

# Tameside Children's Social Care



# Improvement Plan



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# Introduction

It is of the utmost importance to us that we provide high quality services that are safe, effective and ensures support for our children, young people and their families enabling them to flourish and succeed.

We are committed to our children's vision: In Tameside you feel happy, safe and proud of who you are. You belong, can have fun, feel loved and are able to live your best life.

We will only be successful in achieving this ambition if our organisations and communities work together to improve the wellbeing and quality of life for our children and young people across our borough.

We are determined to continue to improve our services for our most vulnerable children, young people and families. With our partners we are committed to ensuring all our children have the best possible start in life. We believe that children should grow and achieve within their own families when it is safe for them to do so. We are committed to working together to make sure our children and young people are safe and able to reach their full potential and they remain at the heart of everything we do.

The judgement received in December 2023 was that Tameside's Children services is Inadequate.

The findings of our Ofsted Inspection in December 2023 demonstrated that progress had been made since August 2023 with the right areas for improvement being prioritised and a more systematic approach to improvement.

Ofsted feedback was that swift and decisive action had been taken in some areas to improve management oversight and raise the quality of social work practice. They told us that with our QA and Performance management frameworks and our approach at Brilliant at the Basics we have the right plans in place but that we now need to drive these at pace to deliver better outcomes for children and their families.

- Impact of Leaders on Social Work Practice – Inadequate
- Experience and Progress of Children in need of Help and Protection – Inadequate
- Experience and Progress of Children in Care – Inadequate
- Experience and Progress of Care Leavers – Requires Improvement to be Good.

We accept their findings that further work needs to be done and will work with tenacity and commitment to improve outcomes for the children of Tameside.



This refreshed Improvement Plan sets out what we will focus on over the next two years to achieve our vision and improve how we work with, understand and support children and families to be the best that we can be, building on what we know needs to improve from a range of evidence. The plan:

- Includes areas for improvement from inspections and our Improvement Notice of July 2022 and Inspection December 2023.
- Reflects clear links to Tameside's plan, and other key strategies and plans for children's services
- Will adapt according to new external and internal drivers and areas for improvement, such as new legislation, local changes and new areas for improvement. This will enable us to ensure we are tenacious in focusing on the right things in a timely manner

This plan will help shape the future development of other key documents including the following:

#### The Corporate Plan

Corporate Parenting Strategy

Early Help Strategy 2023-26

SEND Improvement Plan

Placement Sufficiency Statement Action Plan

Priority Education Improvement Area Delivery Plan

Community Safety Strategy

Youth Justice Strategy

Tameside Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-26

Multi Agency Neglect Strategy 2019-22

Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Transformation Plan 2015-20

Workforce Development Strategy

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Locality Plan 2023-28

## Housing Strategy Inclusive Growth Board

Whilst our initial focus is to directly address our four Ofsted areas for improvement; our ambition is to continue to build upon the work we have already undertaken across all of our services so that we achieve the best start for all our children, young people and families.

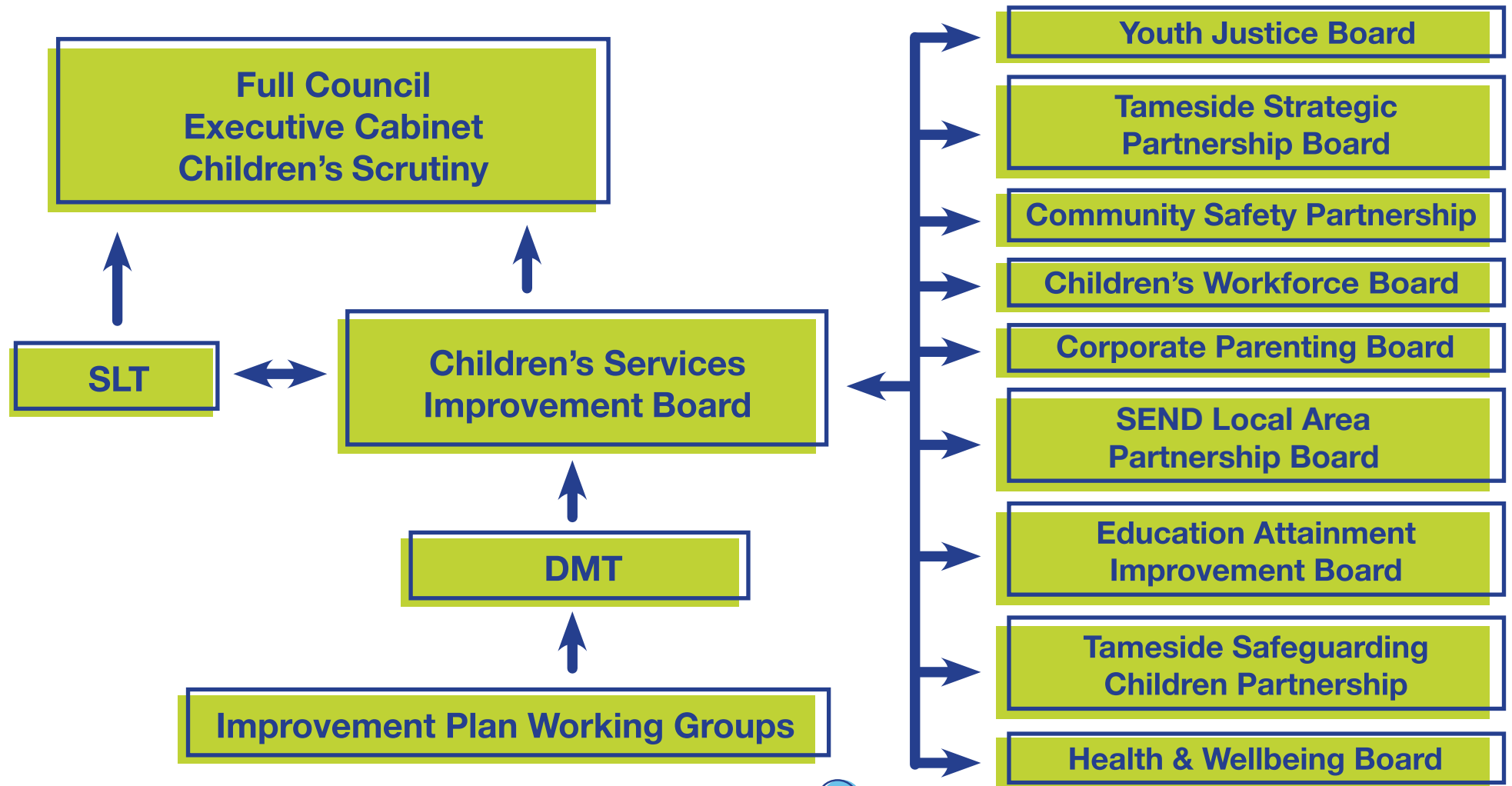
We are now focusing on establishing a permanent stable workforce. We have secured our AD for Children's Safeguarding on a permanent basis and the recruitment process for the appointment to the DCS has commenced, along with processes to secure the remainder of the permanent leadership team. In the meantime, we have an experienced AD of Education in post who will remain until the permanent role is filled. The senior management team structure consultation has commenced and following this we will move to the permanent appointment process to further stabilise our leadership team to drive our improvement journey.

Funding from the Council has been received to continue our improvement journey, however, as a consequence of the cost of living crisis and the impact of the current inflationary challenges faced nationally Tameside Council is facing significant financial pressures. We will carefully monitor the impact of these to ensure the success of this improvement plan.

The Corporate Parenting Board captures and shares our continued commitment to improve for all our children, young people and their families. This Improvement Plan is led by the Director of Children's Services and is supported across the Council, partners and with collaboration from our children, young people and their families.



# Governance Framework



# Priorities, Goals, Principles & Values

The children's vision: In Tameside you feel happy, safe and proud of who you are. You belong, can have fun, feel loved and are able to live your best life.

## Our Priorities

- 1. Quality of Practice:** Children and young people receive a consistently good service: We have an environment where outstanding practice flourishes.
- 2. Working in Partnership:** The views, experiences and engagement with children and young people, their parents and our partners drive us to achieve success, together.
- 3. Achieving Permanence:** We have the right resources in the right place to meet the needs of the children and families we work with.
- 4. Leadership and Workforce:** We lead well, inspiring and supporting staff to be the best that we can be.

## Our Goals

- Children and young people remain safely with their families
- Where children and young people cannot remain with their family they are placed close to home and are able to remain within their communities and support networks (where appropriate) ensuring meaningful relationships are maintained
- Families receive the right support at the right time, the first time, and in the most effective way
- Children and young people (including children with special educational needs and disabilities and our children in care) have their physical, emotional and mental health needs met
- Children and young people feel supported into adulthood and know all of the information they need to about themselves and their lives
- Children and young people are supported into education, employment or training
- Children and young people are consulted and directly involved in planning
- Children and young people's wishes and views are heard, understood and acted upon
- Our services are co-produced with our service users (children and families) to ensure best fit for them

## Our Principles and Values

- Always listen and respond to the voices of children and families
- Help children and families to develop their own solutions and be ambitious advocates for them
- All agencies work together through a multi-agency co-ordinated response for children and young people
- We use practice model to consistently assess risks, concerns and identify solutions with families
- Everyone understands our practice framework and uses our thresholds consistently so that we offer the right help at the right time, locally, at the earliest opportunity to deliver impact and change for children and families
- We will use meaningful measures to demonstrate the quality of the work we do
- Our leaders are strong, visible and engaged with practice and practitioners
- We will equip children's services leaders to drive improvement across the service
- We are persistent and curious – our workforce are confident, assured and take action to keep children safe
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility – we will always keep our focus on the child

# Our Improvement Plan

This high level Improvement Plan is set to outline our priorities moving forward with each improvement activity being linked to a measurable impact. We have identified four priorities for improvement; **1) Quality of Practice, 2) Working in Partnership, 3) Achieving Permanence, 4) Leadership and Workforce.** Our priorities are underpinned by 13 focus areas which are outlined in the delivery and service plans.

All our improvements link to the Ofsted judgement areas and have a dedicated sponsor to own and drive forward the improvement activity. They are supported by key members of staff who will develop and embed the changes required. The sponsors for each priority will report quarterly to the Children's Improvement Board.

Ensuring we work with the voices of our children and families at the heart of what we do remains a top priority.

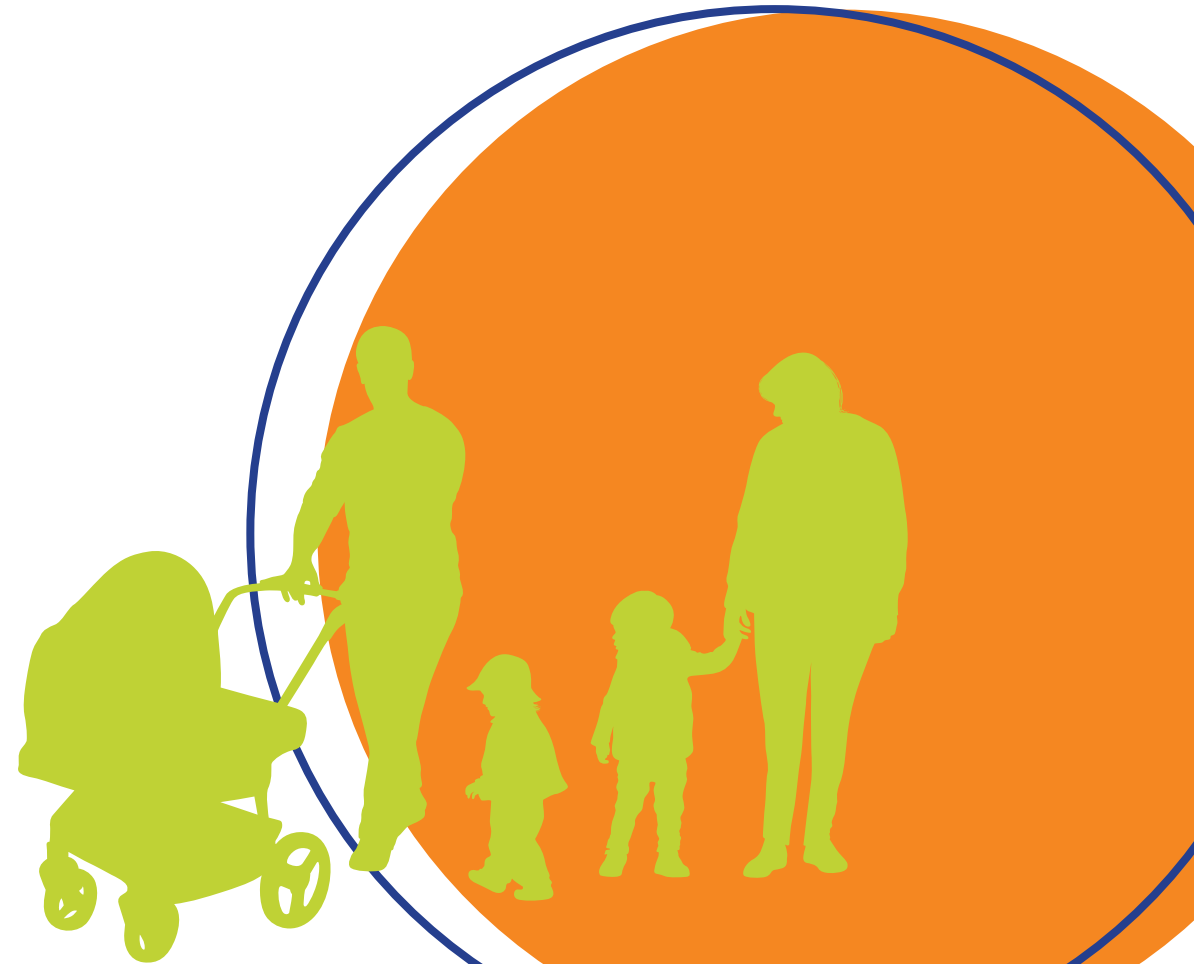
Experience and Progress of Children in need of Help and Protection	Experience of Cared for Children	Experience and Progress of Care Leavers	Impact of Leaders on Social Work Practice
<b>FA1: The Voice of Children and Families</b>			
<b>FA2: Collaborative working with partners</b>			
<b>FA3: Identifying, assessing and managing risk</b>	<b>FA6: Effective placement matching</b>	<b>FA8: Consistency of support and pathway plans for care leavers</b>	<b>FA9: Governance and leadership</b>
<b>FA4: Practice framework (including Thresholds and timeliness)</b>	<b>FA7: Children in specific circumstances</b>		<b>FA10: Practice evaluation &amp; performance management</b>
<b>FA5: Plans and Timeliness</b>			<b>FA11: Supervision and management oversight</b>
			<b>FA12: Recruiting and retaining a stable permanent workforce</b>
			<b>FA13: Data and Systems</b>

# Detailed Delivery and Business Plans

This improvement plan is supported by a detailed delivery plan and individual business plans which outline what specific activity/ actions are being undertaken and the quality and impact measures, in order to deliver the overall outcomes for children and young people in Tameside. The delivery plan addresses the four priority areas for improvement developed based on feedback from Ofsted

Business plans are set out to address all activity required to achieve operational change and to address everyday business as usual activity.

In developing the delivery plan each priority sponsor has worked with the Improvement Programme Team to develop detailed delivery plan with clear actions, leads and timeline for delivery. The delivery plan details the breakdown of activity with timeframes, measures and performance data for each of our goals.





# Assuring the Quality and Impact of our Work

Everything we do, our leadership, procedures, measures and learning must always focus on what practitioners actually do with children and families, and what the quality and impact of that work is. We collect and measure enormous amounts of data, and whilst we know we have improved upon our ability to analyse what we collect, we also know that we can use data to even greater effect to drive improvements in the quality of practice.

We continue to strengthen our approach to quality assurance to ensure measures are meaningful to the people who do the work, supports learning and improves practice. Going forward our Quality Assurance System encompasses:

- Collaborative case audit,
- Dashboard to monitor application of our practice framework in individual case management;
- Children, young people, parents/carers staff feedback and feedback from partners on practice and organisational fit and leadership respectively;
- Core data for monitoring specific goals, case trends and outcomes with a small set of key indicators that are already collected.

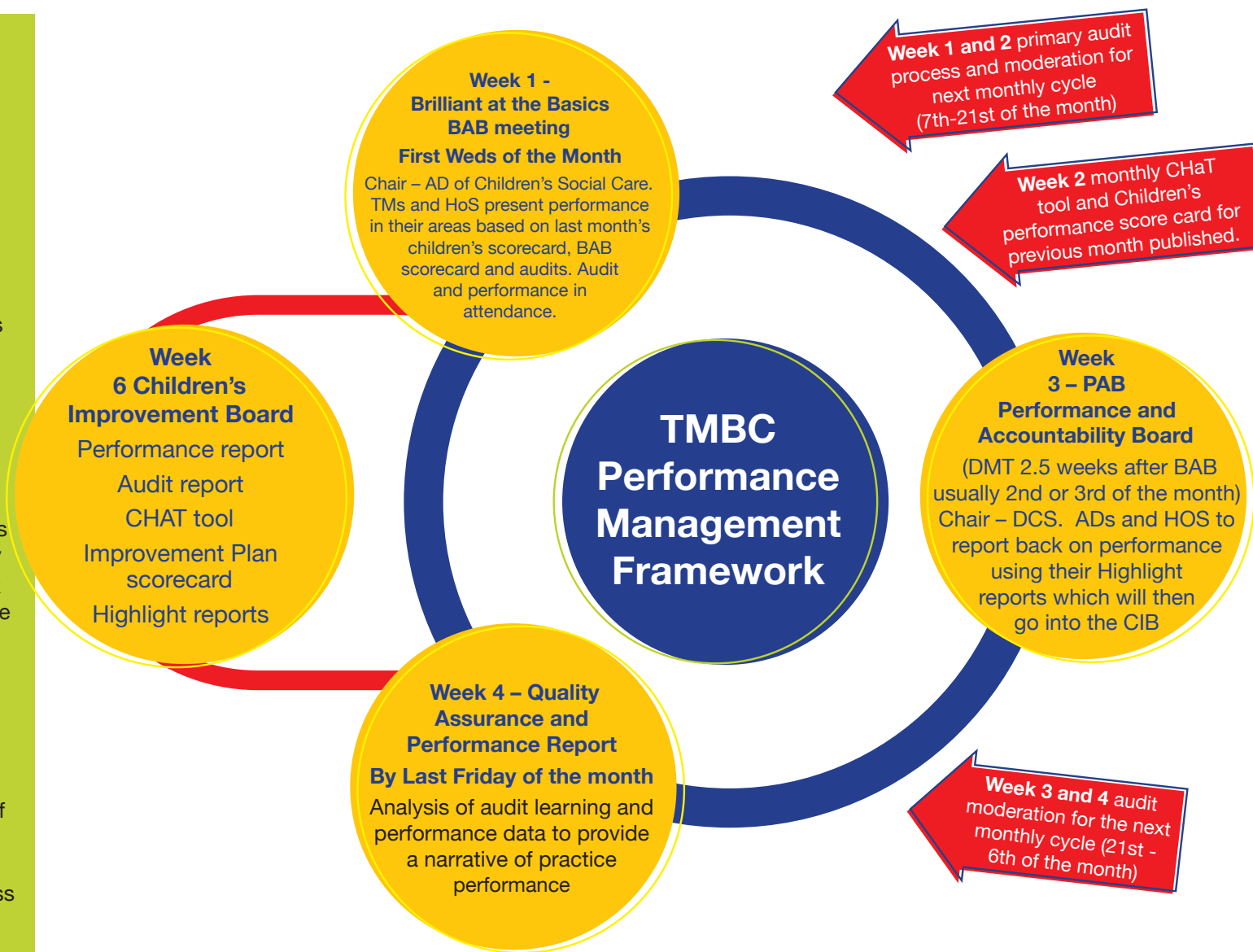
Through our quality assurance activities we will demonstrate we understand ourselves and the difference we are making to the lives of children, young people, families and carers through good use of data, information, children, young people and family feedback, compliments and complaints – always asking ‘how can we make things better?’ and being curious and innovative in our practice.



# Our Performance and Assurance Cycle

## Practice Improvement Activity

Collaborative Audits  
 Thematic Audits  
 Quarterly Practice Week  
 Peer reviews  
 Internal reflective practice discussions  
 Rapid Reviews  
 Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews  
 National thematic learning reports  
 Feedback from Children and families  
 Feedback from IRO/CP chairs  
 Feedback from Children in Care Council  
 CAFCASS and feedback from proceedings  
 Complaints and compliments  
 Exit interviews / staff feedback  
 Staff performance management process  
 Panel meetings



## Performance Inputs

Children’s Scorecard  
 Improvement Board Scorecard  
 Brilliant at the Basics (BAB) Scorecard  
 ChAT (Annex A data report)  
 Whole Service Data book  
 Whole Service Data Quality Report  
 Annex A Child Level Data and Data quality lists  
 Daily and Weekly data reports  
 Business Object Reporting (moving towards operational dashboards)  
 Highlight reports  
 Audit Report  
 Inspection and feedback  
 Safeguarding Learning Reviews  
 CSC learning case reviews

# Our Improvement Plan

## 1: QUALITY OF PRACTICE

Lead: Assistant Director, Children's Social Care (Alison Montgomery)

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>What needs to improve: The consistency in applying thresholds and interventions for children</b>									
1.1	Ensure effective application of thresholds and intervention across the partnership, recognising risk, to achieve best outcomes for children. <b>FV2</b>	<p>Performance data and QA audit activity will demonstrate that children are referred to the appropriate level of service to meet their identified needs.</p> <p>Performance data and QA audit activity will demonstrate robust decision making in accordance with multi-agency effective support (thresholds) framework.</p> <p>Thresholds are applied consistently across the partnership.</p> <p>Performance data and QA audit will demonstrate that strategy meetings and subsequent enquiries will be high quality, timely and consistent.</p>	TSCP Independent Scrutineer	Sep 23	Oct 24	Children and their families will say they feel safe and supported and that everyone is working together to make sure the outcome is best for the child.			We have strengthened our management capacity at the front door with experienced team managers in post who are monitoring the threshold application and working more closely with partners. We are in the process of developing a daily multi-agency meeting so that we are benchmarking our understanding of thresholds and decision making.

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
1.2	<p>Develop a consistent, high quality, multi-agency front door to effectively identify children who need help and protection, to ensure the right intervention at the right time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear lines of management accountability and responsibility.</li> <li>• Appropriate staffing and resources to deliver the service.</li> <li>• Delegation of decision making in response to contacts and referrals.</li> <li>• Use of the RAG rated system.</li> <li>• Multi-agency involvement in initial screening and decision making.</li> <li>• Practice regarding multi-agency strategy meetings and/vs the use of risk management meetings.</li> </ul>	<p>External review and internal oversight will confirm if changes evidence a positive impact on the provision of the service</p> <p>The service is fully staffed and able to meet the demands of the front door.</p> <p>There are effective initial responses for our children and young people.</p> <p>Children and young people at risk of harm are identified at the earliest opportunity to keep them safe.</p> <p>The history of children is gathered and used to inform next steps for children and young people.</p> <p>Timeliness and quality of strategy meetings is good and child focused.</p> <p>There is an effective multiagency response when children go missing from home or care.</p> <p>Assessments are effective at identifying all children's needs and risks.</p> <p>Children aged 16 to 17 years old who present as homeless have their needs fully assessed and met.</p>	<p>AD Children's Social Care</p> <p>MASH Strategic Group</p>	Sep 23	Sep 24	Children will say I know that the right decisions are made for me at the right time and I understand why these decisions have been made.			<p>The MASH is now fully staffed over establishment to ensure we are equipped to meet the demands of the front door. We have improved our contact and enquiry form and in added in specific chronological tab and linked this to an impact statement so that social workers and managers have to discuss the impact of history on current risks to children and young people.</p> <p>Our implemented missing protocol has been rolled out to partners and agencies. Our performance has significantly improved since Dec 23. We have seen a reduction in repeat missing episodes for our children in care. Our offer of missing interviews has consistently increased month on month and is currently at 92% (an increase of 30% from Dec 23). Interview received was at 21% and is now at 75%. Timeliness in 72 hours has gone from 12% to 61%.</p> <p>For 16-17 year olds who present as homeless we have a joint housing protocol in place, have co-produced leaflets with our care experienced young people to ensure that we have a homeless tracker that has oversight by a HoS. We have agreed to a joint housing officer in the MASH.</p>

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>What needs to improve: The quality of assessments to identify children's needs and risks to support decision-making around next steps</b>									
1.3	<p>Embed practice standards to improve the quality and consistency of practice to create a "Brilliant at the Basics" approach. <b>ILAC, FV1, FV2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments</li> <li>• Visits to children</li> <li>• Voice of the child</li> <li>• Plans</li> <li>• Case summary</li> <li>• Chronology</li> <li>• Supervision and Management Oversight</li> </ul>	<p>Social work practice will consistently be of a high standard and compliant with guidance.</p> <p>Assessments and Plans will be of high quality and will clearly demonstrate the voice of the child.</p> <p>Systems will show clear chronology and be updated in a timely manner.</p> <p>Staff will have regular supervision with clear outcomes and learning areas.</p> <p>Our practice will be timely and consistent.</p> <p>Children and young people will say that their plans clearly show their wishes and feelings and that they feel listened to.</p> <p>Analysis of concerns will be consistent, identifying risks and needs of the children to ensure the right interventions at the right time.</p>	AD Children's Social Care	Aug 23	Sep 24	Children will say that they feel secure and are part of a happy family.			We have launched new practice standards based on Brilliant at the Basics and our 5 C's which will be embedded over the next few months.



Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>What needs to improve: the quality of plans for children in need of help and protection, children in care and care leavers to enable them to receive the support they need.</b>									
1.4	Child Protection Planning is timely and effective and keeps children safe.	<p>Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences will be timely, multi-agency and demonstrate the voice of the child</p> <p>Child Protection Plans will be of a high quality and reviewed in line with practice standards</p> <p>Risks and needs of children will be consistently recognised to ensure plans are timely and effective and children are receiving the right intervention at the right time.</p> <p>Children and families will have a copy of their Child Protection Plans and will be able to articulate the changes requires and safety plan.</p>	AD Children's Social Care	Feb 24	Sep 24	Children will say I know the right decisions and made for me at the time and I understand why these decision have been made.			We have changed our Child protection visit timeframes from 20 days to 10 in line with best practice and to ensure we are keeping children safe. Our data has show an increase since this metric was introduced.



Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>What needs to improve: The timeliness of children achieving permanence.</b>									
1.5	<p>Develop a robust performance data system to ensure a plan for children's permanency is evidenced by second review or before. <b>ILAC</b></p> <p>Ensure timely, authoritative assessments and ambitious plans for children to secure permanence at the earliest opportunity.</p>	<p>Performance data will demonstrate placement stability for cared for children who experience fewer placement moves.</p> <p>Placement tracking will ensure timely searches for placement and review of unregulated placements</p> <p>Deep dive audits will evidence placement matching and decision making for cared for children.</p> <p>Performance data will evidence how matching procedures ensure permanence is secured for children in long term foster care</p> <p>A1, A10 A20 performance data will demonstrate timely adoption for children whose permanence is secured via adoption in line with national average.</p>	HOS Cared for Children	Sept 23	Nov 24	<p>Children will say that they feel secure and are part of a happy family.</p> <p>Children will say they know that they are cared about, because managers know their personal story's and ensure they help children return home where it safe to do so, stay in their family network, or find their forever family that meets their personal timeframe.</p> <p>Children will say that managers create meaningful measures that keep them safe, and ensure that their lived experience is recorded in way they can understand in their personal children files.</p>			Our Permanence Strategy is completed and we will now embed this as our approach.



Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
1.6	To re-launch the Public Law Outline (PLO) process and ensure plans are of good quality with timely implementation during pre-proceedings <b>ILAC, FV1</b>	Fewer children enter the care of the Local Authority as a result of robust PLO planning and intervention.  Performance scorecard enables effective management oversight to strengthen pre-proceedings through improved tracking and the implementation of multi-agency legal gateway meetings, providing uniformity in decision making.  Effective and timely PLO pre-proceedings enables quicker decisions about children's permanence.	AD Children's Social Care	Oct 23	Sep 24	Children and families will be well informed and understand the decision making process. They will say their plan is easy to understand.			PLO toolkit has been embedded and performance is being monitored to measure impact.





Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>What needs to improve: to work with care leavers to help them understand their rights and entitlements, their health histories and their understanding of the local offer</b>									
1.7	<p>Use practice improvement sessions and strengthened management oversight to Improve the quality of pathway plans.</p> <p>Ensure pathway plans are purposeful, outcome focused and co-produced with young people to drive best outcomes for their futures.</p> <p>Ensure all cared for children have pathway plans from 16years. <b>ILAC</b></p> <p>Care leavers to receive consistent, high quality support and guidance, ensuring changing needs and risks are fully explored and understood.</p>	<p>Effective pathway plans and reviews evidence how we are ambitious for all of our care experienced adults, they have suitable accommodation, are in education, training and employment, and are free of debt.</p> <p>Performance data demonstrates we are in touch with our care leavers (% Performance measure)</p> <p>Care Leavers will have knowledge of health passport at final health assessment.</p> <p>Care leavers will feel well supported with their emotional health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Care leavers have good relationships with their Personal Advisors and are visited regularly. They feel that their voice is heard and feel ready for independence.</p> <p>Disabled care-experienced young people have their needs understood and are visited regularly.</p> <p>Care leavers understand their entitlements and know how to provide feedback.</p> <p>Care leavers feel ready for living independently.</p>	<p>AD Children's Social Care</p> <p>HOS cared for Children</p> <p>Transformation and Neighbourhoods, ICFT</p>	Sep 23	Sep 24	<p>Young people will say they feel well supported and have a clear plan for their future.</p> <p>Young people will know what they are entitled to when leaving care.</p> <p>Young people will know that we are here to support them and will have ownership of their individual pathway plans that will help them gain confidence to grow into adulthood.</p>			<p>Our draft local offer is currently in consultation. Our independence booklet co produced with our care leavers launched earlier this year and is an active tool to support our young people.</p>

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>What needs to improve: the multi-agency recognition and response to risk, including referrals, strategy meetings, when children go missing from home or care, arising risks for children in care and care leavers, and when allegations are made against professionals.</b>									
1.8	Embed a clear practice framework for children and young people at risk of exploitation.	<p>Risk will be managed, and good outcomes will be achieved for children who are at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) via robust contextual safeguarding planning.</p> <p>Performance data will ensure children at most risk of CCE are tracked and appropriate interventions in place including return home interviews and multi-agency risk management plans.</p>	AD Children's Social Care	Sep 23	Sep 24	<p>Our children and young people will say they feel safe and know that that their social worker is doing all they can to support them.</p> <p>Children will feel listened to and say they can trust and confide in their social worker to keep them safe.</p>			The Tameside Complex Safeguarding Operating Model is being taken to our Exploitation Strategic group in September 24
1.9	Review the practice and outcomes of the children with disabilities service to improve practice <b>ILAC19&amp;21</b>	<p>Deep dive and dip sampling of files will identify areas of strength and areas for improvement which will inform service and team plans.</p> <p>Social workers are confident in using alternative communication tools to understand the experiences of disabled children</p> <p>Monthly audits will evidence how planning for children with special educational needs and disabilities supports good outcomes.</p> <p>Performance data and QA will evidence that personal advisors will visit regularly and demonstrate an understanding of their needs.</p>	<p>AD Children's Social Care</p> <p>AD Transformation and Neighbourhoods, ICFT</p>	Nov 23	Dec 24	<p>Children and young people will say that their needs have been understood and their outcomes are achievable for them.</p> <p>Children will see that we take care to make sure that when we see we need to make improvements we make sure we do this in a timely way and hold their experience in our minds to ensure we all learn together.</p>			Our short breaks offer is currently under review. We are reviewing all children in the service to ensure they are safe and receiving the appropriate package of support.

## 2: WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

### Lead: AD Children's Social Services (Alison Montgomery)

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>What needs to improve: Working in Partnership</b>									
2.1	Work with Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to develop the strategic and operational relationship to ensure timely engagement in CP assessment and planning. <b>ILAC, FV1, FV2</b>	There will be evidence of working together to jointly input into child protection assessments in a timely effective way.	AD Children's Social Care	Oct 23	Oct 24	Children and young people will say they know all professionals are working together to ensure they are safe and that the right decision has been made for them.			Strategic and operational MASH meetings now in place to strengthen the quality of referrals, information sharing and multiagency holding of risk, need and harm.
2.2	Work with partners to develop robust tracking and ensure initial and review health assessments for cared for children are completed within timescale, with particular attention to initial health assessments <b>ILAC, FV1</b>	Performance scorecard will demonstrate timely referrals and assessments that are completed on time for both IHA and RHA  Audit data will demonstrate how IHA and RHA ensure cared for children's health needs are consistently met and identify any areas requiring improvement.	AD Children's Social Care  Tameside Safeguarding Children's Partnership  AD Transformation and Neighbourhoods, ICFT	Oct 23	Dec 24	Children and young people will say that we understand their health needs and are able to provide support for their health & wellbeing including emotional support.			Work to streamline the process between health and social care is on-going. Improved use of systems is being explored.

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
2.3	Work with Adult services to proactively plan and prepare young people who will require support from adult social care so that they have the appropriate provision and services in place.	Young people will live in accommodation suitable for their needs and receive the right support at the right time from a multi-agency perspective.	AD Adults AD Children's Social Care AD Education	Nov 23	Mar 25	Young people will say they live in accommodation that suits their needs and circumstances and they are well supported.			A transition tracker to identify and monitor children and young people and their transition pathway has been developed. Further work to improve data quality and oversight is continuing.
<b>What needs to improve: The engagement and participation of children and young people in their assessments, planning and service delivery.</b>									
2.4	Ensure parents, carers, children & young people's feedback and engagement is central to our understanding to how effective our front line work is.	There will be two way engagement with children & young people who are service users, using digital means there will be an improvement in the attendance at Children in Care Council (CICC), Youth Council, Schools, Young Carers, Care Leaver Forum.	AD Children's Social Care	Oct 23	Oct 24	Children and families will say that their input is valuable and that it drives best practice and good outcomes for children. Children and young people will say they feel listened to and regularly meet with leaders to share their lived experience.			Our Participation strategy is in the final stages and will be going for a final consultation via an online survey in September
2.5	All children receive life story work consistent with good practice expectations, evidenced on children's files and confirmed by audit. <b>ILAC</b>	Participation work with children and young people evidences the impact of life story work.	AD Children's Social Care	Nov 23	Oct 24	Children will know their journey and will have access to all the information they need to help them understand why decisions were made.  Children will say they don't have to keep repeating their story, but we hold their stories with care.			Life story guidance has been created and life story work is included in our annual training programme.

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
2.6	<p>All plans to include clear evaluation of educational attainment and progress and identify the steps being taken to improve overall outcomes for children and young people</p> <p><b>ILAC</b></p>	<p>Virtual school and health partners are a visible part of a child's network .</p> <p>Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are done within required timescales and are of good quality (termly).</p> <p>Health Assessments and Strength and Difficulty Questionnaires (SDQs) are in the PEP's actions.</p> <p>C&amp;YP who are Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) will have robust NEET planning which is reviewed in accordance with NEET strategy.</p> <p>All children with a social worker who receive their education at home will have an evaluation of the appropriateness of the education provided and how this is supporting good educational outcomes.</p> <p>Clear plans are in place for children with a social worker who are on reduced education timetable to ensure educational outcomes are well supported.</p> <p>Ensure the virtual school is working collaboratively with education establishments to implement more systematic and rigorous systems to support the needs of children more effectively.</p> <p>School and Education Attendance.</p>	AD Education	Sep 23	July 25	<p>Children will say that Tameside Council cares about their education and their future ambitions and goals.</p> <p>Children will know we are aspirational for them, understand their individual needs and work hard to help them gain their best opportunities.</p> <p>Young people will know we are working with them to help them find the best opportunities for their next steps, that the services work together to ensure we are focused on creating opportunities and supporting young people on their pathway.</p>			There will be a review of action and measures for impact against the improvement.

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>Education</b>									
2.7	Improvement Board receive assurance of the implementation of the SEND improvement plan.	There will be clear governance and accountability for service improvement	AD Education AD Transformation and Neighbourhoods, ICFT	Oct 23	Sep 24	Children and their families will see that their Education and Health Care plans are focused and led with pace and care. That services work together to ensure we give children the best opportunities to grow and we are aspirational in our approach.			SEND Improvement Plan has secured additional capacity to develop and implement at pace.



### 3: ACHIEVING PERMANENCE

Lead: AD Children's Social Services (Alison Montgomery)

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>What needs to improve: The sufficiency of placements to meet the needs of children</b>									
3.1	Revise placement sufficiency strategy and commissioning activities to increase placement quality and choice. <b>FV1</b>	<p>There will be an increased choice of placements that will ensure better matching to meet the needs of the children.</p> <p>Performance data will evidence stability and permanence.</p> <p>Fewer children and young people will be residing in unregulated placements.</p>	<p>Head of Commissioning</p> <p>AD Children's Social Care</p>	Sep 23	Oct 25	<p>Children and young people will have a stable and secure home that is suitable for their needs.</p> <p>Children will say that we try hard to keep children in the borough when they cannot stay in their family and family network.</p> <p>Children will say that the care they are receiving is the best it can be.</p>			<p>Sufficiency Strategy has been completed and will be updated annually.</p> <p>Good progress is being made against actions in the delivery plan.</p>
3.2	Expand the range of accommodation and services that are available to our care leavers to provide high quality support and preparation for adulthood.	<p>Supported accommodation commissioned for our cared for children and 16+ care leavers .</p> <p>Reduction in use of temporary and unregistered accommodation.</p>	<p>Head of Commissioning</p> <p>AD Transformation and Neighbourhoods, ICFT</p>	Sep 23	Mar 26	<p>Young people will feel supported in their transition to adulthood and will have options to choose from that suit their needs and circumstances.</p>			<p>Actions are on track to be delivered within agreed time frames.</p>

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>What needs to improve: The timeliness and quality of the induction, training, and review of foster carer agreements</b>									
3.3	<p>Streamline the foster carer recruitment process to accelerate the recruitment and assessment of foster carers and ensure the foster care offer is competitive for the local market.</p> <p>Review the timeliness and quality of the induction, training and review of foster carer agreements.</p>	<p>Timeliness of the assessment and approval process will improve.</p> <p>Tameside provide a competitive offer to new and existing foster carers improving year on year net increase in the number of in-house foster placements available.</p> <p>Ensure the use of foster care agreements with clear expectations and carers held to account regarding the quality of care.</p>	AD Children's Social Care	Nov 23	Sep 25	Children will say they have been able to remain close to their friends and family.			The GM Hub went live in June and we will continue with initiatives such as fostering fortnight to increase our foster carers. We are aware more work needs to be done to recruit foster carers.
3.4	<p>Review and update the support offer to foster carers and children to increase in-house capacity to care for children and young people.</p>	<p>There will be increased choices and availability for children and young people with specific therapeutic needs.</p> <p>Fewer children and young people will be residing in unregulated placements.</p>	<p>AD Children's Social Care</p> <p>Head of Commissioning</p>	Nov 23	Sept 25	<p>Children will feel supported by carers who understand their lived experience and help them to settle with great care.</p> <p>Children will feel when things are difficult we are able to provide good support to help them.</p>			The GM Hub went live in June and we will continue with initiatives such as fostering fortnight to increase our foster carers. We are aware more work needs to be done to recruit foster carers.



## 4: LEADERSHIP AND WORKFORCE

Lead: Director of Children's Services (Allison Parkinson)

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>What needs to improve: The Council's oversight, accountability and governance of leadership of children's services</b>									
4.1	Ensure the Leadership of the Council including all Directors, Members and senior leaders make an effective contribution to driving the improvement plan and provision of support from the wider infrastructure of the Council and partners. <b>ILAC,FV1,FV2</b>	The Leadership of the Council including CEX, Lead Member and DCS recognise and prioritise the needs of children and this is reflected in corporate decision making, scrutiny activities and activity of the Improvement Board.	Lead Member TMBC CEO and DCS	Sep 23	Jun 24	Children and young people will say I know that everyone in Tameside have listened to what Ofsted said and agreed to make things better as quickly as possible in a way that will make all their services good in future and my experience has improved as a result.			
4.2	Develop a governance structure that enables senior leaders and Members to drive improvement outcomes for children including Corporate Parenting Board (CPB), Improvement Board and Scrutiny Committee	Senior leaders and Members will demonstrate good oversight, challenge and support to achieving best outcomes for children.	DCS SLT Head of Transformation	Sep 23	Dec 23	Children and young people will say the people leading the council know about their lives.			Refreshed children's improvement board in place from October 23.

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
4.3	Undertake scrutiny and assurance development session with key political and corporate leaders <b>ILAC,FV1,FV2</b>	Senior leaders and Lead Members understand the experience of children receiving support services in Tameside.	DCS SLT AD People and Workforce Development Improvement Lead	Sep 23	Mar 24				Children's scorecard is tabled as a standing item on Children's Services Panel
4.4	Ensure clear link between Childrens Improvement Plan and Safeguarding Partnership to improve outcomes for children.	Strategic links in place achieved by clear governance.  Appropriate policies will be in place  Multi-agencies working in partnership to implement policies.	DCS Chair of Safeguarding Board  Chair of SEND Improvement Board and Chair of Improvement Board	Sep 23	Sep 24				We have appointed a new experienced Independent Chair to strengthen the Partnership.
<b>What needs to improve: The regularity and effectiveness of management oversight and challenge</b>									
4.5	Practice learning workshops will be delivered for all staff across children's services to ensure the Practice framework is known, understood and implemented consistently across the workforce	The outcome of practice audits evidence improvement across all areas.  Our workforce describe and evidence understanding of the framework  Data will evidence that every member of our workforce has completed training to enable them to implement the practice framework.	Head of Quality Assurance & Audit	Oct 23	Dec 24	Children and young people will feel confident that their Social Worker has the appropriate knowledge and skills to support them in making positive outcomes			We have launched new practice standards based on Brilliant at the Basics and our 5 C's which needs will be embedded over the next few months.

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
4.6	Use performance and accountability processes alongside practice development workshops to drive improved management oversight and decision making <b>ILAC,FV1</b>	<p>Children's files will consistently provide demonstrable evidence of critical reflection, hypothesis, support and challenge to ensure practice is consistently good and better.</p> <p>Progression of children's plans will be evidenced and demonstrate how best outcomes have been achieved.</p> <p>Case file audits will evidence consistently good practice.</p> <p>Social care staff will describe the impact and difference good management support is making to their practice.</p>	DMT	Oct 23	Oct 24	Children and young people will say I know that services are working to the best standard possible and my social worker works with others to make things better when they need to.			Our performance management framework is now in place. Based on a mid point review we will work to streamline and strengthen this process.
4.7	Implement a Quality Assurance framework that delivers high quality program of reliable audit and learning activities that creates culture of learning and accountability	<p>Monthly audits will evidence improved practice as a result of clear actions and evaluation of the outcomes via closing of the learning loop.</p> <p>Deep dive and thematic audits will provide direct line of sight as of the quality of practice to Senior Leaders together with the Improvement Board and inform practice improvement activity.</p> <p>Thematic learning from monthly audits will contribute to systemic improvements across children's and inform commissioning of training services.</p> <p>Learning from QA activity (including child practice reviews and section 11 audits) will be used to inform training and development programme for the workforce.</p>	HoS Quality Assurance Chair of Safeguarding Board	Sep 23	Jan 24	Children and young people will say that the help and support they get from their social worker is getting better.			Processes are now in place, requires longer to demonstrate more significant impact.

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
4.8	Clearly defined first and second tier management roles and responsibilities to empower and support operational managers to succeed in delivery and a culture of continuous improvement.	<p>Learning from QA activity evidencing scrutiny and supportive challenge from managers.</p> <p>Managers operating within the delegated duties framework and have clear accountable tasks.</p> <p>Manager feedback / employee survey.</p> <p>Delivery of business plans. Service specific performance indicators.</p>	DMT	Nov 23	Jun 24	Children and young people will say I know that managers in children's services know how good our services really are and make sure they are always of high quality.			Increase the pace of activity to ensure structures and roles meet the needs of the service, including implementing the training offer.
4.9	Work in collaboration with the corporate improvement team to drive forward the actions set out in our improvement plan to ensure the progress continues at pace with dedicated project management resource	<p>Change and improvements are driven effectively.</p> <p>Performance data demonstrate that the improvements are having a positive impact.</p> <p>Each service to have a delivery plan, with SMART actions and accountability to prioritise the right areas for improvement.</p>	Head of Transformation	Sep 23	Jun 24				Additional capacity has been secured and working with the AD of digital to develop automated solutions.



Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
<b>What needs to improve: The recruitment and retention of staff and support for newly qualified social workers</b>									
4.10	Develop a Children's Workforce Board to implement the Children's workforce strategy to improve staff retention and recruitment. <b>ILAC, FV1</b>	<p>Number of permanent social workers will increase.</p> <p>There will be a reduction in number of changes of social workers for children</p> <p>Career pathway is clear and demonstrates progression routes for all social care staff.</p> <p>Staff are inducted well and have regular effective performance conversations in supervisions.</p> <p>Outcomes in line with our workforce development strategy will be achieved to support recruitment and retention.</p>	<p>AD People and Workforce Development</p> <p>DCS</p>	Oct 23	Nov 24	Children will say they feel confident that their Social Worker will be consistent and remain un-changed			Workforce board established. Work ongoing to improve professional development offer. We are working to create a stable and permanent workforce as we know this is a key element of our improvement journey
4.11	Review capacity in the service to ensure the resources are deployed to enable the most effective support at the appropriate level needed, creating a stable supportive workforce. <b>ILAC, FV2</b>	<p>Caseloads will be maintained within the caseload policy thus enabling good purposeful social work interventions that provide positive outcomes for children.</p> <p>Data demonstrates timely interventions at appropriate levels.</p> <p>Strengthen the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) social worker standards.</p>	AD People and Workforce Development	Oct 23	Oct 24	Children will say they have a good, trusting relationship with their social worker.			Additional resource has been secured to support the improvement journey.

Ref.	Actions	How will we know?	Lead	Start Date	End Date	What our children will say	Action RAG	Impact RAG	Commentary
4.12	Develop and implement workforce engagement sessions to ensure that all children's social care staff are kept informed, updated and have the opportunity to share their views	Feedback will tell us that our staff feel part of our improvement journey and that their input is valued.	AD People and Workforce Development	Nov 23	Oct 24	The workforce I come across are happy, motivated and passionate about making a difference to my life.			Overarching communication strategy shared with stakeholders. Engagement plan in development.

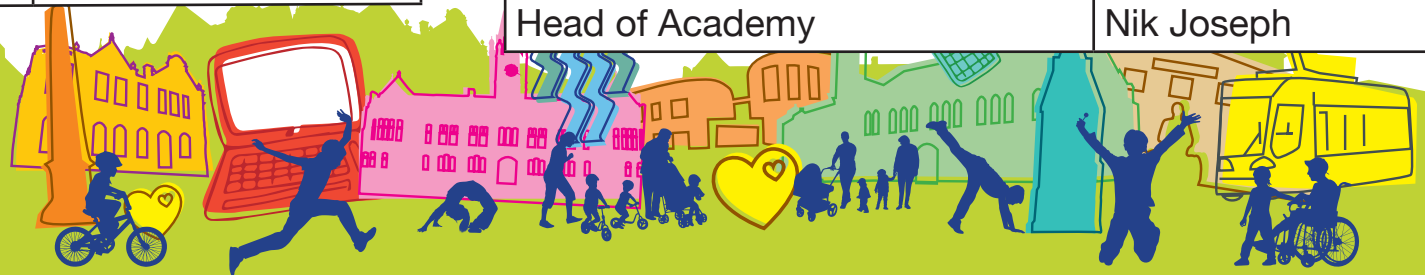


# Appendix A: Accompanying notes

## Current Post Holders (September 2024)

Job Title	Current Post Holder
Director of Children's Services (Acting)	Sandra Stewart
Assistant Director (Social Care)	Alison Montgomery
Assistant Director (People & Workforce Development)	Tracy Brennand
Assistant Director (Education)	Deborah Myers
Tameside Children's Strategic Partnership Independent Scrutineer	Melanie John-Ross
Head of Commissioning	Mark Love
Head of Early Years, Early Help & Neighbourhoods	Faye Edwards
Head of Fostering, Adoption, Residential, Leaving Care and Placements	Becky Pearson
DSCO	Mel Oldham
Head of QA, Inspection Readiness and Practice Improvement	Petra Pankova

Job Title	Current Post Holder
Head of IRO & CP	Bart Popelier
Head of MASH, EDT, Duty and Assessment and Safeguarding (Court lead) and Children with Disabilities	Karen Somerville
Head of Youth Partnership	Charlie Spencer
Head of Cared for Children	Allison Sollom
Head of SEND	Hilary Cook
Head of Access	Katie Twigg
Head of Virtual School	Phil Mellen
Head of Education Improvement & Partnerships	Jo Pearson
Head of Transformation & Improvement	Emily Drake
AD Transformation and Neighbourhoods, ICFT,	Stephanie Sloan
Head of Partnerships	Rhianne Elleston
Head of Academy	Nik Joseph



# Key to monitoring of Action and Impact BRAG ratings

**BRAG RATING:** The 'BRAG' rating for progress and impact will be updated on a monthly basis in the detailed delivery plan.

<b>BLUE</b>	Completed and impact evidenced, target achieved and this is likely to be sustained.
<b>RED</b>	<b>Action:</b> Tasks not been completed or timescales slipped and need attention <b>Impact</b> should start to be seen and measured, but are not met.
<b>AMBER</b>	<b>Action:</b> Tasks are not fully on track but plans are in place to ensure progress by identifiable timescale <b>Impact</b> can start to be measured but are yet to be demonstrable
<b>GREEN</b>	<b>Action:</b> Tasks are progressing as expected and deemed to be on target <b>Impact</b> of outcomes can be demonstrably measured





# Appendix B: Performance Measures

Improvement Board Reference	Description	Reporting Frequency	Target
IB1	EHM contacts - timeliness of contact start date to decision (not MASH outcomes) - % completed within 1 working day (by month)	Monthly	>90%
IB2	Number of referrals per 10K pop < 18 rolling 12 months	Monthly	<650
IB3	Percentage of referrals in month that were within 12 months of a previous referral	Monthly	<22%
IB4	Rate of S47 initiated per 10k (rolling 12 months)	Monthly	<250
IB5	Percentage of s47s initiated that convert to ICPC in month	Monthly	<34-44%
IB6	Percentage of ICPCs held within 15 working days of the Strategy Discussion rolling 12 months	Monthly	>83%
IB7	Percentage of Single Assessments completed within 45 working days rolling 12 months	Monthly	>85%
IB8	Percentage of CIN on a plan with a review / updated plan in the past 6 months (exc CP and CiC)	Monthly	>85%
IB9	Percentage of CIN on a plan with a visit in the last 20 working days	Monthly	> 90%
IB10	Rate of CPP per 10K pop < 18 rolling 12 months	Monthly	<60



Improvement Board Reference	Description	Reporting Frequency	Target
IB11	Percentage subject of CPP for a second or subsequent time (Previously CPP at any time) rolling 12 months	Monthly	< 23%
IB12	Percentage of CPP with a visit in the last 10 working days	Monthly	> 90%
IB13	Rate of Children in Care per 10K pop < 18	Monthly	<115
IB14	Percentage if Children in Care with a visit in statutory timescales	Monthly	>90%
IB15	Percentage of CLA started in rolling 12 months who have had an Initial Health Assessment completed IN TIME	Monthly	>75%
IB16	Percentage of CEP (16 to 24) with an up to date pathway plan	Monthly	>90%
IB17	Percentage of social workers who were case holders and had a completed supervision in the last 30 days	Monthly	>85%
IB18	Percentage of Children with a supervision in timescale	Monthly	>90%
IB19	Average caseloads Assessment (excluding ASYE)	Monthly	<18
IB20	Average caseloads Social Work Teams (incl ASYE)	Monthly	<18
IB21	Average caseloads Cared for Children (incl ASYE)	Monthly	<20
IB22	Average caseloads (ASYEs)	Monthly	<15



# Appendix C: Ofsted Improvement Measures

Ofsted Improvement Measures	Actions that seek to address the measure:
The council's oversight, accountability and governance of leadership of children's services	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4
The multi-agency recognition and response to risk, including referrals, strategy meetings, when children go missing from home or care, arising risks for children in care and care leavers, and when allegations are made against professionals	1.8, 1.9
The consistency in applying thresholds and interventions for children	1.1, 1.2
The quality of assessments to identify children's needs and risks to support decision-making around next steps	1.3
The quality of plans for children in need of help and protection, children in care and care leavers to enable them to receive the support they need	1.4
The regularity and effectiveness of management oversight and challenge	4.5, 4.6, 4.7 4.8, 4.9
The timeliness of children achieving permanence	1.5, 1.6
The response to 16 and 17-year old children who are homeless	1.3
The sufficiency of placements to meet the needs of children	3.1, 3.2
The timeliness and quality of the induction, training and review of foster carer agreements	3.3, 3.4
The work with care leavers to help them understand their rights and entitlements, their health histories and their understanding of the local offer.	1.7
The engagement and participation of children and young people in their assessments, planning and service delivery	2.4, 2.5, 2.6
The recruitment and retention of staff and support for newly qualified social workers.	4.10, 4.11, 4.12



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