

# Swindon Children's Social Care Reduction of Children We Look After plan

2023- 25



# Our Vision for Children and Young People in Swindon

- We work together with all our partners to ensure our most vulnerable children and young people are safe from harm
- We will ensure that we will intervene at the earliest opportunity to effect positive change and offer timely and proportionate action to children's needs
- We will ensure that our children and young people are supported to fully engage and participate in our work with them
- We will ensure that we have skilled, sufficient and stability of our staff across the workforce including sufficient numbers of foster carers, so children receive timely responses to have their needs met
- The children we look after will be protected, educated, are healthy and are supported into independent adulthood
- We will all continue to build an environment where social work practice will thrive and ensure all children and Young People achieve good outcomes

## Reducing the needs that often result in Children having to come into care

### What We Know:

- We know that we need to work with partners to reduce the needs that Children present to receive statutory services
- We know that we want to work with Families as early as possible to prevent things getting worse
- We want to work with children and Families to build on their strengths and wider family where we can
- We want to keep children with their families where it is safe for them to do so

Actions/What	Lead/Who	Timescales/When	Progress/How	Quality Assurance/Know	RAG
Work with Early Help Services to ensure the offer to prevent escalation of need is robust and meets the needs of Children and Young People in Swindon	SM front door /EH HOS	Ongoing	Reconfigured Early Help Coordinators into the MASH further review to take place in the next 4 weeks	Oversight by SM front door /EH HOS	
Quality of Assessments will be analytical to meet need and will ensure that plans are formed to ensure change	SM Front door Lead	Review monthly in BAU audit	Regular audit and check and challenge processes to ensure high quality assessment	Audit Feedback/ Management oversight	
Review and reduce the CIN plans where we have successfully met need to ensure they are progressing positive outcomes	IRO CIN with all Team Managers	April 2023 final report	Ensure all CIN is SMART planning and is not open longer than 6 months without a formal review	Audit CIN IRO	
Step down support is clear and deliverable with Families	Front door/ HOS EH HOS	Ongoing	Review the step-down processes to ensure early identification of need weekly step up/down commenced	reduction of work to Statutory services by 25%	
Continue to strengthen front door links with CSE/CCE services	FS SMs/ EOC HOS	Ongoing	Increase referrals to services to prevent need and risk escalating	Reduce CIN plans required	
FGC (Family Group Conference) to be used to prevent care and to ensure all staff are utilising this service at the earliest opportunity. All children who are known to statutory services have an FGC and engage with EOC prior to an admission to care.	Front door SM/ FS SM / SM IAS	February 2023	Increase in the number of FGC's taking place  Reduction in the number of children subject to statutory services	Tracker through Legal gateway panel	
Reduction of 0-5 and 6-11 age group which we know can exit the care pathway with the effective use of edge of care and early help services	ALL	Offer to be in place for 1 <sup>st</sup> April	Build an offer that addresses behaviour, emotional and social needs of this age group with schools and tier 2 services	Reduction in this age group into admissions into care	

IAS to provide training to FSWs in FST to replicate the support for 0-10yrs and provide group work to reduce risks for siblings					
Pre-birth work to ensure early identification of support or into statutory services through planning	Front door service lead /EH HOS/ FST SM	Panel to be effective / impact	Tracker and panel weekly Hospital link worker into front door Early / unborn plans	Reduction of pre birth children into CP and new-born children into care	
SWIS- Build on strengths of CSC and schools with SW in school manage EH/ Stat work	Education/SM Front door/ Lisa /Annette		Future Funding /Sharing learning	Feedback	

## Reduce drift and delay in care planning to reduce the time children spend in care

**What We Know:** Children who enter care in Swindon take too long to exit and receive permanency within their care plans  
We have a high % of Children in need that is not managed effectively, and plans need to action progress and positive change for families

Actions/What	Lead/Who	Timescales/When	Progress/How	Quality Assurance/Know	RAG
Increase the % rate of referrals from Family safeguard in teams to edge of care / reunification EOC to work with carers and providers to support placement stability and focus on reunifications.	SM IAS and FS	Immediate start	We will look at referral numbers monthly CLA Review by EOC Lead to challenge care planning and identify children for EOC to promote reunifications	audit	
Identify parenting workers to ensure we are assessing parental	SM FS	In post Feb 2023	Will ensure PA's are completed to ensure no drift and delay in care planning	LGW tracker	

capacity where we consider we require more information Recruit a Parenting Worker for Opal and a Clinical Therapist to EOC to reduce escalating concerns and strengthen support.	SM IAS				
Refresh Legal Gateway panel to ensure consistency of decision making and tracking of children	Lisa Arthey Director of CSC	January 2023	External review in March 2023	Tracker	
CIN IRO to review all CIN over 3 months to ensure plans are progressing change	CIN IRO SM DCT SM FS	February 2023	Ensure all plans are SMART and progress change	Audit and report to Quality assurance Bord/CMT	
<b>Ensure all children who can return home or to wider family are supported to do so</b>					
<b>What We Know</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We know that children in our care do not receive permanency at the earliest opportunity</li> <li>We need to ensure where we are able, that we promote reunification to family/wider family at the earliest opportunity</li> <li>We need to understand our children that we look after better so we can ensure we are building services that meet their needs</li> </ul>					
<b>Actions/What</b>	<b>Lead/Who</b>	<b>Timescales/When</b>	<b>Progress/How</b>	<b>Quality Assurance/Know</b>	<b>RAG</b>
Profile our CLA children to have a better understanding of their needs for planning and delivery of reunification.	SM CA/ Analyst / SM IAS	February 2023	EOC Lead will review and report to enable planning to take place	Corporate parenting Board	

Identify children who are no longer required to be subject to statutory orders who we can look to discharge safely due to change of circumstances	SM CLA	February 2023	Use the numbers to inform practice and review	CPB report	
Review Kinship arrangements to ensure robust reg 24 and viability assessments to ensure safe care	CPG	April 2023	Offer to be agreed via CMT and then communicated to all staff	CPB report showing reduction of CLA numbers	
Ensure we are adopting early permanency for our young children	CPG/D	February 2023	Evidence that the permanence framework is embedded within the children files	Children moved to EPP % higher than 2022	
Create a therapeutic offer that will ensure children and Young People's mental health is addressed	Commissioner	April 2023	Support the stability of children in our care	Children stabilise and less referrals required to tier 4 CAHMS	
Permanency Framework to be launched with focused training and development for staff and Partners	All SM/DSW	Launch FEB 2023	All children require a plan of stability	All staff use the framework and evidence on audit of perm plans on child's files	
Care Planning group to be chaired by DSW to ensure strategic oversight of ATV	ALL SM/D CSC	February 2023	See above	Better line of sight and traction for children In our care	
Review the support and financial offer to carers and children who are subject to Special Guardianship Order	SM CLA	March 2023		SGO increase and less children in our care in 2023	
Ensure that there is a strong SGO (Special Guardianship Order) offer to support the alternative to care (260k)	SM CLA	March 2023		See above	

## Ensuring we have the right Homes for Children that we look after

What We Know:

- We know that like all Councils we are met with rising costs for our children that we care for
- We know that a high % of our children in care are looked after outside of Swindon
- We know that we need to be clearer from the outset with Providers on what we need them to offer our children in care
- We know that we need more Foster Carers that live in Swindon and work with us to ensure children can experience a family setting
- We know that we have a small number of children in Homes that we consider would do better in a family setting but that we cannot offer this resource currently
- We aim to ensure that we utilise the Swindon £ as far as can to ensure best value

Actions/What	Lead/Who	Timescales/When	Progress/How	Quality Assurance/Know	RAG
Project management support to be identified with clear timelines agreed for the delivery of commissioned beds for Children	Commissioner	March 2023	Track the plan to recruit and give clear start dates and spec to work from	Team to be in place	
Development of a specialist commissioning team who will identify new market opportunities alongside delivering on existing commitments	Commissioner	March 23	The team will be set up and able to deliver the strategic objectives	Delivery board, CMT will have oversight of this	
Following the completion of the fostering discovery work action plan which will lead to a net increase of ten foster carers per year alongside the mix of placements required for example emergency, parent and child and remand beds.	Commissioner / SM CLA	March 23	Fostering service will commence recruitment	Target met and numbers of cares increased per year	
Development of commissioned residential and semi-independent homes in the boundary of Swindon	Commissioner	March 23	Increase in provision of this nature	Target met to increase % of children we care for living in our area	
Partnership and provider meetings to be arranged to promote better matching of our children who are	Commissioner and All SMs	March 23	Better relationships with Providers will develop better matching for homes	Children stability will increase % and show a reduction in moves	

coming into our care and who will remain with us					
We offer appropriate support to placements at the right time to enable children to remain in their placements. That we evidence our understanding of why children's placements end to prevent future disruptions	CLA SM		Better matching	Increase In children staying in homes where they need to	
Joint Funding Policy across the BSW ICB/LA areas. All children and young people who meet the criteria to be considered for joint funding.	DCT SM	April 2023	The policy is in the process of being co-designed with representation from Health and Social Care across the BSW.	Draft policy to Children's Transformation Board February 2023. Version to ICB (Integrated Care Board) Executive Board April 2023.	
Designing a commissioning framework for the provision of short breaks for disabled children. To include both specialist and inclusive provision.	DCT SM/SEND Commissioner	April 2023	A review of provision and a model for a draft commissioning framework have been completed.	CPB and offer is agreed by parents and children	
Ensure that children are in homes which are proportionate to their needs, through the regular reviewing of placements through business as usual and using step down panels to review placements on a regular basis.	SM CLA	March 2023	Review of children through care planning and high-cost placement panel	Delivery Board, CSLT, CSMT and QAPIB	
Work with Housing to commission appropriate provisions for adolescents, so they are not unnecessarily brought into LA care.	SM IAS	March 2023	Appropriate provision to be identified via Housing	Less children from a Joint Housing Assessment (Homeless 16-18years) will require admission into care.	



