



Northumberland
County Council

INSPECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDREN'S SERVICES

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

June 2020

Progress Rating Key:

1 - Achieved	2 - Largely Achieved, Some Tasks Outstanding	3 - In Progress	4 - Not Achieved, not started
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Glossary:

ASYE: Assessed and Supported Year in Employment

CP: Child Protection

CPW: Child Performance Worker

IRO: Independent Reviewing Officer

SOS: Signs of Safety

LAC: Looked after Children

PSW: Principal Social Worker

Area of Improvement:**1. Quality of the written plans for all children**

	Issue	Actions	Timescale	Progress RAG	Supporting narrative	Lead
1.1	Further improve the consistent quality of our written plans to support the effectiveness of our care planning for children	Workshops to be developed with a focus on the construction of CP and LAC plans which will be developed to improve the recording of: - desired outcomes - clearly assigned responsibilities for actions supporting the achievement of that outcome - consistently detailed timescales by which the action should be completed.	June 2020	2	Workshops developed and ready to roll out in June. To be completed virtually as team development sessions during COVID. Roll out to include IRO's, Social Workers and Managers.	KM/ AW
1.2		Continued implementation of Signs of Safety module to further support consistent and focussed planning with families, including contingency plans.	March 2021	3	Module has been purchased and implementation plan has slowed due to COVID but opportunities for SoS consultant to train staff virtually have recently been introduced.	AW
1.3		ASYE academy social workers to receive focussed input on effective planning in order to model good practice from the earliest point of	April 2020	1	This is now part of the ASYE academy training.	AW

		social work experience.				
1.4		IRO's to ensure that the initial plans for CP and LAC are not simply action lists and follow the Signs of Safety format and provide basis for an outcome focussed plan.	September 2020	2	To form part of the training programme in line with the Signs of Safety module.	KM /AW

2. Area of Improvement:
Quality of analysis in some assessment of impact on children

	Issue	Actions	Timescale	Progress	Supporting Narrative	Lead
2.1	Further improve the timely updating and consistent analysis of impact in assessments	Review and refresh current assessment training to ensure it covers impact of child's experience.	June 2020	1	Complete and ready to roll out to all relevant staff.	AW/TH
2.2		Exemplars of assessment to be indemnified and used as models of good practice.	June 2020	1	PSW identified a number of appropriate examples that can be accessed via the good practice folder.	SK
2.3		ASYE academy initial training to cover assessments and how to analyse impact on children.	April 2020	1	Already in place and part of the ongoing practice development plan for the academy.	PB/CS
2.4		Development of workshops to enhance the available training to be undertaken with all teams.	July 2020	2	Workshops developed and ready to roll out virtually from July.	AW

3. Area for Improvement:

Quality of the recording of management oversight in supervision records

	Issue	Actions	Timescale	Progress (RAG)	Supporting Narrative	Lead
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3.1	To ensure consistency in the management oversight and supervision for frontline staff	To undertake specific development sessions with first line managers on written supervision detailing the rationale or reflection that underpins decisions in care planning.	June 2020	2	Face to face sessions planned for April and May cancelled due to COVID but an on line pack developed ready for 1 st June. Virtual model for supervision training developed to be rolled out in July.	AW
3.2		Quality of supervision and impact on care planning to be evaluated via senior managers audit of effectiveness.	September 2020	3	Some limited evaluation currently being undertaken via audit process looking at quality of practice during COVID.	GR
3.3		Tool and theoretical models to be further rolled out to support managers in effective supervision.	June 2020	2	Resources purchased and sent out to all team managers further input to be provided regarding use of tools.	AW

4. Area for Improvement:

Quality and sensitivity in the way that Later Life letters are written for adopted children

	Issue	Action	Timescale	Progress	Supporting Narrative	Lead
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4.1	Improve the overall quality of written Later Life letters	All later life letters to be completed by specialist family placement workers in line with Life Story Work.	June 2020	1	Almost all Later Life letters now a task completed by CPWs.	LS
4.2		Review of later life guidance to be undertaken in line with Coram BAAF guidance to ensure it continues to be in line with the latest guidance.	August 2020	2	Guidance has been updated to reflect Coram BAAF practice standards. Team workshop to take place virtually during July.	LS

How will we know

Quality Assurance:

- Standard quality audits and practice days always consider the quality and effectiveness of key areas of practice and management oversight and decision making.
- Themed audits will be undertaken in the specific areas of practice identified in the plan.

Monitoring of the plan

Children's Senior Management Team	The progress of the action plan will be monitored on a monthly basis alongside and as part of the overall monitoring of the continuous improvement plan.
Corporate Overview: Family and Children's scrutiny committee (FACS)	The progress of the action plan will be reported to and scrutinised by FACS.
Northumberland Safeguarding Children Committee (NSCC)	The progress of the action plan will be reported to and scrutinised by NSCC.
Lead Member oversight and challenge	The progress of the action plan will be subject to lead member oversight and challenge as part of regular assurance meetings
Case and Practice supervision	Quality assurance of the areas of work on individual cases through case/management supervision.