



EARLY HELP AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT 2023/24



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If, after reading this summary, you would like more information
please contact performance@Derby.gov.uk.

Executive Summary

Like many local authorities, Derby has faced on-going challenges impacted by the national context on policy and need. Locally, leaders continue to strive to make sure that the needs of children and young people in the city are prioritised and protected. We have maintained stability at a leadership level, which has allowed us to respond collaboratively to any challenges. In addition to this, we have also been able to take the opportunity to review and reflect seeking to strengthen key areas of the service.

Presented below are some of the most recent achievements and challenges that we have faced, alongside some areas of impact.

What has changed since January 2023?

- Following our first all-out elections in May 2023, we have got a **new Administration**, revised Cabinet portfolios, and Lead Member for Children and Young People.
- We have implemented some **structural changes** across the department to deliver against our Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023-2026 commitments. It should be noted that whilst there were no changes to staffing within Children's Social Care Fieldwork, there were changes in Early Help, Specialist Services and the Quality Assurance Service.
- Our **Virtual School** is working closely with colleagues in Early Help and Children's Social Care to ensure a coordinated offer across a child's journey, alongside a department-wide focus on school attendance.
- We have opened six **Family Hubs** in the City, with a wider service offer.
- We have introduced a new **criminal risk exploitation (CRE) Team**.
- We're progressing **Registering Supported Lodgings and Staying Close Transition properties** with Ofsted.
- Our **Strengthening Families Model** has been launched, enabling children and families to be signposted at the earliest point, preventing escalation of risks and need.
- Our **Principal Social Worker** now works across Children's and Adults Social Care, allowing a more holistic view of practice, experiences and outcomes.
- We have **collaboratively re-designed and re-launched our Quality Assurance Framework**, to make sure that there is a balanced and insight-led understanding of children and families experiences and outcomes, shaping our future development priorities.



What are we proud of at present?

- ✓ We are continuing to **support families, and reduce risks** and when this is not possible, we are increasingly seeking to utilise **friends and families** recognising the positive impact this has for children's experience.
- ✓ There has been a **shift in confidence of partners** to support us in decision-making and aspirations of **keeping families together safely** with shared focus on strengths.
- ✓ There has been a **reduction on the total number of working days lost** across the department due to **sickness absence**.
- ✓ Significant reduction of agency social workers, with **no agency workers currently within Localities**.
- ✓ Our **D2N2 fostering pilot**.

What are we worried about?

- ❖ We recognise that the **complexity and level of need** is continuing to be impacted by national pressures, alongside pressures within other public services; and are working flexibly and creatively in a strength-based way to meet needs. We are working across the Safeguarding Partnership, the Derby Partnership Board, Cost of Living Coordination Group, and our Safeguarding Assurance meetings to ensure a local area response.
- ❖ **Sufficient accommodation** is a risk for the city and this impacts both families in need of help and protection, alongside our looked after cohort.
- ❖ Quality of **maternity / midwifery** in Derby.

Making a difference to the lives of children and families in Derby



Strengthened use of insight at all levels to target help and support including commissioned services



Timelier interventions at all levels ensuring children experience improved outcomes promptly



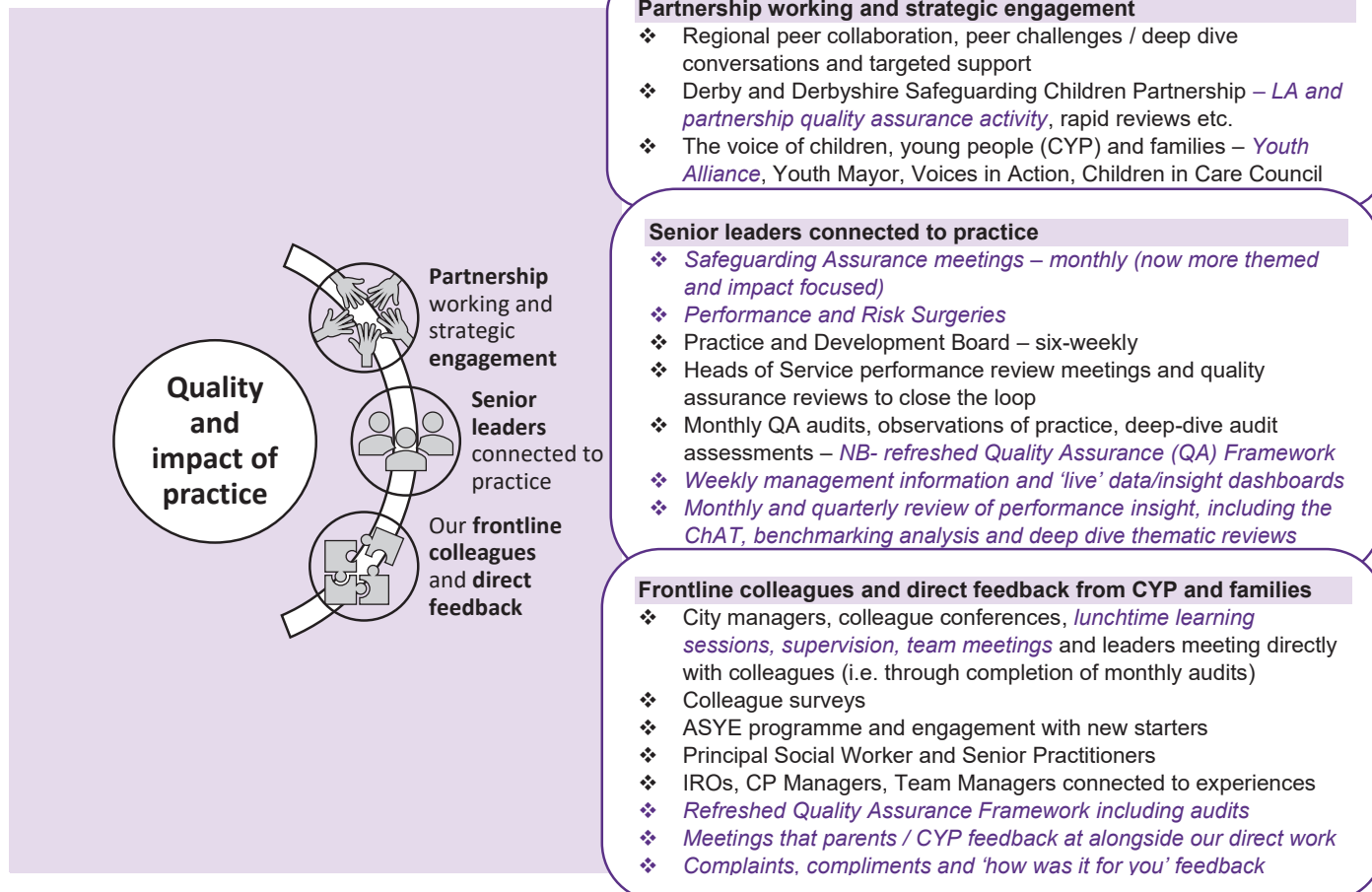
Consistent support for families, as there is reduced staff sickness and limited need for the use of agency social workers



Reduced numbers of children in care and more children placed with Derby City foster carers

How do we know about the quality and impact of practice in Derby?

All local authority services for children and young people collect a variety of insight about systems, processes, outputs and outcomes to understand the quality and impact of practice on children's experiences. Below is a summary of some of the insight and tools that colleagues in Derby use, which makes sure that individuals at all levels are connected to practice and understand the impact of this on the experiences of our children and young people. The tools and areas of our connection to practice, which have been strengthened further over the last year are highlighted in *'italics'* with more information presented in the assessment



Since the start of January 2023, the following activities have been completed, which have further informed our understanding of practice and outcomes for Derby's children and families...

- An assurance day was undertaken with our Leaving Care service at the start of the year.
- We completed our annual deep-dive assessment in April 2023, which evaluated practice and experiences...
 - Quality of contacts, thresholds and repeat contacts.
 - Children remanded in youth detention accommodation.
 - Looked after children at risk of criminal risk exploitation (CRE).
 - Children in need to evaluate the quality of assessments, direct work, plans and evidence that drift / delay is minimised.
- HMIP completed a thematic assessment of children remanded in youth detention accommodation in June.
- We have hosted targeted risk discussions on a number of areas to understand the impact of mitigations on children and families of possible threats or opportunities.
- A Performance Surgery took place in September 2023 to complete an in-depth Councillor-led challenge discussion on the stability of placements for our looked after children and young people.
- A deep-dive performance review of child protection arrangements was delivered in October 2023.
- A focused visit looking at child in need (CIN) and child protection (CP) completed by Ofsted in October.

It should also be noted that during 2023 there have been significant changes in our QA framework to facilitate a more balanced understanding of practice / outcomes, that we can triangulate, with further details on page eight.

What do we know about the quality and impact of social work practice in Derby?

All review activities that have been completed over the last year have provided consistent evidence that professionals in Derby are supporting children, young people and their families to better outcomes. Whilst the context within which we are working remains challenging for ourselves, our partners and Derby's communities we have remained child-focused in all that we do.

When a young person requires our help and support, our strength-based practice, alongside how we work collaboratively both internally and externally, is making sure that we can make the best use of our collective resources and capacity.

Our thresholds are well-understood, and consistently applied and we have worked across the partnership to promote and embed strength-based thinking more over the last year. Recognising the need to work with our children and families in a way that supports them to make sustainable changes, we have focused on what services are available at child in need, child protection and looked after tiers of support/intervention; seeking where possible to make the most effective use of tools and our work at the earliest opportunities. To assist this, our assessments are strength-based, analytical and timely; with weekly and monthly insight allowing senior leaders to track the progress of any that may require longer to complete. Our plans, which have been a development priority for a number of years are child-centred and increasingly more consistent and SMARTer, with up to date and timely chronologies ensuring that we understand the cumulative impact of on-going events on Derby's children and young people's experiences and outcomes; informing our on-going assessments of risk.

Central to the way that we have been supporting families over the last year has been complementing our social workers with alternatively qualified professionals, seeking to maximise the skills and experience of our workforce. Whilst this has always been evaluated by professionals within Derby to be a strength, with more than 90% of families consistently supported to better outcomes through our early help services for many years, we are targeting activities more in line with risk. Our Staying Together Team are a group of workers with a broad range of evidence-based skills, training and experience and their focus is to support families in an open and honest way by using strengths-based approaches to empower families and build resilience at times of crisis.

Co-working is at the core of our practice in Derby, with both Ofsted and HMIP reflecting through their evaluations over the last year that this is supporting children, young people and their families to improved outcomes.

When young people are in receipt of support, this is timely, with all our latest performance insight (pages ten to eleven), evidencing this. Where performance fluctuates senior leaders will review this in weekly meetings, with any targeted discussions hosted through either our Practice and Development Board or at our Safeguarding Assurance Meetings.

Recognising the importance of timely interventions all Heads of Services monitor insight regularly, particularly in priority areas (i.e., missing, 16/17 homelessness, repeat or longer CPPs, children and young people in PLO, unregulated / unregistered placements); with targeted actions completed over the last year to ensure we are supporting children at the right level, in a targeted, timebound, outcome and strength-based way...

- Continuing to build upon social workers within the Initial Response Team (IRT) making early threshold decisions and using our Strengthening Families response for earlier intervention where needs emerge with no agency involvement to prevent escalation.
- A focus on thresholds in conjunction with the pace of work (including when de-listing plans in the multi-agency conference arena) and timeliness, with oversight through Monthly Safeguarding Assurance meetings with senior leaders, with both Locality Case Management Meetings and early permanence work ensuring an operational focus.
- A coordinated partnership response to the cost-of-living with more than 60 Warm Welcome Hubs in Derby, with access to food banks, household support, energy/debt advice; alongside wider support to reduce risks.



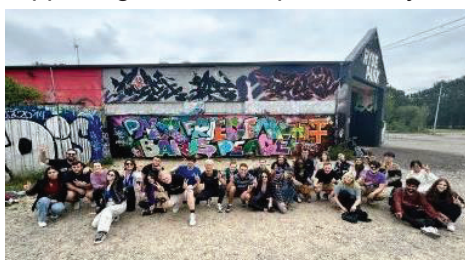
"Children's Social Care and Youth Offending teams work effectively together and work was assessed to be 'thoughtful' with evidence of this making a difference to the lives of children and young people" (HMIP, June 2023)

- An on-going focus on improved school attendance for all children and young people, with additional practitioners within the School Attendance Team.
- Intensive work with housing to reduce risks attached to homelessness.
- Focused work with families who have no recourse to public funds to reduce the impact of poverty related risk, where we have reduced those requiring higher tiers of support.
- A revised pre-birth protocol enabling earlier responses to unborn babies at risk of harm.
- The introduction of our Family Hubs in July 2023, with six hubs that have a designated offer of evidence-based programmes for parents at all tiers of service, with a focused approach to infant and peri-natal mental health.
- A strengthened 'offer' for CIN and CP including 'permission' to commission specialist support for families at risk including STARS, Safe and Sound, Hubbs and Co, Baby People, Connected Peri-natal Support, Roma Support Group and Africa; maximizing opportunities for families to get the right support as early as possible.
- Use of Section 17 budgets to target support and reduce the risk of harm more effectively, including more evidence of creative safety planning.
- Family Group Conferencing is available at all tiers of involvement enabling our families to be supported to develop their own contingency plans before they reach crisis points.
- The introduction of a Specialist Family Visitor, working with vulnerable parents who have children on the edge of care proceedings.
- An Intensive Family Support Substance Misuse Service, where adult substance misuse workers based in our service will deliver a 12-week programme for families affected by substance misuse in pre-proceedings.
- A targeted focus on 'older' child protection plans to ensure that these remain open based on the current risks; alongside introducing reviews for plans open for more than 18-months, with Child Protection Managers tracking all cases at 12-months, aided by newly developed insight dashboards specific to the Child Protection Manager role.

When risks do escalate for children and young people in Derby, we seek to support them to permanence as promptly as possible. We have reduced the backlog of cases in care proceedings, including some diversion of cases to private law alongside funding applications. We have also been engaging with the relaunch of the Public Law Outline enabling more timely and frontloaded care proceedings. Whilst the sufficiency of placements for our looked after children remains an on-going challenge, we continue to be as creative as possible with the placements available alongside our 'Staying Close' offer, which means that we have reduced the number of placements with Independent Fostering Agencies and piloted our first Small Children's Residential Home. Our foster carers are pivotal to making sure we can provide stable, safe and local placements and in October 2023, we hosted an event to celebrate carers who have worked with us for 10-years or more.

With a clear focus on outcomes for children and young people, supporting them to stay safely at home continues to be key. If this is not possible, we seek to explore all family and friends options; where we have seen a positive rise in placements (26% rise from September 2021 to September 2023). For those young people already in our care, we will work across our services and teams to explore options for appropriate and safe re-unification, which has supported us to reduce and stabilise the total number of children in care (page ten).

Supporting our care experienced young people to independence; through building their resilience has also been a priority for us. We have recognised their achievements at a number of events over the last year, building their confidence (events hosted in autumn, winter and Christmas). There are a range of accommodation options available for our care leavers, which means that more than the national average are supported to live in suitable accommodation, including Staying Put with their foster carers.

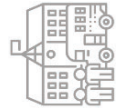


"We are so reliant on our foster carers to give a safe haven to our most vulnerable children. The work they do is highly valued and appreciated by myself, and appreciated by the hundreds of children in their care and by the thousands of care experienced adults, whose lives have been enhanced by the stability, care and consistency of our Derby City foster carers"
(Councillor Whitby, Derby City Council's Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care)

Impact of leaders – supporting children and families to better outcomes



FAMILY & FRIENDS: Children & Young People are safe, connected and supported through positive relationships and networks



LEARNING: Children & Young People are achieving their full potential and developing skills which prepare them for life



OPPORTUNITY: Children & Young People have access to a wide range of opportunities to develop as well-rounded individuals and excite their interests and talents



UNDERSTOOD: Children & Young People have skills and opportunities to be heard and feel listened to, understood and a key part of decision-making processes



RESILIENCE: Children & Young People have the confidence and skills to take on life's challenges and are enabled to make their own positive decisions



INDIVIDUAL: Children & Young People are respected as individuals, confident in their own identity and appreciate and value their own and others' uniqueness



SAFE & SECURE: Children & Young People are supported to understand risk and make safe decisions by the actions we and they take to keep them safe and secure



HEALTHY: Children & Young People have the support, knowledge and opportunity to lead their best healthy lives

- Children and young people are supported to stay safely with friends or family, where possible
- When they become looked after most young people benefit from stable placements and appropriate contact, with relationships nurtured where possible; supporting independence and resilience as young people grow
- A stable workforce means children benefit from stable workers who they are connected with

- Young people are supported to attend school and attendance is a priority for the entire service
- NEET performance has improved from the comparable period in 2022; aided by our Citywide Strategy
- Education is present within plans (although could be smarter) and we are using our Virtual School across all aspects of social care, alongside seeking to strengthen education welfare within the Safeguarding Partnership

- Assessments / plans are child-focused and reflect outcomes that matter to young people alongside to reduce risk
- 16/17 year olds that present as homeless have their rights explained and Independent Advocacy is offered to support young people in their decision making; with a clear protocol in place making sure there is consistency
- We celebrate the achievements of our young people, through targeted events including for our children in care and care leavers; with most of our care leavers progressing to independent fulfilling lives

- Understanding experiences / feedback is key, 'how was it for you' ensures we capture feedback at the earliest point (via any early help service / intervention)

- Participation in visits and reviews is consistent and strong, with the views of young people reflected within plans and assessments, which are both child focused
- We use our direct work creatively to engage and understand young people, particularly for younger children or those with communication barriers; evidenced through our quality assurance activities

- Our approach to working with children and families focuses on their strengths and assets, meaning that we can work together to build resilience; with this model being used increasingly by partners
- Social workers, alternatively qualified professionals and our multi-agency partners work effectively together to meet the needs of young people; and outcomes are strong in most cases

- Workers in Derby complete considered, thorough and analytical assessments; reflecting the individual needs and circumstances of young people; including their heritage and diversity with regular and effective use of tools
- Working to keep looked after children and young people appropriately and safely with family or friends has also meant they are benefitting from their heritage, culture and sense of identity being intrinsically 'matched'
- Specialist Migration Team and our immigration work for EU children, including British citizenship

- Ensuring the safety of children and young people is at the heart of what we do, and we are able to evidence positive outcomes for young people through feedback, reduced need for interventions and reduced risks
- Plans are increasingly more consistent and smarter, setting out what needs to change; after having been a strategic development priority for many years

- Health colleagues are present within all key meetings (VCM, Strategy meetings, reviews etc.), making sure we support young people to live healthy lives; aided by the pre-birth protocol and Keeping Babies Safe Strategy
- Our looked after nurse works to ensure health needs are met and compliance remains consistently strong, despite seasonal variances in our priority health-related performance measures

Derby's social workers... "spend time with children to understand their experiences and ensure that their voice is heard, ensuring they receive the right support at the right time; identify children's needs and escalate risks through accurate assessments that lead to dynamic multi-agency plans; are responsive to identified and emerging risks for children; and, engage with their professional partners effectively, with well-attended multi-agency network meetings held on a regular basis" (Ofsted, October 2023).

Impact of leaders – creating an environment for social work to flourish

People working at the Council and working alongside us are our biggest asset. The passion and commitment of our teams and colleagues is what is making the difference to the lives of children, young people and families in Derby. This is a finding that is consistently reported in any external and internal assessments of the quality of our work and how this is supporting people to better outcomes.

The vision of Derby People's Services Directorate for Early Help and Children Social Care is to have **"a capable and resilient workforce delivering services with the knowledge, skills, values, motivation, and capacity required"**. Our strengths-based approach underpins our desire to create stronger families and to achieve greater stability and reduced risk for children. Our approach is underpinned by a comprehensive workforce strategy, which we review annually.

We have prioritised stabilising our workforce, reducing the need for agency practitioners, and reducing absences. We have continued with an approach of creating good conditions for social work practice and developing a secure base for practitioners to feel safe, well supported, and invested in our values.

To create stronger and more resilient teams we continue to implement and further develop practical strategies to provide a secure base from which our teams can work effectively; underpinned by a supportive and contained culture that enables the positive conditions needed for good social work practice (for example; the service is actively engaged with regional diversity RIIA and internally there has been active involvement in Corporate Well-Being Strategy).

Recognising the national challenges regarding recruitment and retention of children's social workers, we are continuing our efforts to focus on the well-being of all practitioners.

This has included maximising opportunities for people to come together. We have also increased the areas for reflective practice by embedding senior practitioner group case learning supervision and all tier reflective case progression circles. We have secured psychology led

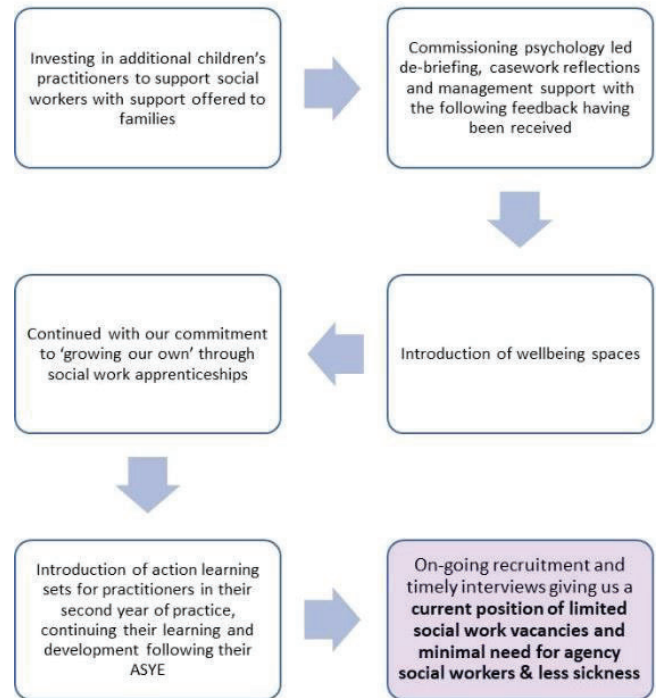
clinical supervision for managers and de-brief for practitioners led by a psychologist, which colleagues have reported as being valued. Individual teams are also encouraged to maintain their own identities and routinely plan team away days. Managers and leaders continue to be visible.

We have nominated Mental Health Champions, who can provide advice and more targeted support, as needed. We commission Axa, an independent provider, to deliver our employee assistance programme which covers a range of services including help with financial matters, medical issues and counselling if personal support is needed for stress and/or depression. If our colleagues require additional support, we will develop a wellbeing plan with them.

Supervision and management oversight have remained central to tracking the progress of children as well as providing support and development for practitioners. Our governance arrangements enable a leadership line of sight on frontline practice and service development. Throughout the service there are opportunities for routine direct and indirect dialogue with line managers and senior leaders. Whilst we are always continuing to develop and refine our supervision offer, practitioners tell us that their managers are accessible, knowledgeable, and supportive.

"Social worker is really good and understanding" (Parent)

Caseloads are manageable; monitored and reported to leaders every month to ensure corporate ownership of demand.



Impact of leaders – national wicked issues

Rising demand	<p>Demand for help and support through services provided by Children's Social Care has been nationally documented as rising over many years. The trends in Derby have however shown variability in need / demand, aligned with targeted work that leaders within the city have undertaken.</p> <p>We have had a Demand Management Board in place for a number of years, chaired by the Strategic Director of People's Services, which has recently been reviewed to now cover Demand and Insight. Key achievements and areas of impact have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the successful delivery of a proof of concept for Supporting Families insight, which has provided a more strategic understanding of households and individuals needs we have launched a new model of locality working; with a focus on how we maximise strengths within our communities and all our professional capacity across teams throughout the Council a citywide approach to need triggered by the cost of living crisis is on-going to be managed by a Local Area Co-ordination Group.
Placement sufficiency	<p>We continue to deliver against our priority areas to make sure that we have placements that meet the needs of our young people...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Childrens' Residential Homes Phase 1 home has been delivered with positive outcomes to date, shaping work for Phase 2 with a Developer partner. A Children in Care Joint Strategy Development Group has been established with monthly meetings between health, education and social care partners. Joint DfE Children's Home Capital bid delivery is on-going to the end of March 2025. The D2N2 Fostering Recruitment Hub project is underway, which Derby will host.
Impact and response to regulation of supported accommodation	<p>Our Staying Close Supported Accommodation Service in Derby City has made significant progress towards its objectives. The milestones achieved, such as the appointment of a Registered Service Manager, development of policies, and successful registration on the government portal, indicate a dedicated effort to establish a robust support system for young people transitioning to independence bolstering existing provision.</p> <p>As the project moves forward, it is crucial to address potential risks associated with young people choosing to leave the program prematurely. Housing instability, financial challenges, and mental health concerns are identified as possible consequences. Mitigation strategies emphasise the importance of building trust, co-producing goals with the young person, and maintaining a supportive team environment.</p>
16/17 year old homeless young people	<p>All young people in Derby who present as homeless have a single assessment. We discuss rights and entitlements and support decisions on the type of involvement / support at the earliest point (Section 17 or 20). All individuals are offered advocacy and we also send a letter reminding the young person to ensure informed decision making.</p>
Safeguarding children not attending school	<p>Derby Priority Education Investment Area has a continued focus on attendance, including those persistently absent, with a shared focus on safeguarding.</p> <p>From an electively home educated perspective, we have an established process in place with data and insight informing developments. All young people have an annual visit, with advice / support and are signposted back to school. There is also targeted activities for those that might be vulnerable (i.e., those young people with an EHCP).</p>
Planning around 'Stable homes, built on love' reforms	<p>Our vision unites all partners in Derby to place <i>'Families Achieving Their Full Potential'</i> at the heart of system reform. We are building on successful outcomes already delivered through strong statutory and voluntary partnerships, in addition to a well-established integrated early help and children's social care service.</p> <p>Our maturity of practice and effective relationships mean Derby has many prerequisite features of a pathfinder. Some of the key changes that we are planning to make include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Strategic Education Safeguarding Lead and Designated Social Care Officer further developing skills/expertise of all professionals in our workforce creating a single point of contact for Family Help, with family-led decision making from the outset, streamlining access to services remodelling our existing Vulnerable Children's Meeting into a Family Help Forum, and merging our Early Help and Single Assessment into one Family Help Assessment expanding our Strengthening Families team in the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) and create additional Strengthening Families Co-ordinator posts in each of our localities centralising S47 child protection strategies through an enhanced MASH arrangement.

Impact of leaders – a renewed approach to learning and improvement

“Quality Assurance is the responsibility of all who work in early help and social care, and at the heart of this activity should be the best outcome for the individuals which receive our services or interact with our colleagues”

Our activity must:

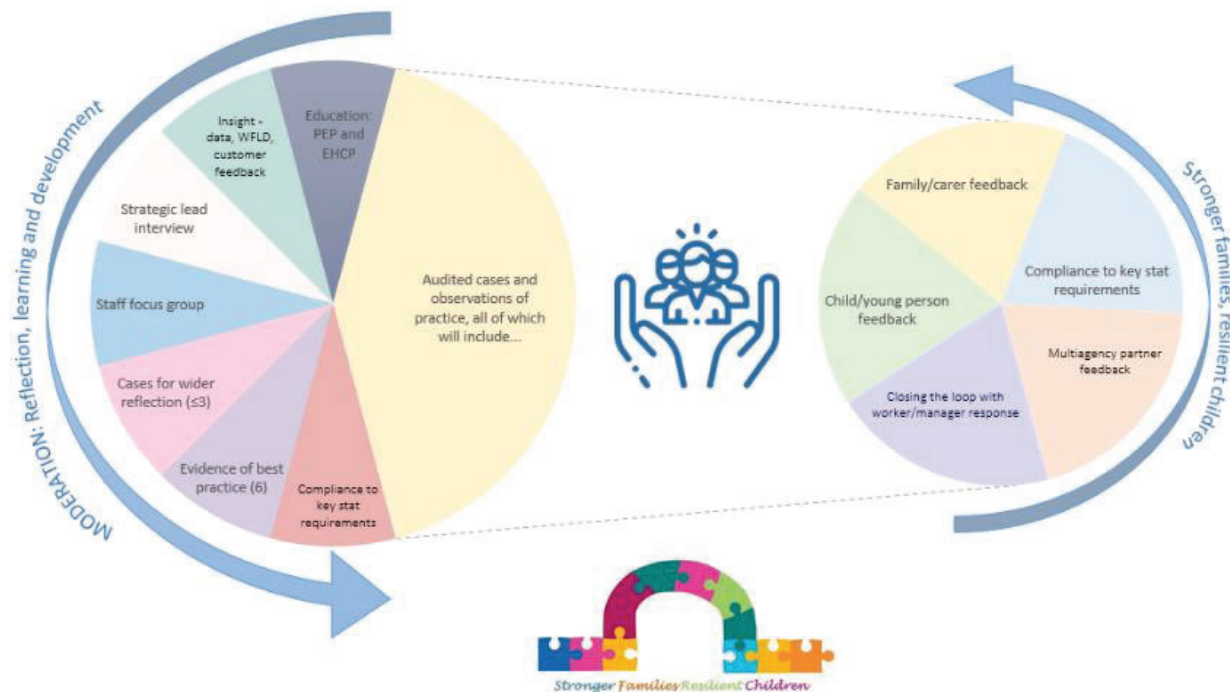
- provide a sound basis for ‘knowing ourselves’
- promote critical thinking and professional curiosity
- meet national and local performance requirements
- ensure practice is compliant, effective, accountable and evidence based
- measure the impact of what we do with children and families
- drive a programme of continuous improvement
- engage with and listen to children, families, staff and partners
- place the child and family at the centre of all that we do.



Derby City Council's refreshed approach to quality assurance for children's social care places the person using services at the centre. We aim to assure ourselves that our children, young people, families and the people important to them, are listened to and are provided with the right support at the right time.

Our approach to quality assurance is a more robust **continuous feedback loop**, which helps identify what good looks like and enables the setting of standards and new priorities. Analysis and evaluation of quality assurance activities now requires more **open reflective discourse** to be able to understand what the information tells us about quality from the experience of children, families, staff, and partners. This then leads to **further identification of new priorities**.

What is now included?











Our new approach to quality assurance attempts to **bring together various methods** which promote **critical thinking and professional curiosity**, as audit and data are only two elements of information that is available to indicate quality of service and outcomes. Quality assurance activities are best used when triangulated with other evidence to provide a picture of practice and its impact on our children and families. **Evaluation and feedback from families, children and young people, practitioners and partners** are vital to our understanding of what other activities may indicate; shaping our further opportunities for development.

Opportunities over the next 12-months and our development priorities

Leaders across Derby recognise that the challenges and risks facing local authorities and the potential impacts on communities and families are likely to continue over the years to come. Reflecting on this, we want to seek to innovate and develop services in a strength based way to support our families and workforce to flourish.

Presented below are some of the opportunities we have identified for the next year that we will be seeking to 'maximise':

	What?	Source of priority	What difference will this make?
F 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Maintain our focus on the workforce to maximise stability and make sure children benefit from positive relationships ❖ Continue on our journey towards 'Stable homes, built on love' 	Internal commitment aligned to our practice model and Workforce Strategy	More children and young people supported to stay safely at home; with families assisted by positive professional relationships with our workforce
L 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Revise our supervision template, to make sure we are learning and reflecting as a service ❖ Further strengthen our working with the Virtual School and Inclusion Team to improve attendance, welfare and educational outcomes 	Identified through internal review activities	<p>Clear oversight and management footprint, that aids reflection</p> <p>A shared focus across the city on educational welfare and outcomes – supporting improvements for young people</p>
O 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Maximise opportunities on skills and learning that will come from the Combined Authority ❖ A focus on the learning offer for our children 	External factors / policy opportunities	More children and young people achieving their potential through education, skills and development
U 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Further embedding our Quality Assurance Framework so we continue to understand the impact of our work for children and families ❖ Review, and where possible, strengthen our recording arrangements – to maximise our understanding of experiences 	Commitment from all colleagues to learn, grow and develop; making sure we know the impact of our practice	More targeted and well-rounded development opportunities identified through our learning, shaped by the influence of all our colleagues and partners
R 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Deliver the Strategic Demand and Insight programme to achieve stronger families and resilient Children 	Identified through internal review activities	Children and young people can make a decision on their own, and they are empowered and enabled to do so
I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Work alongside colleagues to refresh the Derby SEND Strategy 	Identified through internal review activities	Improved outcomes for individuals that leads to increasingly more "joined up" social and health care services
S 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Further review and update our CRE processes ❖ Delivery of the D2N2 Fostering Recruitment Hub project, alongside our on-going sufficiency projects to make sure we can provide safe and secure placements for our looked after children 	<p>Identified through internal review activities</p> <p>National funding opportunities</p>	<p>Simplified CRE processes</p> <p>More stable, local placements for our looked after children and young people that meet their needs</p>
H 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Continue to deliver our Family Hubs project ❖ A relentless focus on the wellbeing of our colleagues 	<p>National funding opportunities</p> <p>Workforce Strategy</p>	<p>The best start in life for Derby's young people</p> <p>A healthy and happy workforce that are supported to deliver the best that they can for Derby's children and young people</p>

Summary of our latest performance and quality assurance findings

Our latest performance insight

Measure	March 2023	December 2023
Percentage of young people years 12 and 13 who are not in education, training or employment (NEET) or whose activity is Not Know	4.5%	7.4%
Percentage of children and young people's early help cases where progression tools show an improving direction of travel after support has been provided	96%	98%
Referrals to social care	2,094 (Sept 22)	2,093
Percentage of re-referrals in 12 months	21.0%	22.3%
Single assessments completed in target timescales	79.9%	82.1%
Children in need per 10,000 population	106.0	106.4
Children who are the subject of a child protection plan per 10,000 population aged under 18 (snapshot)	47.8	49.5
Percentage of Initial child protection conferences held within required timescales	83.7%	91.3%
Percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	28.7%	23.4%
Percentage of child protection plans lasting two years or more	3.0%	5.7%
Percentage of CP statutory visits in timescale	83.4%	90.2%
Child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales	89.6%	93.1%
Children in Care per 10,000 population aged under 18	105.9	101.8
Percentage of CLA statutory visits in timescale	91%	90%
Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement	60.8%	61.4%
Stability of placements of looked after children: number of moves (% with 3 or more placements in last 12 months)	13.7%	10.4%
Participation of looked after children in their statutory reviews	97.2%	96.7%
Looked after children's cases which were reviewed within required timescales	97.4%	97.9%
Percentage of children placed with independent fostering agencies	63.0%	61.6%
Percentage of looked after children who had their statutory health needs met (reported a month in arrears).	83.1%	70.1%
CIC annual health assessments (reported a month in arrears)	92.1%	78.4%
CIC development assessments (reported a month in arrears)	98.6%	87.7%
CIC immunisations (reported a month in arrears)	95.1%	89.8%
CIC dental checks (reported a month in arrears)	74.1%	61.8%
Percentage of looked after children with a completed Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)	91%	73.6%
Average SDQ score	15.3	16.2
Percentage of looked after children with a current PEP	97%	95%
Total number of active approved fostering households	110	112
Percentage of foster carer applicants approved in 8 months from receipt of application	100%	63%
Percentage of children placed with a Derby City foster carer	37%	38.4%
Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted	511 days	577 days
Percentage of children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family	41.2%	6.3%

Measure	March 2023	December 2023
Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days)	230 days	217 days
In touch with our care leavers aged 19-21	93.5%	O/S
Care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation	89.7%	92.3%
Percentage of care leavers aged 19-21 who are in employment, education or training	56.6%	61.5%

Quality assurance

The way that we are completing quality assurance is changing, alongside how we are analysing and reporting on it. Below is a summary of the areas that we have considered through the activities completed this year and key findings identified, which provides an evidence base for the content of this assessment of Derby's practice.

Area considered	What did we do?	What did we find?	
		What is working well?	Development opportunities
Deep dive review (the areas reviewed are set out on page two)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions with colleagues and case auditing / sampling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thresholds Conduct S47 Direct work and engagement with CYP Quality of LAC placements Youth offending interventions Management oversight and supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRE arrangements Chronologies CIN plans
Placement with parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case file audits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate workers and meaningful relationships including with IROs Quality of single assessments and plans informed by the use of tools Chronologies Appropriateness of contact Quality of placements for all children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life story work started promptly Engagement of males / fathers Supervision template
Supervision orders			
Review of the work completed by Strengthening Families workers based in IRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dip sampling (Early Help and Social Care) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thresholds are appropriately applied Team manager oversight evident Home visits take place Communication between professionals Impact of intervention meant no families had been referred back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency of recording Use of tools Develop confidence in responding to Harmful Sexualised Behaviour
Locality Strategy meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sampling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance by police and health in all cases, with contributions shaping decisions Risks and strengths clearly summarised Focus maintained on the child/young person Agreed actions will help keep the child/ren safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened recording Multi-agency interim safety planning (all contributing)
Children with a child protection plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audits Observations of practice Insight pack Interviews with leaders Focus group with professionals Talking to partners, parents/carers and young people Responses from managers on all cases considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Compliance' measures Thresholds Risk identification and assessment, whilst using strength-based practice consistently Assessments and analysis Planning and reviewing Relationships and child-centred practice Direct work Support and leadership Relationships with schools Professionals understood the role of the plan and felt listened to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement of males / fathers CRE processes need further refinement Supervision template Transfer-in arrangements Protocols for hybrid meetings How we support families to fully understand their journey How our recording reflects the quality of our practice

"Leaders know themselves well. They embrace the outcomes from quality assurance activity, which helps them to understand children's experiences and inform their service development" (Ofsted, October 2023)