns.	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance Principal Social Worker	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	September 2023	There will be evidence that the timeliness of actions and interventions complies with Practice Standards. Case file and thematic audits demonstrate the variability of quality of Children In Need plans will be reduced.

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<p>our work. Social work interventions are evidenced clearly, coherently and in a meaningful way.</p> <p>There are clear processes in place to support families to access the appropriate service at the appropriate time.</p> <p>The quality all plans is at least consistently good.</p>				<p>Compliance with Child Protection procedures will be evidenced through case file and thematic audits.</p> <p>There will be evidence that visits to children are responsive to need and risk, and that are purposeful, including life story work.</p> <p>Child Protection visits will be accurate, timely and risk assessments conducted on any visits out of timescale. Re-audit of S47 and Strategy Discussions will evidence improved recording, compliance with process increased multi-agency engagement.</p> <p>Commissioning of placements will be better informed.</p> <p>There will be evidence that the quality of practice improves the lives of vulnerable children, young people and families.</p> <p>There will be a decrease in the number of children and young people entering care and being placed on Child Protection plans.</p> <p>There will be wider system benefits delivered such as improved attendance in schools.</p>					
<p>1.3 Address Ofsted Specific Concerns To address areas of practice concerns highlighted by OFSTED (note Phase 1 of the Plan put in place a number of specific actions relating to concerns the impact of those actions will be assessed as part of QA and Performance processes)</p>	1.3.1	To improve the response to domestic abuse.	Strengthen practice around domestic abuse and embed restorative practice.	<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>	Assistant Director Help & Protection &	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2023	Quality Audits will identify improved practice.
	1.3.2	To improve the access to care experienced support for those young people who are entitled to receive it.	Undertake a review of Care Experienced Service and develop an action plan for Planning for Leaving Care to ensure processes and practice are robust, safe and in the young person's interests.	<p>Young people will be involved in developing their plan.</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</p>	Assistant Director Cared For and Care Experienced	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	June 2023	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

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			Raise awareness of the support available for care experienced young people with the wider children's workforce	<p>them.</p> <p>Young people will have an increased understanding of the decision-making process.</p>					place to support them to become ready for independent living.
						Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	June 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
			Planning for care experienced young people will be reviewed.	Care experienced young people will be supported to transition into a positive adult life.		Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	June 2023	An Action Plan and working group will be created to address factors such as the role of the PA and the Local Offer.
1.3.3	To improve the quality of Assessments.	Review the Assessment model and produce guidance material.	<p>There will be evidence that the quality of assessments has improved.</p> <p>There will be evidence of a good understanding of risk and the child's broader needs being met at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>There will be evidence of good analysis of history when assessing concerns.</p> <p>There will be evidence of professional curiosity, and decisions about next steps will be well informed.</p> <p>There will be evidence of partner information in assessments.</p>	Assistant Director Help & Protection	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2023	<p>The child's voice will be strong in assessments.</p> <p>There will be a reduced number of repeat assessments in the next 12 months.</p> <p>Step downs will be appropriate.</p>	
1.3.4	To improve the out of hours response.	Review and redesign the Emergency Duty (EDT) operating model and practice approach. Deliver specific safeguarding training for the Emergency Duty team.	<p>There will be evidence that the out of hours response is effective.</p> <p>Management oversight will ensure that children receive a timely, consistent service to meet their needs, including outside of normal office hours.</p>	Assistant Director Help & Protection & Assistant Director Adult Social Care	Corporate Leadership	Action not yet completed, but on track	March 2023	New operating model in place.	

Action 1 Milestones & Measures

Reference	Milestone/Target that we will monitor	Frequency	April 2023 3 Months		July 2023 6 Months		October 2023 9 Months		January 2023 12 Months	
			Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
1A	Recruit to Vacancies in Help & Protection	NA					Team Managers 85%			
							Social Workers 70%			
1B	Recruit to Vacancies in Safeguarding & Quality Assurance	NA			100% Practice Improvement		Other roles 85%			
1C	Recruit to Vacancies in Cared For & Care Experienced	NA					Team Managers 70%			
							Social Workers 85%			
1D	Supervision	Quarterly	Baseline		TBC		TBC		TBC	

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 Phase 1 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(s)	Strengthening	RAG Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
2.1 Feedback from families. staff and partners shapes how and what services we deliver, both at an operational and at a Strategic level.	2.1.1	There is unambiguous evidence of how feedback from families, staff and partners has influenced and shaped the delivery of operational and strategic services.	Engage all managers and staff in auditing across the service with practice improvement team coordinating, supporting and moderating.	Staff surveys will demonstrate that the feel included in shaping change.	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	January 2023	All Managers will be engaged in auditing activity.
				There will be evidence of how suggestions from operational staff have positively impacted on service development and improvement.			Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2023	There will be increased evidence that impactful QA is informing practice and improving outcomes for children and families.
				There will be evidence 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.			Action not yet completed, but on track	October 2023	Annual staff survey will demonstrate a learning culture.
				Staff survey will evidence a learning culture					
			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		Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	June 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.
			Strengthen the participation offer for cared for children and young people.	There will be evidence that Cared for Children and Young People will have a place and channels to have their voice heard and have an impact on policy development and implementation.	Assistant Director Cared for Children	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	July 2023	Report to Improvement Board.
2.2. Audit	2.2.1	Case file auditing is	Implement learning	Audits will be completed in line	Assistant	Practice	Activity	March 2023	Regular reports

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer(s)	Strengthening	RAG Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
frameworks and reviews are effective and there is evidence that learning from audit improves practice and influences service delivery		undertaken regularly by the appropriate managers, recorded correctly and evidence of common theme's identified and actions plans to address deficits are implemented.	<p>from external case file auditing (tracking the child's journey) and multi-agency thematic audits to improve the consistency and quality of safeguarding practice.</p> <p>Delivery of the Thematic Audit Programme with a specific focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • priority service areas • vulnerable groups of children specific risk issues 	<p>with guidance.</p> <p>Themes from case file audit will influence future thematic audit programmes.</p> <p>Evidence of case file audit and follow up actions will be recorded on ICS case files.</p> <p>Learning from case file audit will improve operational social care safeguarding practice.</p> <p>Case file auditing will address areas for improvement in terms of assessments.</p> <p>Implement a 'case file audit action tracker.</p> <p>Evidence of impact of audit will be collated at service level, and any outstanding actions can be monitored.</p>	Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance		progressing, some issues but realistic plans in place to recover		to the Improvement Board will demonstrate improvement to the consistency and quality of safeguarding practice and addressing Ofsted concerns.
			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	July 2023	Early Help Audit Framework
	2.2.2	To ensure that lessons learnt are embedded into good practice.	Review any outstanding SCRs and LLRs and establish a timetable for completion and where appropriate, publication.	There will be evidence that lessons learnt are embedded in practice.	Safeguarding Partnership	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	January 2023	Information shared with Commissioner
2.3 Research improves practice and influences service delivery.	2.3.1	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	All Senior Leadership Team	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	January 2023		April 2023 3 Months		July 2023 6 Months		October 2023 9		January 2023 12	
			Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
2A	Staff Survey	Annual							Report to & Action Plan be produced			
2B	Feedback from Families	Bi annual					Report to Improvement Board				Report to Improvement Board	
2C	SCRs and LLRs review	NA			Report to Improvement Board							

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Priority 3 – Improving tools

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

How we plan to improve this area of significant weakness building on the work of Phase 1 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(s)	Strengthening	RAG Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
3.1 IT systems are fit for purpose and user friendly. LCS solutions are considered to support and enable consistent and effective social work practice.	3.1.1	To identify where processes and the system need to be changed to improve case management.	Establish an ICT Improvement Group.	Changes to the ICT systems support the improvement of case management Systems and resources to provide a safe, coherent, and integrated service which makes children safer and improves children's outcomes	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance	Governance & Partnerships	Action Complete	November 2022	There is a forum where priorities are agreed and progress of developments is tracked
			Identify ICT development quick wins and develop a roadmap for future developments.	ICT development quick wins will be implemented. There will be a clear, prioritised roadmap for future ICT developments that is owned by Children's Services.		Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	January 2023	Quick win roadmap agreed
		To produce a suite of documents that support the workforce and children and families.	Use the completed gap analysis 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.	Assistant Director Corporate Resources & Customer Services (Strategic Support)	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	June 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.			Action not yet completed, but on track	October 2023	Accessible information will be available for children and their families.
3.2 Social Care managers have access to appropriate, live management and Performance information in a format that is meaningful and useful for	3.2.1	To ensure that the Leadership and Management teams Performance Management tools that support them to improve the quality of services and to identify opportunities for improvement, change and innovation.	Develop Service Area specific Performance dashboards.	The performance tool will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable challenge identify key lines on enquiry identify areas of work to be audited There will be associated spot checks that will identify areas of risk.	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance	Enablers & Resources	Action Complete	November 2022	There will be a service area specific performance tool that includes previous six months' worth of performance information aligned to the CHAT

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer(s)	Strengthening	RAG Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact			
managing resource, shaping service planning and addressing risks and issues in a timely way.			Develop initial Performance dashboards for and report to Children's Leadership team to consider progress and learning from audits on a monthly basis.	The Children's Leadership team will understand its effectiveness and recognise good practice. The Children's Leadership team will use this information to drive improvement where required. There will be evidence of a developing performance culture.	Assistant Director Safeguarding Review & Quality Assurance	Enablers & Resources	Action Complete	November 2022	Evidence of learning from case file audits is captured consistently and systematically, and actions plans address service deficits in a timely way.			
			Further develop Power Bi dashboards to enable leaders and managers to drill down to child level data.	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	May 2023	Leaders and managers will be able to quickly drill down when investigating areas of concern			
3.2.2	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	February 2023	Peer Review received				
						Action not yet completed, but on track	February 2023	Action Plan developed				
						Action not yet completed, but on track	July 2023	Action Plan progress reviewed				
3.2.2	To ensure a coherent and robust approach to service planning. To ensure staff, partners, and communities what Sefton's ambitions are for children and young people and for children's services. This involve proactive internal and external engagement and be corporately led	Develop and agree Corporate Plan.	The Corporate Plan will articulate the vision for Children's Services. Services will be focused on achieving corporate priorities and there will be a shared understanding of areas of priority work across the Council	Chief Executive	Corporate Leadership	Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2023	Council approve Corporate Plan				
						Develop a Communications Plan that enables a cultural shift throughout the Council	Internal, external communications and marketing plans will articulate ambitions are for children and young people and for Children's Services. The impact of this will be visible in twelve months.	Chief Executive	Corporate Leadership	Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2023	Communications Plan
										Refresh the	The Council and partners will	Chief

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			Children's & Young People's Plan	articulate priorities for Children's Services.	Executive	& Partnerships	yet completed, but on track		Young People's Plan
			Develop 2023/24 Service Plans and agree schedule for review of progress.	Service Plans will align to the Corporate Plan and delivery of the Improvement Plan.	Children's Services Leadership Team	Corporate Leadership	Action not yet completed, but on track	May 2023	Children's workforce has a shared understanding of areas of priority work across the Council and their Service Plan.

Action 3 Milestones & Measures

Reference	Milestone/Target that we will monitor	Frequency	January 2023		April 2023 3 Months		July 2023 6 Months		October 2023 9 Months		January 2023 12 Months	
			Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
3A	Corporate Plan agreed	3 yearly			Council approval							
3B	Communications Plan	Annual			Plan Agreed							
3C	Refresh Children & Young People's Plan	2023 - 2025					Council approval					
3D	Service Plans in place	Quarterly review					Progress evidenced to Commissioner		Progress evidenced to Commissioner		Progress evidenced to Commissioner	

Priority 4 – Improving Strategic Partnerships

Our overall aim for this priority area: Effective partnership working to enable the delivery of a high quality multiagency response for children and families

How we plan to improve this area of significant weakness building on the Work of Phase 1 we will

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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	July 2023	The Corporate Parenting ethos will be embedded across the Council and partner agencies
						Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	July 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.
	4.1.2			Review the Virtual School and Virtual School Governing Body.	The review will produce an Action Plan.	Assistant Director Education	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2023
	4.1.3		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 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.

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer(s)	Strengthening	RAG Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
4.2 That the improvements in practice are supported by the Local Safeguarding Partnership.	4.2.1	That partner agencies provide active support where required to the achievement of the Improvement Plan.	Develop an Action Plan to implement the changes identified by the review of the effectiveness of partnership arrangements. Prepare a report on work undertaken so far and its impact.	There will be evidence of effective multiagency contributions to improving outcomes for children and young people. There will be evidence of good communication, information sharing and the application of thresholds and, where appropriate, ensure that escalation processes are followed.	Safeguarding Partnership Scrutineer	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2023	Report to Improvement Board.
	4.2.2	Partners are aware of private fostering responsibilities.	Raise awareness of responsibilities in relation to private fostering across the partnership	There will be a written statement, which sets out the duties and functions in relation to private fostering and the ways in which they will be carried out. The wider children's workforce will understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of privately fostered children. Private foster carers and parents of privately fostered children will have access to receive advice and support to assist them to meet the needs of privately fostered children; privately fostered children are able to access information and support when required so that their welfare is safeguarded and promoted. The Council will monitor the way in which it discharges its duties and functions in relation to private fostering	Safeguarding Partnership	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	March 2023	The Council will be notified about privately fostered children living in Sefton.
	4.2.3	To improve the quality of and timeliness of referrals to MASH.	Review and redesign the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) operating model and practice approach.	There will be evidence that referrals into the MASH are appropriate, contain sufficient information to enable the team to understand the nature of the concern and or the support being requested and timely.	Assistant Director Help & Protection	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	March 2023	There will be sufficient partner resources in the MASH All referrals from partners will be timely

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				There will be evidence that screening of contacts is robust, risks identified and professional curiosity is being demonstrated.	Safeguarding Partnership	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	May 2023	There will be demonstrable improvement in the quality of referrals from partners.
			Review referrals on a regular basis and put in place a feedback loop and where required training when referrals are in appropriate.	There will be evidence that referrals into the MASH are appropriate, contain sufficient information to enable the team to understand the nature of the concern and or the support being requested and timely.	Assistant Director Help and Protection	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	May 2023	Partners will learn from feedback and there will be continuous improvement in the quality of referrals.
	4.2.4	To ensure that there is a responsive and effective partnership response to Domestic Abuse for families with children.	Implement a partnership Action Plan.	Social workers and the wider children's safeguarding workforce will understand the complexity of Domestic Abuse and how to respond. Safety Plans will be multiagency and professionally owned.	Domestic Abuse Partnership	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	December 2023	Implementation of the Domestic Abuse Action Plan.
			Deliver consent and safety planning training to Social Work teams.	Risk will be appropriately assessed and consent sought where appropriate.	Assistant Director Help and Protection	Practice	Action not yet completed, but on track	February 2023	Social workers will seek consent in appropriate circumstances,
	4.2.5	The partnership will have access to Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) that underpin social care practice and Safeguarding Partnership Board responsibilities, promoting the best possible outcomes for children and young people.	Refresh the Children's Chapter of the JSNA. Remind the Council workforce and partners of the availability of the various chapters of the JSNA.	The Children's Chapter of the JSNA will include updated Children's Social Care information. Partners will be aware of the relevant chapters of the JSNA – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's • Education • Youth Justice • Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing 	Corporate Resources Safeguarding partnership	Corporate Leadership Governance & Partnerships	Action Complete Action not yet completed, but on track	November 2022 January 2023	JSNA Updated The Council and partners will understand the current and future health and care needs of local children to inform and guide the planning and commissioning of health, wellbeing and social care services within Sefton.
4.3 Corporate Services,	4.3.1	Finance actively support Children	Adequate resources and tools will be	There will be robust financial controls in place.	Executive Director for	Corporate Leadership	Action complete	January 2023	Budget proposals for

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systems and mechanisms contribute directly to enabling good social work practice and the delivery of effective Safeguarding services in Sefton.		Services in delivering effective services, and support budget reviewers and holders in managing limited resources effectively and efficiently within the current climate	allocated to support budget holders and budget reviewers in managing budgets and resources.	<p>Effective service planning both in year and in support of multi-year budget planning.</p> <p>Business Cases developed as part of the Improvement journey will be considered through agreed governance routes.</p> <p>There will be evidence of Corporate Resources & Children's Services working together to forward plan.</p> <p>Financial planning activity will consider sufficiency, workforce strategy and the Improvement Plan.</p>	Corporate Resources and Customer Services				years 1 and 2 (2023/24 and 24/25) for Budget Council agreed with Executive Director Children's Services and included in budget plan
					Children's Services Leadership Team	Corporate Leadership	Action not yet completed, but on track	March 2023	Council approve budget
						Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2023	Budget holders/ reviewers will own and understand their responsibilities, be accountable and be able to manage budgets effectively
						Corporate Leadership	Action not yet completed, but on track	February 2023	Further Medium Term Financial Planning assumptions for years 3-5 will be reviewed with Executive Director Children's Services
4.3.2	The recruitment of staff will be efficient; newly appointed staff will be able to start in post in a timely way	The recruitment of staff will be efficient; newly appointed staff will be able to start in post in a timely way	Develop and deliver a targeted recruitment drive for Social Workers.	Recruitment marketing activity will assist in attracting talented individuals to join Children's Services.	Corporate Communications Manager	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	February 2023	The recruitment of staff is underpinned by a marketing plan and supporting materials.
			Children Services managers will work alongside the Recruitment team to continue to develop a robust process for ensuring the recruitment process	Recruiting managers will progress local actions and work with the Recruitment team to ensure no unnecessary delay in new employees starting their new roles.	Children's Leadership Team & Personnel	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	April 2023	Recruitment rates improve and contribute to a reduction in agency rates

The Outcomes We Are Aiming For	Action Ref	Objective	The Actions We Are Taking	How we will know it has worked	Responsible Lead Officer(s)	Strengthening	RAG Rating	Milestones	Output/ Impact
			for new staff runs smoothly without delay.						
	4.3.3	As staff graduate from the Social Work Academy their transition to new teams will be smooth.	Children Services managers will work alongside the Recruitment 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.	Children's Leadership Team & Personnel	Enablers & Resources	Action not yet completed, but on track	August 2023	Contribution to a reduction in agency rates.
	4.3.4	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.	Chief Executive	Governance & Partnerships	Actions not yet completed, but on track	June 2023	The Local Government Association deliver tailored training to Overview & Scrutiny
	4.3.5		Improve Opposition party involvement in Children's Social Care.	There will be demonstrable evidence of political ownership of Children's Services.	Executive Director of Children's Services	Corporate Leadership	Action complete	January 2023	The two Leaders of the main Opposition parties attend the Corporate Parenting Board
	4.3.6	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.	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Governance & Partnerships	Action complete	January 2023	New Consultation & Engagement Framework.
				Children and young people have a strong voice in the development of Council and partner strategies.	All partners	Governance & Partnerships	Action not yet completed, but on track	January 2024	There will be evidence of Children and young people having a strong voice in the development of Council and partner strategies.
4.4	4.4.1	To ensure that	Refresh the Cared	The Council and the market	Joint Sefton	Governance	Action not	February	Sufficiency

4D	Quality of Referrals to MASH	Quarterly			Baseline								
4E	Education Plans	Termly											

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