

20 PLEDGES FOR 2020

"We are setting out a plan to bring about real change - not just about what can be achieved, but in the manner in which we will deliver it."

Paul Dwyer
Cllr Phil Davies, Leader of Wirral Council



Ofsted Improvement Plan Wirral

October 2019

WIRRAL PLAN 2020

Making Wirral great for children,
young people and families



1. Introduction

In June 2019, Ofsted inspection of local authority children's services in Wirral found that Wirral was no longer providing inadequate services for children. The inspection judgements as stated within the Inspection Report rated the impact of leadership on social work practice as good and the experience and progress of children in need of help and protection and children in care as requires improvement.

The full Ofsted report recognised that "changes to the senior leadership team...have ensured that the improvement of services for children is at the centre of a wider corporate agenda". It identified that a greater number of children benefit from timely and good-quality early help and that quality assessment and care planning is leading to more timely action for children who are the subject of care proceedings. The inspection found that children looked after have more safe and secure placements in the local community because of an improved fostering service and recognised that care leavers now have access to a dedicated team that supports them well.

The Report also highlighted 5 key areas for improvement which have been noted by the local authority and will form part of a wider Social Care Improvement agenda. The specific recommendations from Ofsted were:

To improve:

- 1. The quality of analysis within social work assessments to fully take account of the impact of lived experiences of children and lead to good-quality planning for children, including effective planning for permanence.**
- 2. The timeliness and quality of transition arrangements for young people who will require support from adult services.**
- 3. The availability of good-quality services to meet the emotional health and wellbeing needs of all children and young people at the time when they need it, without delay.**
- 4. The provision of education for children in care, including improving their attendance and the timeliness and quality of their personal education plans.**
- 5. The provision of direct work and life-story work for all children at the right time for them to make sure they understand their life experience.**

These recommendations form the basis of Wirral's Ofsted Improvement Plan with specific, measurable and realistic actions which will provide the direction and focus for the next year. The Plan will be a working document, able to adjust and amend in line with emerging ideas and innovations as they develop across Children's Social Care. The Plan will be fully reviewed after 1 year to evaluate impact and to redesign and reshape priorities to address the recommendations moving forward.

2. Improvement outcomes

Wirral is an ambitious, outcome-focussed local authority. It wants to work collaboratively with partners to fully address the recommendations outlined within the Inspection Report. Equally, it wants to work with partners to address their actions and recommendations from the inspection of their services. As a result, Wirral and health partners and ensuring that programmes, actions and deliverables are aligned and co-ordinated.

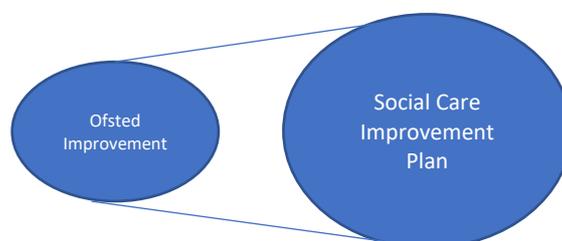
In order to meet the recommendations with the Report, Wirral has developed key priority outcomes which will provide the overall strategic direction for improvement:

1. Children's daily lived experience will be at the centre of assessment and planning
2. Early and effective planning to adulthood will enable young people to be independent and thrive in adult life
3. Children and young people will receive emotional health and wellbeing support that is tailored to their needs and respects the complexity of young people's lives
4. Looked After Children will attend and succeed in school
5. Children and young people will be helped to understand their life histories from an early age

The Improvement Plan seeks to capture key deliverables that will enable Wirral Children's Services to address and improve at pace in the areas required.

3. Wider improvement

The Ofsted Improvement Plan will be aligned with a wider Social Care Improvement Plan which will address the areas of development identified in the Ofsted Inspection Report as well as other strategic improvement areas.

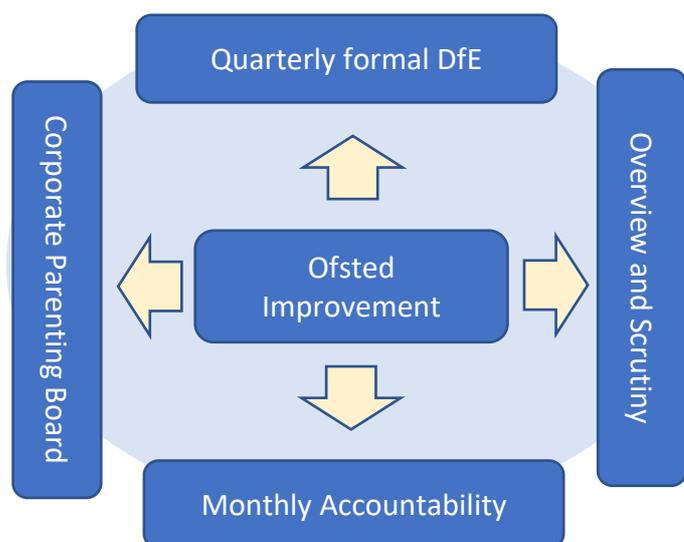


4. Governance and Accountability

Wirral will implement a robust Assurance Framework to provide governance and oversight of the progress and pace of improvement. This framework will ensure that external dialogue and communication is effective with the Department for Education and that within Wirral local authority, internal assurance mechanisms are in place. Assurance mechanisms will include:

- **External Assurance:** Following the removal of the Improvement Notice, Wirral has entered a period of 'supervision and support' with the Department for Education for one year. This assurance is intended to be 'light touch' involving 6 weekly telephone calls with the Director for Children's Services and quarterly review meetings of progress.
- **Internal Assurance:** With the dis-establishment of the local authority Improvement Board, the Corporate Director for Children will hold monthly 'Accountability' meetings to review progress and provide critical friend challenge to Assistant Directors and Heads of Service.
- **Elected member assurance:** The Corporate Director for Children and Deputy Director for Social Care will also report regularly to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Corporate Parenting Board and Cabinet on the progress on improvement activity to provide assurance to elected members and senior leaders including the Chief Executive.
- **Quarterly Ofsted Accountability meeting:** Quarterly Accountability meetings will be held involving the Corporate Director for Children, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education and the Chief Executive. The Department for Education will be invited to these meetings as part of the wider assurance mechanism.

Diagram. Assurance Framework



5. Improvement actions

For each of the improvement outcomes identified, there are a range of planned initiatives and activity outlined below which will support achieving these outcomes. Assurance measures have been identified to provide understanding about whether activity is being delivered. A set of 5 outcome measures will also be developed for each recommendation to demonstrate and evidence impact.

6. Conclusion

Following the Ofsted inspection in June 2019, Wirral has continued to improve practice and progress. The Ofsted Improvement Plan outlines how the local authority and partners will address the recommendations from the Ofsted Inspection Report.

Children's daily lived experience will be at the centre of assessment and planning

Ofsted Improvement action 1 : Improve quality of analysis within social work assessments so that they fully take account of the impact of lived experiences of children and lead to good quality planning for children, including effective planning for permanence

No.	Planned activity	Desired Outcome	Target Date	Lead	Measure
1.1	Undertake independent, in-depth review of Supporting Families Enhancing Futures (SFEF) practice model in partnership with Stockport Council (PiP), so that clear strengths and weaknesses can be identified.	Clear and identifiable evidence that the SFEF model is having the impact required.	March 2020	Simone White, Deputy Director Children's Social Care	Quarterly evaluation reports with recommendations and evidence of impact = No' of evaluation reports
1.2	Roll-out of full second wave training of SFEF practice model for Team Managers, Heads of Services and practitioners.	All senior managers and practitioners will have a thorough understanding of how to capture the daily lived experience	March 2020	Joe Banham, Head of Quality and Safeguarding	No' of practitioners trained No' of Team Managers trained No' of Heads of Service and Senior Managers trained
1.3	Quality assurance review of assessments and plans based on a clear, shared idea of what 'good' assessment and planning looks like.	Accurate understanding of key learning outcomes required for practitioners to improve quality and practice in assessment and planning.	January 2020	Joe Banham, Head of Quality and Safeguarding	% of good or requires improvement audits were focus has been quality of assessments

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1.4	Develop a series of good practice guides and templates to improve timeliness and quality of assessments and ensure planning outcomes are SMART	Practitioners have tools and guidance which helps to improve assessments	January 2020	Joe Banham, Head of Quality and Safeguarding	% of assessments completed within 30 days
1.5	Regular supervision with Team Managers which evaluates the impact of their quality assurance and advice on assessment and planning improvements	Team Managers know what 'good' looks like and can provide constructive feedback to practitioners to improve quality	December 2019	Nabeel Chaudhry, Alex Kaitell, Lynn Campbell Head of Service, Assessment and Intervention,	No' of supervisions carried out each quarter
1.6	Develop SFEF outcomes framework to measure and understand impact.	Evidence-based understanding of impact of SFEF	January 2020	Wirral Children's Safeguarding Partnership	No' of measures developed to evaluate SFEF
1.7	Embed a system of compulsory practice observation linked to the appropriate DfE Knowledge and Skills Statements.	Practice observations support continued opportunities for self-improvement and reflection.	March 2020	Joe Banham, Head of Quality and Safeguarding	No' of practice observations carried out per quarter

Early and effective planning to adulthood will enable young people to be independent and thrive in adult life

Ofsted improvement action 2

Improve the timeliness and quality of transition arrangements for young people who will require support from adult services

No.	Planned activity	Desired Outcome	Target Date	Lead	Measure
2.1	Develop a clear tracking system to monitor and ensure children are referred as early as possible to Adults Services for assessment.	Transition arrangements are robust and ensure children's needs are met as early as possible when they turn 18.	December 2019	Eifion Burke, Head of Permanence	No's of children with transition assessments age 14, 15, 16
2.2	Hold training and development workshops between Adults and Children's Services to agree and understand approach to transition and to develop relationships.	There will be a clear and consistent approach to supporting children as they transition	December 2019	Eifion Burke, Head of Permanence	No' of practitioners attending transition training workshops
2.3	Deliver transition training to the Care Leavers, Permanence and IRO Team to ensure transition planning is embedded in pathway planning	Children Looked After will have discussions around transition from age 14+	October 2019	Paul Smith, Head of Skills, Integrated Skills, Learning and Employment	No' of pathway plans completed Timeliness of pathway plans % transition audit graded as Good or requires improvement

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2.4	Full commissioning review of 16-18 Panel	Decisions at Panel are appropriate and effective	January 2020	Anne-Marie Carney, Commissioning Manager	Recommendations from review
2.5	Ensure that joint funding decisions from TOG and Complex Care Health Panel are clearly communicated and jointly agreed	Children's care needs are jointly commissioned and delivered	Ongoing	Anne-Marie Carney, Commissioning Manager	No' of cases where funding decisions from TOG and Complex Care Health Panel have been agreed
2.6	Review of the commission of the All Age Disability Service so that transition for young people with disabilities into adulthood is robust.	Senior leaders understand and can evidence effective transition planning in the All Age Disability Service.	2020/21	Simone White, Deputy Director for Social Care	No' of children with disabilities undertaking transition planning at 14, 15, 16
2.7	Review the current assessment procedures and pathways to adult/health services to ensure that there is appropriate care for vulnerable young people in Wirral when they turn 18.	Adult Services assess young people appropriately, considering their vulnerability and fulfilling responsibilities to support them.	December 2019	Lynn Campbell, Head of Assessment and Intervention	No' of young people receiving support for vulnerability when they become adults

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2.8	Quality assurance review of transitions to identify improvement learning outcomes	Training and development can be tailored around learning outcomes and areas for improvement	January 2020	Steve Smith, Practice Improvement Manager	% of transition audits rated as good or outstanding
2.9	Raise awareness with staff in 0-19 teams to ensure understanding of recording the voice of the child in referrals and Named nurse to work with the local authority in changing the current referral form.	The voice and lived experience of children and young people actively informs analysis of risk within health visitor referrals to children's social care.	December 2018	0-19 service lead and named nurse	% compliance with audit

Children and young people will receive emotional health and wellbeing support that is tailored to their needs and respects the complexity of young people's lives

Ofsted improvement action 3

Ensure the availability of good quality services to meet the emotional health and wellbeing needs of all children and young people at the time when they need it, without delay.

No.	Planned activity	Desired Outcome	Target Date	Lead	Measure
3.1	Undertake full review and re-commissioning of CAMHs contract for CLA	Mental Health services are timely and meet the need of CLA	September 2019	Alex Shears, Commissioning Manager	

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3.2	Provide guidance and training for professionals about emotional health and wellbeing and mental health	Practitioners feel confident and able to support the mental health and emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people.	November 2019	Eifion Burke, Head of Permanence	No' of practitioners trained in mental health first aid and/or other mental health training
3.3	Develop Mental Health Support and Planning for CLA-Creative Solutions Work with KIND Futures in Mind and Mental Health redesign Board.	There is a wider offer for young people to access emotional wellbeing support.	Ongoing	Eifion Burke, Head of Permanence	% reduction in referrals to CAMHs
3.4	Explore community options and initiatives such as allotments for mental health support and other creative approaches for Care Leavers and potentially other young people.	More opportunities for Care Leavers to engage in wellbeing activities	December 2019	Fiona O'Shaughnessy, Participation Manager	% of positive evaluation responses from care leavers regarding new wellbeing opportunities
3.5	Creation of 'Our Space' hub for care leavers with access to mental health support, advice and guidance	Mental health provision will be commissioned based on feedback from care leavers	March 2020	Paul Smith, Head of Skills, Integrated Skills, Learning and Employment	% Positive feedback from Care Leavers about the new space and environment

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3.6	Deliver training for managers on community emotional treatment reviews to support young people with mental health pre- level 4.	Practitioners have improved understanding of community emotional treatment reviews.	December 2019	Lynn Campbell, Head of Service – Assessment and Intervention	No's of practitioners engaged in training on community emotional treatment reviews
3.7	Create Mental Health Champions across practice areas with detailed insight and knowledge	Practitioners can access advice and guidance from mental health champions	December 2019	Simone White, Deputy Director Children's Social Care	No' of Mental Health champions across Children's Services
3.8	Deliver AMP's training	Skilled and effective workforce	March 2020	Heads of Service, Children's Social Care	No' of practitioners engaged in AMPs training
3.9	Scrutiny committee to review CAMHS referrals and waiting times	Elected members have oversight and can challenge providers if there are concerns	October 2019	Scrutiny Support Service	COMPLETED
3.10	Wirral CAMHS Head of Clinical Services to meet with CCG, Public health and LA Commissioners to review the recommendation and current data pertaining to current waiting list times.	A reduction in CAMHS waiting lists and ensure the provision of a timely response to all children and young people requiring emotional and mental health support.	December 2019	Clinical Lead – Wirral CCG	CAMHS Waiting times

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3.11	Include SDQ score in prepopulated section on Review Health Assessment care plan and outcome.	Information about the emotional, mental health and behavioural needs of children looked after is embedded within health assessments and plans.	December 2019	0-19 service lead/Named nurse and CWP	% SDQ completion and audit compliance
3.12	Wirral CAMHS to ensure all relevant staff in WCHC are aware of how they can contact the service through the CHOICE clinic. The CHOICE clinic can provide WCHC with relevant information pertaining to individual children.	Information about the emotional, mental health and behavioural needs of children looked after is embedded within health assessments and plans.	December 2019	Clinical Lead	% referrals to CHOICE from WCHC

Looked After Children will attend and succeed in school

Ofsted improvement action 4

Improve the provision of education for children in care, including improving their attendance and the timeliness and quality of their personal education plans.

No.	Planned activity	Desired Outcome	Target Date	Lead	Measure
4.1	Improve access to education for children who are being assessed for EHCP	CLA children with EHCP Plan will achieve well in schools	March 2019	Trish Lewis, Head of Virtual School	Attainment outcomes for CLA with EHCP

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4.2	Launch Attendance Strategy which outlines plans to improve attendance including ensuring there are appropriate measures in place to address poor attendance of CLA, where required.	More children will attend school regularly and overall attendance rates for schools will improve.	November 2019	Di Hollis, Head of Schools and Communities	% CLA Absence and Persistent Absence
4.3	Improve timeliness and quality of personal education plans with clear targets and robust quality assurance	Children have quality PEPs produced with them and in a timely manner	December 2019	Trish Lewis, Head of Virtual School	% PEP Completion rates
4.4	Undertake training with foster carers about supporting children to stay in and regularly attend school/education	Children Looked After will understand the value of school and education	December 2019	Bev Hurst, Head of Fostering	% Attendance of CLA in foster care
4.5	Use supervision process to set objectives around education and use escalation processes where children are missing from education and/or need alternative provision.	Children at risk of missing from school are identified early and supported	October 2019	Assessment and Intervention Heads of Service	No' supervision per quarter
4.6	Develop reporting and monitoring framework for Head of Virtual School and senior managers to understand provision of education for children looked after.	Senior managers have a good understanding of the educational provision of children looked after	December 2019	Trish Lewis, Head of Virtual School	%CLA Out of Education

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4.7	Ensure Children's Social Care representation and contribution on the Fair Access Panel	Decisions about education provision for children looked after/Cin/CP will be based on best interests of child and family	November 2019	Alex Kaitell, Head of Service	No' of Fair Access Panel were Social Care represented
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Children and young people will be helped to understand their life histories from an early age

Ofsted Improvement action 5

Improve the provision of direct work and life-story work for all children at the right time for them to make sure they understand their life experience.

No.	Planned activity	Desired Outcome	Target Date	Lead	Measure
5.1	Design and offer training around structured Life story work	Life story work will be clearly recorded, and children will have accurate child-centred information	January 2020	Eifion Burke, Head of Permanence	Permanence Service Plan
5.2	Build in a quality assurance process to view and comment on direct work and life story work in order to see correlation with assessment and planning	Direct work with children and families is used to guide assessment and plans	March 2020	Head of Service, Assessment and Intervention	% Dip sample audits were direct work influencing assessment and planning
5.3	Explore the development of digital life story work as an interactive forum for children, cares and social workers to capture a child's life story.	Children can understand their life stories through capturing of real-life events.	January 2020	Hannah Myers, Performance and Improvement Manager	No' of children with access and use of portal

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5.4	Use Life story practice champions to work with practitioners to develop a consistent and quality approach to life story development.	Practitioners understand and provide life story work for children that helps them understand their life experience.	Ongoing	Eifion Burke, Head of Permanence	No' of Life Story Practice Champions
5.5	Undertake programme of training e.g. counselling, mental health support to enable Personal Advisors and social workers to be able to know how to share life histories with young people	Practitioners will feel confident in sharing life histories with young people	December 2019	Paul Smith, Head of Skills, Integrated Skills, Learning and Employment	No' of practitioners trained
5.6	Appoint dedicated person to review Subject Access Requests who can work with Personal Advisor to provide information in a timely and sensitive way	Young people will be able to access and understand their records in a timely and sensitive way.	November 2019	Hannah Myers, Performance and Improvement Manager	No' of SARs completed