

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND EARLY HELP  
SERVICES**

<b>TO:</b>	<b>ADULT, CHILDREN AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>23 AUGUST 2016</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Ofsted Single Inspection Framework and Next Steps</b>		
<b>LEAD COUNCILLOR:</b>	<b>CLLR J. GAVIN</b>	<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>Children Services and Families</b>
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## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to accept the findings of Ofsted's Inspection of Reading Borough Council services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers, to acknowledge the progress already made against Ofsted's recommendations and to inform committee of the proposed plan for further improvement across children's services. The report was published on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2016 and the inspection took place from 23 May to 15 June 2016.
- 1.2. The overall judgement by Ofsted was that Children's Services in Reading are 'Inadequate'. This judgement is as a result of Children who need help and protection being 'Inadequate'; Children looked after and achieving permanence being 'inadequate' (including graded judgements of 'requiring improvement' for both Adoption Performance and Experiences and Progress of Care Leavers) and Leadership, Management and Governance being 'inadequate'.
- 1.3. In the executive summary, Ofsted identified serious, persistent and systemic failures in the services provided to children who are in need of help and protection. They were of the view that the instability of the senior leadership over that period had impeded progress. They also concluded that children's social care services had deteriorated since 2012. The impact of the high

turnover of staff, particularly front line social workers had impacted upon the relationship with children, families and foster carers and had adversely affected the quality of child protection inquiries and assessments and militated against consistent management oversight. The planning of sufficient local placements for children who are looked after is taking too long to develop and it takes too long to place children into adoptive placements. Greater involvement of children in the reviewing and planning of services is required and the services to care leavers require strengthening.

- 1.4. The report did identify that since early 2016 there are signs of positive progress involving the establishment of performance management systems helping managers to tackle the weaknesses more swiftly, that the reduction of and heavy reliance on short term agency social workers was progressing, that the services feature some strengths, including the MASH, targeted early help, the disabilities service, the stability of looked after children. The report did identify that concerns referred during the inspection were acted upon swiftly and appropriately. They noted that permanent appointments had now been made to senior posts in the local authority, that rigorous plans are in place to recruit and retain social workers and frontline managers. The inspectors noted the realistic understanding which senior managers have of the scale of practice weaknesses and that recent action to address these failings was having an impact on timeliness and quality of practice. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board was deemed to 'require improvement'. The board received a number of positive judgements and whilst it requires further improvement before it can be deemed to be good it does have an accurate view of practice, partners are well engaged and that partners and young people have shaped the priorities for the board and that the most recent annual report is comprehensive and well written.
- 1.5. As a result of the overall judgement of the inspection of the services, Edward Timpson MP, Minister of State for Children and Families has written to the Leader of the Council of his intention to issue Reading Borough Council with a Direction under sections 497A(4) and (4B) of the Education Act 1996. The Direction will require the Council to co-operate with, comply with instructions from and provide assistance to a Commissioner for Children's Services and the Secretary of State for Education.
- 1.6. Much work has already been done to address weaknesses already identified in the report to ACE on 29 June 2015 and more recently in the report presented to ACE on 4 July 2016. This is acknowledged in the inspection report but refers to the improvement work being stalled during autumn 2015 until it was picked up again in early 2016.
- 1.7. At this committee on 29 June 2015, it was agreed to establish a Children's Service Improvement Board which is independently chaired. The board meets monthly, is tasked with overseeing the implementation of the improvement plan. The Chair presents a quarterly report to ACE.
- 1.8. The inspection report does acknowledge that ACE shows a clear and focused understanding of the challenges and performance of children's services and

that the committee receives regular, comprehensive performance management reports and ensures that officers are held to account.

## **2. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

**2.1 That the Committee acknowledges and accepts the findings of Ofsted's Inspection of Services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.**

**2.2 That the committee recognises the improvement journey currently underway in Reading identified through both the inspection report and the recent improvement activity.**

**2.3 That the committee accepts the proposal for management oversight of a single improvement plan through the CSIB.**

**2.4 That the draft Ofsted Action Plan will be received by ACE on the 3 October 2016 before submission to Ofsted.**

## **3. POLICY CONTEXT**

3.1. Ofsted's Inspection findings identified that safeguarding needs of children were not addressed through consistent and prompt enquiry. The impact on children being that they are left in situations of unknown risk. Inspectors found children in situations where they had not been seen by social workers and those in situations where their risks were not understood and acted upon with sufficient urgency. High staff turnover impacted on the ability of children, carers and families to build positive and trusting relationships with social workers. Delay and drift in cases of looked after children meant that care proceedings were often delayed. Children did not have up-to-date care plans which meant their progress was not always appropriately progressed or planned for. An insufficiency of local placements results in too many children being placed more than 20 miles from Reading which impacts on the ability to provide services to children and foster carers. Too many children placed with family and friends do not have appropriate assessments and as a result Reading Borough Council cannot account for the safety of those children. Care leavers services need to be strengthened and ensure greater participation particularly in employment and training. Instability in the senior leadership team has impeded progress in the improvement of practice across services providing a lack of urgency to improvement work

3.2. The inspection report recognises the elements of recent improvement and existing good practice (Appendix 1). However as an authority considered by Ofsted to demonstrate systemic failure and rated as "inadequate", there are a series of 18 recommendations for improvement across Reading's children's services which must be delivered at pace.

- 3.3. As a result of the judgement of systemic failure in line with the DfE publication 'Putting Children First' the DfE has made a decision to issue a Statutory Direction and appoint a Commissioner, who is being appointed from the 1 September 2016. The Commissioner will report on improvements and options for removing the service control for a period of time and transfer them to a different organisation in order to secure sustainable improvement. They will also make a judgement if the LA has the capability to improve. Appendix 2 sets out a system diagram to show the DfE intervention policy. Over a period of three months the Commissioner will ascertain the council's capacity and capability to improve children's social care.
- 3.4. Ofsted's recommendations for improvement have been matched against DfE's three pillars of reform (People and leadership; Practice and Systems; Governance and Accountability) in order to demonstrate how Reading's vision and drive for improvement will deliver fundamental reform across the children's social care system in order to safeguard the needs of children (Appendix 3). It is recognised that a number of the areas for improvement cut across more than one of the pillars. We have set out in Appendix 4 work which has already been undertaken on the recommendations under the three pillars of reform. The pillars are as follows:
- **People and Leadership** - bringing the best into the profession and giving them the right knowledge and skills for the challenging but hugely rewarding work ahead, and developing leaders equipped to nurture practice excellence
  - **Practice and Systems** - creating the right environment for excellent practice and innovation to flourish, learning from the very best practice, and learning from when things go wrong
  - **Governance and Accountability** - making sure that what we are doing is working, and developing innovative new organisational models with the potential to radically improve services
- 3.5. The Annual Safeguarding Activity Report presented to ACE on 4 July 2016 scrutinised and noted proposed next steps for improvement that included recruitment and stability of the workforce; workforce development; management oversight; supervision; audit and MOSAIC development in the context of budgetary constraint. It was accepted that the delivery of improvement should hold the child at the centre of improvement work and that delivery should be in collaboration with both internal Reading Borough Council and external partners.
- 3.6. The CSIB report to ACE on 4 July 2016 recognised the continued impactful support, challenge and oversight of the CSIB of the Children's Services Improvement plan and associated performance framework. ACE noted that CSIB have oversight of the service remodelling for Children's Social Care and acknowledgement of the challenges of embedding quality and consistency across all services against significant staff turnover. CSIB expressed concern

regarding both frequency and quality of staff supervision. In reviewing the role of CSIB ACE noted the focus on the evaluation of impact in relation to performance, the quality of evidence in quality assurance findings and staff recruitment, retention and consistency of practice. Much work has been done to strengthen supervision and the improvement in both practice and systems of supervision will be reported to the next CSIB.

#### **4. THE PROPOSAL**

##### **Current Position**

- 4.1. In addition to the work undertaken by the Directorate Management Team, Lead Member briefings, Corporate Parenting Board and ACE, service improvement activity is overseen by the CSIB in the form of a comprehensive improvement framework. Additional improvement activity has been undertaken across all service areas and is captured in Appendix 4.

##### **Options Proposed**

- 4.2. It is proposed that the role of the CSIB is continued and strengthened in order to provide ongoing challenge and scrutiny to the service improvement work of Reading Borough Council in collaboration with its partners. Where there are outstanding actions in existing service improvement and development plans they will be integrated into a single improvement plan which will also incorporate the 18 recommendations for improvement set out in the OfSTED report. The draft Improvement plan will be brought to ACE on 3 October 2016.

##### **Other Options Considered**

- 4.3. There are no other options being considered at this stage.

#### **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 5.1. This report is in line with the overall direction of the Council by meeting the following Corporate Plan priorities:
- 5.2. Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable;
- 5.3. Providing the best start in life through education, early help and healthy living.

#### **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 6.1. The Ofsted Inspection Report is a public document and is widely available to provide the community with the judgement of Reading's Children's Services.

6.2. The community have not been engaged in the preparation of the immediate improvement response to the Ofsted report publication. However, as the improvement plan is developed it will be in conjunction with partners, particularly Thames Valley Police, the Clinical Commissioning Group, Berkshire Health Care Foundation Trust, Royal Berkshire Hospital and Public Health, Schools and The Foster Care network.

6.3. Particular attention will be paid to the voice of the child which will be represented through the improvement journey outlined in the improvement plan. Work has already been started to strengthen the role of the independent Reviewing Officers. Further work will begin in September to strengthen the Children in Care Council. In September, every Reading child will be asked to let the Director know how they would like Reading to look in the future. Their views will be used to inform the forward direction across a whole range of services.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1. An Impact Assessment is not relevant to the preparation of this report.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1. Whilst there are no legal implications in relation to this report, it is important to note that under Children's Services Legislation, we are required under a general duty of the Children's Act 2004 to address the quality of services and to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. There are no additional financial implications at this stage however the post Ofsted improvement plan will need to be fully resourced.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers review of the effectiveness of the local safeguarding board.  
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/reading>

Putting Children First: Delivering Our Vision for Excellent Children's Social Care  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/putting-children-first-our-vision-for-childrens-social-care>

Third Quarter Report Children's Services Improvement Board report to Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee 4 July 2016  
Annual Safeguarding Activity Report - 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 report to Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee 4 July 2016  
<http://www.reading.gov.uk/article/9579/Adult-Social-Care-Childrens-Services-and-Education-Committee-4-JUL-2016>

## APPENDIX 1

### Summary of Good and Improving Practice as Identified in Ofsted's Inspection of children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers.

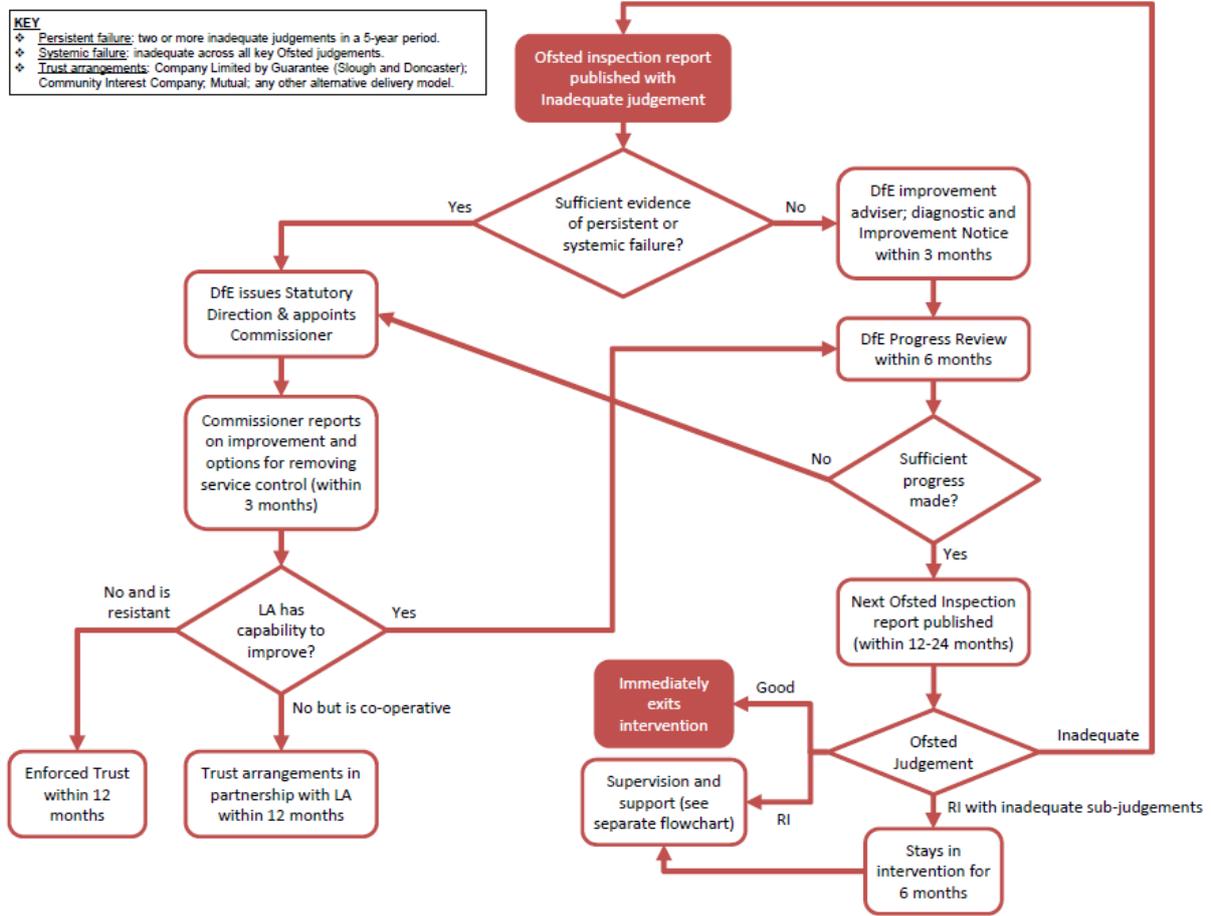
- 10.1. The recruitment strategy for front line social workers was recognised as a positive response to addressing the issues of short-term staff impacting upon continuity of care for children. This strategy is beginning to realise a reduction in case-loads for social workers. The recent appointment of the principle social worker is seeing impact in planning and service improvement. The appointment of a permanent senior management team will drive forward the previously 'interrupted' improvement journey as set by Helen McMullen in February 2015. The improvement plan is deemed to be properly targeted and is recognised as having an impact on the outcomes for children and families.
- 10.2. The established, clear pathways to a cohesive Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was recognised as a strength demonstrating effective communication and information sharing to enable prompt decision making in addressing the risks and needs of children.
- 10.3. Both the targeted Early Help Services and Children with Disability Teams were identified as areas of practice that have a positive impact on the improvement of outcomes for children and families. This improvement is achieved through both prompt response and skilled and helpful support to families. The Community Action Teams (CAT) were particularly recognised for child centred and outcome focussed work which is accessed swiftly by those in need of help and support. Ofsted recognise that these elements of good practice relate to the stability of the workforce.
- 10.4. From an educational perspective children who are missing education are well tracked and those in specialist provision have their needs met well. Alternative education meets the needs of children effectively.
- 10.5. Purposeful decision making as a result of appropriate and timely intervention by the out of hours team, supported by clear systems and processes allows prompt follow-up for children and families.
- 10.6. The audit programme demonstrates a realistic appraisal of the quality of practice linking to plans to improve the quality of practice across the service. The revision of the performance management system is showing some evidence of clear improvement particularly in assessments. Learning from audit will be utilised as will case review and complaints in order to improve practice.

- 10.7. Assessment completion within timescales is improving. There were some limited examples of children making progress against plans. Ofsted also recognised improvements in the timeliness of initial child protection conferences. Discussions in core groups and progress against protection plans are becoming clearer.
- 10.8. Children are becoming more effectively protected from the risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) through effective joint working and communication with the police.
- 10.9. For our children in care placement stability is good and the majority of our children live in accommodation that meets their needs. The positive influence of Independent Reviewing officers (IROs) can be seen through their increased challenge of weaker care arrangements. The means by which the emotional and mental health needs of children are addressed is increasingly effective as are health assessments through increasingly timely completion. Our children are placed in good and outstanding schools and managers work well with those schools to ensure our children are safe from bullying and discrimination. Educational outcomes for our older children are improving.
- 10.10. Fostering panel is well chaired and foster carers report largely purposeful and supportive relationships with supervising social workers.
- 10.11. Better quality assessments and the appointment of court managers have contributed to significant improvement in the quality of court work.
- 10.12. The use of Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) has significantly improved by the Local Authority to a level above that of statistical neighbours. This is as a result of the active consideration of children's placement within the wider family.
- 10.13. The diversity of children achieving permanence through adoption was recognised as a considerable improvement for Reading's children. A renewed focus on adoption performance is showing improvements in the positive impact on the time taken to place children. Suitability for adoption is considered for a wide spectrum of children in Reading. Prospective adoptive assessments are good. Suitability and stability of adoption placements has ensured no adoption breakdowns in the past 2 years. The adoption panel has effective oversight of approval and matching. Effective and efficient agency decision making (ADM) is carried out on a monthly basis by the Head of Children's Social Care. Post adoption support is strongly promoted and provided.
- 10.14. Reading's care leavers feel safe in their accommodation and a good proportion stay with their foster carers post 18. A good proportion of care leavers gain places at university. These young people continue to receive good support from their leaving

care advisors. The numbers of care leavers living in B&B accommodation has significantly reduced.

## APPENDIX 2

### DfE System Diagram of Intervention



## APPENDIX 3

### Recommendations aligned to ‘Putting Children First’ Pillars

No:	Recommendation	Putting Children First Pillars
1	Local authority leaders should ensure that permanent and competent social workers provide skilled, responsive and safe services to children at risk of harm, and in need of help and protection. The focus on improving practice standards for children should be urgent, determined and relentless.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People and Leadership</li> <li>• Practice and Systems</li> <li>• Governance and Accountability</li> </ul>
2	Ensure that the timely progression of child protection inquiries are informed by clearly recorded strategy meetings with well-evaluated outcomes and recommendations that are commensurate with levels of risk and need. Inquiries and assessments should be overseen by consistent, rigorous and timely management decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and Systems</li> </ul>
3	Ensure that all children in need have clear plans to support and evaluate timely improvements in their well-being and safety. Social workers and their managers should continually evaluate and review levels of risk and need, taking prompt action when children’s circumstances either fail to improve or deteriorate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and Systems</li> </ul>
4	Ensure that staff are provided with regular, high-quality supervision to support and challenge their practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People and Leadership</li> <li>• Practice and Systems</li> <li>• Governance and Accountability</li> </ul>
5	Achieve a consistent understanding and application of thresholds to support more effective and timely case transfers across different levels of need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and Systems</li> </ul>
6	Ensure that assessments consistently feature consideration of family histories and children’s daily experiences, to understand and evaluate the risks and needs more accurately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and Systems</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX 3

No:	Recommendation	Putting Children First Pillars
7	Provide effective management oversight to prevent delays in children being seen, and to ensure the timely progression of their assessments and plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People and Leadership</li> <li>• Practice and Systems</li> </ul>
8	Review all cases where children are exposed to domestic abuse and neglect, to ensure that their needs have been thoroughly assessed and that they are safeguarded, where appropriate. Particular attention should be given to children living with, or in proximity to, adults with histories of violence and abuse of other adults and children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and Systems</li> <li>• Governance and Accountability</li> </ul>
9	Ensure that all young people who go missing from home and care are offered prompt return home interviews, and that the information obtained is used to support their safety plans. Links and associations with other young people and adults of concern should be promptly identified, and preventative and disruption activities purposefully pursued.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and systems</li> </ul>
10	Provide rigorous screening, assessment and careful multi-agency planning and follow-up at risk assessment conferences on sexual exploitation and 'missing children' for all children identified at risk of sexual exploitation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and systems</li> </ul>
11	Raise awareness of private fostering arrangements, and ensure that children living in such arrangements are assessed and visited within the required statutory timescales.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and systems</li> </ul>
12	Ensure that the need for permanence for all children looked after is considered at their second review, and is regularly reviewed thereafter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and systems</li> </ul>
13	Comply with care-planning regulations and legislative requirements when children are looked after under voluntary arrangements or placed with family and friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and systems</li> </ul>
14	Improve the sufficiency and availability of local placements for children who become looked after, reducing the trend for placing children in settings that are at a long distance from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance and accountability</li> </ul>

### APPENDIX 3

No:	Recommendation	Putting Children First Pillars
	Reading.	
15	Expand the membership and influence of the Children in Care Council so that it is able to communicate effectively with and represent the views of all children who are looked after.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance and accountability</li> </ul>
16	Provide stronger support for care leavers in their transition to independent living through more effective support in engaging or re-engaging in education, employment and training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and systems</li> </ul>
17	Ensure that all care leavers have accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date information about their rights and entitlements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and systems</li> </ul>
18	Ensure that pathway plans are specific and detailed enough to achieve objectives and improve their outcomes for all care leavers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and systems</li> </ul>

## People and Leadership

<b>People and Leadership – Putting Children First Pillar</b>		
Bringing the best people into the profession, and giving them the right knowledge and skills for the incredibly challenging but hugely rewarding work we expect them to do, and developing leaders equipped to nurture practice excellence		
<b>REC NO:</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION DETAIL</b>	<b>COMPLETED/ALREADY IN PROGRESS</b>
1	<p>Local authority leaders should ensure that permanent and competent social workers provide skilled, responsive and safe services to children at risk of harm, and in need of help and protection.</p> <p>The focus on improving practice standards for children should be urgent, determined and relentless</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Successful recruitment drive - 43 social work posts have been offered and 41 accepted. These 41 candidates are now going through the visa application and Human Resource (HR) processes and are likely to start in groups with group induction in Aug, Sept, Oct and Nov (depending on candidates' visa progress). 3 permanent Team Managers have been appointed, 2 of which were former agency workers: 1 HS, 34 experienced social workers and 5 Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE).</li> <li>2. Electronic DBS is in place which is much quicker than the paper based method.</li> <li>3. Recruitment portal in place to advertise vacancies. Work is underway to develop a specific social work page.</li> <li>4. Social Workers receive Market Supplements which are reviewed annually to ensure they are still appropriate.</li> <li>5. Strong links with 2 Universities are in place to target recruitment of Newly Qualified Social Workers.</li> <li>6. Induction has been reviewed and revised and has now been launched to provide intensive support to new and existing employees, especially those from overseas.</li> <li>7. The Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Neglect and Domestic Violence (DV) Toolkits have been shared with all practitioners and will be used in all assessment activity to safeguard children. These tools have now been implemented into day to day social work practice and will form part of the induction programme for all new workers</li> <li>8. All practitioners undertaking home visits to see children have been mandated to ensure that 'Signs of Safety' tools are used to capture the voice of the child and young peoples' wishes and feelings. This activity will be monitored through the case file audit activity monthly</li> </ol>

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		<p>9. Review of workflows and development of process maps across the system are underway to ensure all practitioners understand what is required to deliver statutory social work duties at all points across the system,</p> <p>10. Examples of good practice , templates and forms are being developed that will provide all practitioners with ‘good practice examples’ to assist their practice These practice examples will be included in the induction pack from September 2016</p> <p>11. MASH – additional capacity has been put in to facilitate and strengthen triage appropriately. There is now a professional advice line for all professionals who wish to make a referral and require assistance and a strengthened professional feedback conversation undertaken with professionals who make a referral to Children’s Social Care services to ensure threshold application is effectively applied.</p> <p>12. Practice standards have been developed by Team Managers and the Principal Social Worker for inclusion in the induction process and on the Tri-x procedures web portal</p> <p>13. From September 2016, work will commence to ensure all practitioners have in place a performance appraisal that will set out what is required of their role, how performance will be measured and how they will be supported to deliver their statutory duties effectively</p> <p>14. The Transfer Policy has been refreshed to ensure that any Children’s cases transferring from any part of the service or closing will be quality assured by a manager using a clear set of standards</p> <p>15. Standard team meeting agenda template forms have been developed and will be implemented from 1 September to ensure standards of work are consistently being applied and lessons learnt from audit activity are shared to improve the quality of practice</p> <p>16. Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) are supported in improving practice by regular monthly supervision, team meetings and reflective practice sessions.</p>

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		17. Completed – Team Manager (TM), Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Service Manager (SM) are available for consultation on cases as required as to ensure IRO’s are well equipped to manage their case conferences and LAC reviews
<b>4</b>	Ensure that staff are provided with regular, high-quality supervision to support and challenge their practice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Performance data has been updated to reflect completion of supervision for all cases within 4 weeks, 6 weeks and those overdue to support Service managers in having oversight of supervision performance – this is monitored weekly and senior managers discuss in their Senior Management Teams.</li> <li>2. Early Help have completed supervision survey with staff.</li> <li>3. Early Help undertaking audits of Managers’ supervision</li> <li>4. QA and Reviewing team monthly supervision is in place and meets the required standard.</li> <li>5. Reflective practice sessions are routinely planned into Review &amp; Quality Assurance team meetings in order for group learning and sharing of good practice.</li> <li>6. The Supervision Policy has been refreshed within Children’s Social Care services to ensure there is clarity for all managers and practitioners on standards for supervision and how supervision will provide effective challenge, support and direction to improve the quality of social work practice</li> <li>7. Quality assurance activity alongside case file audits will monitor the timeliness and effectiveness of supervision that is being delivered by managers, with a clear escalation process in place where supervision has been identified as not being to the required standard</li> <li>8. Managers and practitioners have been briefed on the new standards for supervision which will be a key requirement for delivery within every manager’s performance appraisal with performance monitored monthly</li> <li>9. A group supervision briefing has been delivered to all managers and group</li> </ol>

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		supervision will be undertaken monthly from September 2016 to ensure 'lessons learnt' from quality assurance activity is implemented and reflective discussions are undertaken to develop and improve professional social work practice.
<b>7</b>	Provide effective management oversight to prevent delays in children being seen and to ensure the timely progression of their assessments and plans	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Performance Dashboards have been developed for each service area across Children's Social Care to ensuring that performance is effectively monitored and robust discussions are undertaken to lift areas of poor performance</li> <li>2. Every Monday morning, all Managers including the DCS receive clear weekly performance data across all Children's Social Care teams to help them address poor performance. Swift actions are required by Service Managers to address dips in performance. Dashboard reports provide up to date snapshot picture with links to more detailed team level data. These will continue to be developed and inform the monthly performance summaries</li> <li>3. Managers recording all key decisions on MOSAIC</li> <li>4. Review of MOSAIC forms underway to ensure that children are seen and spoken to in line with statutory visiting requirements.</li> <li>5. Refreshed electronic forms are currently being implemented through the Mosaic Use Group that will ensure management oversight is captured on all elements of 'the Child's journey' through the Children's Social Care system</li> <li>6. Quality assurance activity alongside case file audits will monitor the timeliness and effectiveness of case progression and timeliness of assessments, with a clear escalation process in place where there is drift and delay on cases</li> <li>7. Further training is being provided to all IRO's to ensure Child Protection, Children in Need and Looked After Care Plans are SMART and there is robust challenge of partners attending meetings where drift is evident on a child's plan</li> <li>8. An escalation process is now in place to ensure that cases that are at risk of 'drift and delay' are brought to the attention of senior managers by IRO's responsible for reviewing children's plans. All service managers have received</li> </ol>

<b>People and Leadership – Putting Children First Pillar</b> Bringing the best people into the profession, and giving them the right knowledge and skills for the incredibly challenging but hugely rewarding work we expect them to do, and developing leaders equipped to nurture practice excellence		
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		'Systems Leadership' training to ensure they understand their role in managing services for effective performance, and creating an environment of robust support, challenge, learning and development  9. The new service delivery model of Children's Social Care implemented from August 16 will ensure there is more management oversight on cases and more robust supervision to improve the quality of social work practice  10. Early Help have implemented quarterly file audits and 9 month reviews undertaken – specific questions asked re how satisfied are you that the child/children has been seen regularly and timeliness of assessment and review of plan. 11. Early Help - Management reminders sent out re timeliness of CAF assessments and monitored via Performance Board. 12. YOS – management oversight has been endorsed by HMIP 13. Revised aide memoire has been completed with permanence as one of the discussion points at each review as a standard item. 14. The quality assurance framework has been refreshed and a more rigorous approach to case file audit activity will ensure risks are identified and robust corrective management action is undertaken swiftly. 15. Escalation processes have been implemented that will ensure the Director and Head of Children's Safeguarding are made aware of any areas of concern and risk that will impact the quality of service delivery 16. 'Need to Know' briefing tools have been implemented to ensure that senior managers and the Lead Member are kept informed of high profile cases

## Practice and Systems

<b>Practice and Systems – Putting Children First Pillar</b>		
Creating the right environment for excellent practice and innovation to flourish, learning from the very best practice, and learning from when things go wrong		
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2	<p>Ensure that the timely progression of child protection inquiries are informed by clearly recorded strategy meetings with well-evaluated outcomes and recommendations that are commensurate with levels of risk and need.</p> <p>Inquiries and assessments should be overseen by consistent, rigorous and timely management decisions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategy Meeting standards have been addressed with key partners and all strategy discussions are minuted and circulated within 1 day to ensure actions by professionals are clear when progressing child protection enquiries and addressing risks to children.</li> <li>2. Electronic forms on the Mosaic system re currently being refreshed to ensure there is effective management oversight, direction and decisions evident on all cases</li> <li>3. Monthly supervision is now in place to ensure cases are discussed monthly and actions recorded on case progression activity, with previous actions reviewed on a monthly basis</li> <li>4. Legal planning meetings are in place weekly for practitioner case discussion and progression of cases to care proceedings as required</li> <li>5. Case tracker tool in place to ensure there is no drift or delay on cases going through care proceedings. Weekly case tracking activity is undertaken to ensure management decisions are robust and cases are progressed appropriately and at pace</li> <li>6. QA Framework in place with the delivery of managers monthly auditing on track to begin again in September 2016</li> <li>7. Action plan trackers in place to review learning from previous auditing, Managers monthly, Ofsted 20 cases, Annex A cases and iMPower case reviews.</li> <li>8. Audit of the last 20 cases that went to Strategy discussion and then on to ICPC. To understand how thresholds for S47 are being applied, recording is of a good standard and risks are clearly understood and addressed initially and longer term.</li> <li>9. Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) audit of early help and referral to give an understanding of threshold of partners, referral information is appropriate to inform MASH as to concerns and the level of risk.</li> </ol>

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		10. Audit of re – referrals has been completed, findings to be collated into report to Service Managers and for inclusion in Quarterly Audit report.
<b>3</b>	<p>Ensure that all children in need have clear plans to support and evaluate timely improvements in their well-being and safety.</p> <p>Social workers and their managers should continually evaluate and review levels of risk and need, taking prompt action when children’s circumstances either fail to improve or deteriorate</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Performance and Data Team - Timeliness of Child in Need (CIN), Child Protection (CP) and Looked After Children (LAC) plans are monitored in the monthly performance summaries-Aug 2016</li> <li>2. SDQ data for LAC children has been added to Monthly performance summaries Aug 2016</li> <li>3. Identified the need for an additional conference chair to ensure CIN plans in are in place for all children stepping off a CP plan.</li> <li>4. Review of service standards for single assessment commenced to ensure that assessments are robust and timely</li> <li>5. Youth Offending Service (YOS) - When YOS involved with CIN, completed assessments are sent to allocated SW to include in records</li> <li>6. Where YOS assess a young person as a high level of risk a risk management process will include relevant other professionals in a multi-agency meeting.</li> <li>7. The children’s commissioning team are in the process of improving our quality monitoring of external placements. This will assist in the process of evaluating and reviewing levels of risk and need. To date the team has:</li> <li>8. Created an outcome monitoring framework and two risk matrices to monitor individual placements and provider performance.</li> <li>9. Identified the factors required for input into each matrix so that it can provide a risk assessment of placements and provider performance on a monthly basis.</li> <li>10. Begun work with colleagues to identify how we can receive the data they hold to populate each matrix.</li> <li>11. Service standards have been refreshed to ensure that, where there is limited progress evident on cases, a legal planning meeting is convened at 12 months to re-evaluate risks and identify further actions required</li> <li>12. Monthly supervision is now in place to ensure cases are discussed monthly and actions recorded on case progression activity, with previous actions reviewed on a monthly basis</li> </ol>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Legal planning meetings are in place weekly for practitioner case discussion and progression of cases to care proceedings as required when risks to children escalate</li> <li>14. The quality assurance framework has been refreshed and a more rigorous approach to case file audit activity will ensure risks are identified and robust corrective management action is undertaken swiftly where plans are not meeting children’s needs</li> </ul>
5	Achieve a consistent understanding and application of thresholds to support more effective and timely case transfers across different levels of need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Early Help - 6 x Workshops held with partners to introduce revised threshold document and ensure understanding</li> <li>2. Revised pathway into early services – introduced Feb 16 – web based form</li> <li>3. Escalation process in place to agree threshold of family if not agreed at weekly allocation meeting (WAM) or triage</li> <li>4. Step up process agreed with MASH re cases in Early Help. Above escalation process to be used if agreement cannot be reached.</li> <li>5. Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) QA sub group multi-agency audit being undertaken on effectiveness of MASH and Early Help pathways – Sept 16</li> <li>6. In progress - Review the last 20 cases that were de-planned at the 9 month point to inform risks have been addressed, fully explored and a clear CIN plan has been developed. Threshold for the original ICPC will be reviewed.</li> <li>7. Completed - Robust Challenge updated and tracking is managed by the business support team to ensure timescales adhered to.</li> <li>8. The Transfer Policy has been refreshed to ensure that any Children’s cases transferring from any part of the service or closing will be quality assured by a manager using a clear set of standards</li> <li>9. Transfer Summary templates have been produced to ensure that all cases either transferring or being passed to another worker provide clear analysis of the case and actions required to maintain consistency</li> <li>10. All agency workers will be required to give a two week notice period before leaving Reading Borough Council so that children are seen, cases are updated</li> </ul>

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		and a robust Transfer Summary is in place for the receiving social worker on every case
<b>6</b>	Ensure that assessments consistently feature consideration of family histories and children’s daily experiences, to understand and evaluate the risks and needs more accurately	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Refresher training has been provided to all practitioners to ensure high quality Chronologies are in place for all children known to Children’s Social Care services to inform risk planning</li> <li>2. All statutory visits to see children will capture the voice of the child through the use of signs of safety tools which will ensure the ‘lived’ experiences of children are assessed appropriately</li> <li>3. Assessments of Children in Need will incorporate the wishes and feelings of children and young people and will capture the ‘lived’ experience of children to inform future risk and need planning</li> <li>4. Weekly Legal Planning Meetings are now used to ensure Chronologies and court statements are of a high standards that appropriately assess risk and need of cases moving through the court process</li> <li>5. The use of Family Group Conferencing will be used to consider the needs of all children who are at risk of becoming looked after from September 2016.</li> <li>6. Early Help - All CAF assessments audited in Triage by multi-professional Managers</li> <li>7. YOS assessments are quality assured</li> </ol>
<b>9</b>	Ensure that all young people who go missing from home and care are offered prompt return home interviews, and that the information obtained is used to support their safety plans. Links and associations with other young people and adults of concern should be promptly identified, and preventative and disruption activities purposefully pursued	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revision of Return Interview forms underway to prompt more detailed responses from Young People, and identify risk factors and other intelligence to safeguard child and other YP. (This is in draft form and needs to be reconfigured in Mosaic.)</li> <li>2. The notification episode with details of the missing person (misper) event will be simplified to reduce the work for Social workers and ensure they use this information in their assessment and planning concerning a YP/child.</li> <li>3. All return interviews to be undertaken within 72 hours and clear reasons recorded and analysed to inform future strategic activity around Child Sexual Exploitation(CSE)/Missing cases</li> <li>4. The notification episode with details of the misper event will be simplified to</li> </ol>

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		<p>reduce the work for SWs and ensure they use this information in their assessment and planning concerning a YP/child.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Standards and expectations for each element of missing episode have been established and will be monitored. Escalation process has also been developed if required timeliness standard is not met.</li> <li>6. Use of tablets to undertake missing interviews (MI's) – rather than pen and paper. To be approved by Digital Implementation Board (DiB) Aug 16</li> <li>7. Quality of Missing Interviews - Audit completed of a random sample of completed Missing Interviews. July 16 Recommendations to be developed into action plan – Aug 16</li> <li>8. MI word form has been revised to improve quality of information obtained from MI. Training for staff in new form – Sept 16</li> <li>9. Sexual Exploitation &amp; Missing Children Risk Assessment Conference (SEMRAC) meetings have a section on each agenda re places and persons of interest are discussed and disruption action agreed. CSE Coordinator used this, Police intelligence, SEMRAC discussions and case notes, missing reports and return home interview information to develop a Reading peer network map. A copy was passed to Police to assist disruption activity</li> <li>10. YOS are standing members of SEMRAC and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) meetings</li> <li>11. Review sharing of information between Thames Valley Police (TVP) and Reading Borough Council and revise protocol</li> <li>12. Workforce development plan for staff on how to improve multi agency response re missing persons</li> <li>13. Missing Coordinator to brief the Police Operational Groups regarding how they handle Safe and Well Checks (ensuring coordination with Return Interviews)</li> <li>14. CSE and Missing Group have requested reports on the progress of the Ofsted recommendations</li> <li>15. Missing Coordinator to undertake briefings with Children's Social Care Teams regarding the completion of the new Return Interview Forms</li> </ol>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. Return interviews should take place within 72 hours. IRO are monitoring this has taken place and escalating where this is not.</li> <li>17. Still to do re; CSE/Missing:</li> <li>18. Ensure there is a lead officer for CSE and missing in each agency and ensure that these roles and responsibilities are communicated to staff.</li> <li>19. SEMRAC to develop a CSE and Missing problem profile that maps the needs in the area to identify levels of CSE and locations across Reading or circumstances where children are particularly at risk.</li> <li>20. All partner agencies to develop methods of recording and capturing data relating to missing children and CSE cases to enable identification of prevalence and monitoring of incidence of children and young people at risk of CSE in Reading</li> <li>21. Review all basic safeguarding training – level one and two to contain signs of CSE. To include single agency training..</li> <li>22. Organise an annual CSE and/or Missing conference/seminar to increase understanding of child sexual exploitation in the professional and wider community so that they are part of preventing and responding to the problem.</li> </ul>
<b>10</b>	Provide rigorous screening, assessment and careful multi-agency planning and follow-up at risk assessment conferences on sexual exploitation and ‘missing children’ for all children identified at risk of sexual exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As recommendation 9 (above) plus:</li> <li>2. SEMRAC Business Support in place</li> <li>3. Early Help - New MI word form includes specific question regarding CSE risks and obtains workers reasoning behind risk assessment and recommendations</li> <li>4. All children who have had 3 missing episodes in 90 days are discussed at SEMRAC and an action plan agreed with Social Worker. This now to be escalated.</li> <li>5. CSE and MI Coordinator review daily reports of Missing children</li> <li>6. Screening tool training delivered across Children’s Social Care (CSC)</li> <li>7. CSE Coordinator to attend CSC induction sessions to present on roles &amp; responsibilities, screening tool and purpose/function of SEMRAC</li> <li>8. Monthly SEMRAC meetings with improved attendance – multi agency meetings to ensure robust assessment of risk</li> <li>9. SEMRAC action log updated and reviewed monthly</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. SEMRAC escalation process developed</li> <li>11. Missing Coordinator to brief the Police Operational Groups regarding how they handle Safe and Well Checks (ensuring coordination with Return Interviews)</li> <li>12. CSE training has been provided to over 400 staff through the LSCB on signs of CSE and completing the screening tool</li> <li>13. CSE Champions group is well established across the partnership with 22 members to lead on CSE issues within teams</li> <li>14. CSE and Missing Group have requested reports on the progress of the Ofsted recommendations</li> <li>15. Missing Coordinator to undertake briefings with CSC Teams regarding the completion of the new Return Interview Forms</li> <li>16. LSCB CSE and children who go missing strategic sub group is place to oversee process and multi-agency planning. The group reviews data and practice issues at each board and identify changes and improvement need to be made.</li> </ul>
<b>11</b>	Raise awareness of private fostering arrangements, and ensure that children living in such arrangements are assessed and visited within the required statutory timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mailshots have been undertaken to all schools (including private), GP surgeries, children’s centres etc.</li> <li>2. SM for fostering has attended the LSCB board which led to sessions with partners to promote Private Fostering (PF).</li> <li>3. LSCB produced PF factsheet – has been highlighted and made available to all board members and handed out at schools designated leads</li> <li>4. PF fostering page is now on LSCB website</li> <li>5. LSCB carried out PF audit early this year, result fed into PF annual report</li> <li>6. Service Standards have been refreshed and staff briefed to ensure they understand what private fostering arrangements are, and this has been incorporated into the induction programme</li> </ul>
<b>12</b>	Ensure that the need for permanence for all children looked after is considered at their second review, and is regularly reviewed thereafter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Process is now in place that ensures the Permanency Team link with all social workers prior to a Looked After Child’s second review</li> <li>2. Service Standards have been refreshed to clearly set out permanency planning</li> </ul>

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		<p>arrangements and social workers roles and responsibilities within that process</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. All social workers will produce a report to every Looked After Review in line with care planning regulations that sets out the permanency plan for a child and progress reports at subsequent reviews</li> <li>4. There has been increased challenge from IRO's re drift and escalation actions.</li> <li>5. Strengthened the use of Legal and Permanency Tracking forums.</li> <li>6. System in place to ensure that SWS send out formal invites to relevant family finding workers for the second LAC Review.</li> <li>7. IRO's have produced a revised aide memoire including permanence as one of the discussion points at each review as a standard item</li> </ol>
<b>13</b>	Comply with care-planning regulations and legislative requirements when children are looked after under voluntary arrangements or placed with family and friends	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reg 24 process has been rewritten</li> <li>2. The planned attendance by the Family &amp; Friends team (F&amp;F) to team meetings of all children's social work teams has commenced to deliver Reg 24 Training.</li> <li>3. The F&amp;F team is involved in the induction of new Children's Social Workers as part of to brief them on Reg 24 duties.</li> <li>4. Foster Panel process reviewed</li> <li>5. Update on progress of Reg 24 cases has been requested by the Service Manager for Family Placements and any irregularities will be addressed through supervision and performance meetings.</li> <li>6. IRO's robustly challenging late notification of cases where children become looked after in order for plans to be reviewed in a timely manner.</li> <li>7. All Reg 24 placement assessments are now brought to the attention of the fostering panel for approval and then to the Head of Service for final sign off</li> <li>8. Service standards refreshed and briefed to staff to ensure assessments of private care arrangements are completed in line with legislative requirements and children are seen and spoken to at regular intervals.</li> </ol>
<b>16</b>	Provide stronger support for care leavers in their transition to independent living through more effective support in engaging or re-engaging in education, employment and training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Children's Commissioning Team have been working with the Leaving Care Team to increase suitable local provision sourced in a timely manner and for an acceptable price. In order to achieve this, the following activity has been</li> </ol>

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		<p>undertaken to date:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. An Approved Provider List is being developed. To date an Expression of Interest was advertised on our Electronic Business Portal and Contract Finder which generated a number of promising responses. A briefing has been provided to the Lead Member.</li> <li>3. A Provider Event has been arranged for August 2016. This event will be a platform to explore the issues that we face in Reading in terms of safely accommodating our 16+ LAC and what potential solutions are within the market.</li> <li>4. We have met with our neighbouring LA's to discuss the option of a sub-regional collaborative for a 16+ Framework.</li> <li>5. We have commenced bi-monthly meetings with the leaving care team to gain a better understanding of need and to be able to start looking at options for young people prior to them reaching 16.</li> <li>6. Virtual School attends NEET Operation meetings.</li> <li>7. Virtual School circulates details of employment and training opportunities regularly to Social Workers with responsibility for Care Leavers.</li> <li>8. Virtual School offers specific support to Post 16 students in further and higher education as identified by Leaving Care Advisers, Post 16 providers and Foster Carers.</li> <li>9. Virtual School offers training to Social Workers and Foster Carers regarding Post 16 provision.</li> <li>10. Care Leavers achievements are recognised at the Celebration of Achievement Awards.</li> <li>11. All young people are supported with their transitions through education into employment and/or training.</li> <li>12. An Adviza PA is also embedded within the LAC/LC team as part of the RBC IAG contract (1 day per week).</li> <li>13. They attend the LAC reviews and home visits with social workers, signposting and making referrals to other agencies, where appropriate.</li> <li>14. Care Leavers ring-fenced RBC work experience placements (3 referrals with no</li> </ol>

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		placements) 15. Virtual School attended NEET Operational Meetings to better understand training offers for re-engagement & support 16. 10 LAC/CL have already been identified as having the potential to undertake apprenticeships. Work is ongoing to secure opportunities for them within RBC and the wider employment market and offer the relevant support for them to take-up these opportunities
<b>17</b>	Ensure that all care leavers have accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date information about their rights and entitlements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Virtual School delivers training to Social Workers to raise awareness of LAC Bursaries and Care Leavers entitlements Post 16</li> <li>2. All Pathway Plans for care leavers will be completed with young people by their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, in a language they understand, that will set out their rights and entitlements</li> <li>3. All Pathway Plans will be reviewed at 6 monthly intervals in line with care planning regulations and the IRO service will hold key partners to account for driving care plans and positive outcomes for care leavers.</li> </ol>
<b>18</b>	Ensure that pathway plans are specific and detailed enough to achieve objectives and improve their outcomes for all care leavers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The education element of the Pathway Plan document has been updated to include aspects of the Personal Education Plan (PEP)</li> <li>2. Virtual School has completed e PEP training to support Social Workers and Post 16 providers with the implementation of the Post 16 ePEP</li> <li>3. IRO's have been directed as part of their role to ensure Pathway Plans are seen at each review and they are QA'd as to meet the needs of the young people. A proforma for a good pathway plan has been shared with the IRO's and SW teams.</li> <li>4. All Pathway Plans for care leavers will be completed with young people by their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, in a language they understand, that will set out their rights and entitlements</li> <li>5. All Pathway Plans will be reviewed at 6 monthly intervals in line with care planning regulations and the IRO service will hold key partners to account for driving care plans and positive outcomes for care leavers.</li> </ol>

## Governance and Accountability

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<b>8</b>	Review all cases where children are exposed to domestic abuse and neglect, to ensure that their needs have been thoroughly assessed and that they are safeguarded, where appropriate. Particular attention should be given to children living with, or in proximity to, adults with histories of violence and abuse of other adults and children	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure social care attendance at all Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and MAPPA meetings</li> <li>2. Delivery of the QA Board examining key themes arising from performance and other sources.</li> <li>3. Early Help – Troubled Families (TF) have revised paperwork within early help to ensure issues around domestic abuse (DA) are specifically explored with families.</li> <li>4. LSCB are reviewing threshold document over the summer to ensure key areas of CSE, female genital mutilation (FGM) and Neglect are sufficiently clear.</li> <li>5. There is now an updated quality assurance framework in place which has led to monthly managers’ audits beginning in April 2016, these were suspended through Ofsted and the following month to enable other priority actions to take place, and the fact that a number of audits and case reviews were taking place.</li> <li>6. In progress - LSCB multi agency audit plan in place which address DV and neglect.</li> <li>7. There is now a requirement that all social workers will use nationally agreed Domestic Abuse and Neglect tools as part of their risk assessment.</li> <li>8. All assessments will be validated through case file audit activity to ensure children subjected to neglect or domestic abuse environments are appropriately assessed and risks are robustly managed</li> <li>9. Neglect Protocol and accompanying tools have been implemented through the LSCB to ensure all partners are working together to tackle this issue</li> </ol>
<b>14</b>	Improve the sufficiency and availability of local placements for children who become looked after, reducing the trend for placing children in settings that are at a long distance from Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is a large volume of work already underway to address the issue of sufficiency and availability of local placements for children who become looked after. Specifically looking at residential, fostering and 16+ accommodation and how we can ensure that placement searches are carried out quicker, are closer to Reading and offer the best value for money. Activity</li> </ol>

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		<p>currently underway is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Residential - Approved Provider List - An Expression Of Interest for an Approved Provider List has been published on the Electronic Business Portal and Contract Finder - The lead member has been briefed.</li> <li>3. Reading Homes - A review of residential children’s homes within the Reading area is being conducted and meetings have been set up with a number of providers during August to discuss a closer working relationship and the option of pre-agreed fees.</li> <li>4. Provider Event - A date and venue has been booked for a provider event. This event will be a platform to explore the issues that we face in Reading in terms of sufficiency and availability of local placements for LAC and what potential solutions are within the market.</li> <li>5. Sub regional Residential Framework – The Commissioning Team have met with our neighbouring Local Authority’s to discuss the option of a sub-regional collaborative for a 16+ Framework.</li> <li>6. YMCA - Joint working with Housing and the YMCA to review our outcome quality monitoring process has been completed and joint monthly case monitoring meetings to ensure the Council have a full understanding of who is placed at the YMCA and what their move on plans are in place</li> <li>7. Supported Lodgings - A meeting has been held between the Fostering and Adoption Service manager and commissioning team to discuss the current supported lodgings provision and if this could be further developed</li> <li>8. Fostering - Fostering review has identified the need to robustly drive recruitment activity to secure local foster carers as part of Reading’s Sufficiency Strategy.</li> <li>9. Work is underway to further develop marketing strategies and to speed up assessment activity for foster carers, including response times for carer enquiries and shortened assessment timescales to recruit foster carers quicker.</li> <li>10. South Central IFA Framework - Approval has been given by DMT to remain</li> </ol>

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		<p>within the South Central IFA Framework. The framework offers pre-agreed costs and quality monitored providers.</p> <p>11. Prime Provider Project - Research has been carried out into various models of innovative working with single providers: Prime Provider, Joint Venture, Partnership Working. A potential provider was invited in to meet with social care colleagues in July and a further meeting has been set up for August. Other LA's currently looking at this type of venture have been contacted to seek their views of the opportunities and weaknesses that this type of arrangement can offer</p> <p>12. IFA Approved Provider List - Meetings with individual agencies have taken place but this project has been put on hold whilst the Prime Provider option is explored.</p> <p>13. 16+ - An Approved Provider List is being developed. To date an Expression of Interest was advertised on our Electronic Business Portal and Contract Finder which generated a number of promising responses. A briefing has been provided to the Lead Member.</p> <p>14. A Provider Event has been arranged for August 2016. This event will be a platform to explore the issues that we face in Reading in terms of safely accommodating our 16+ Looked After Children and what potential solutions are within the market. We have met with our neighbouring LA's to discuss the option of a sub-regional collaborative for a 16+ Framework. Commissioning team have commenced bi-monthly meetings with the leaving care team to gain a better understanding of need and to be able to start looking at options for young people prior to them reaching 16.</p> <p>15. Needs Analysis and Commissioning Strategy - Underpinning the sufficiency work (and the wider commissioning work across all services) is the development of the full Commissioning Strategy, supported by a full Needs Analysis. Work to date includes: Production of an Interim Strategy which sets a general direction and records the information currently held on population, priorities and needs.</p>

<b>Governance and Accountability – Putting Children First Pillar</b>		
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. Delivery to ACE Committee in July 2016 an action plan and timetable for delivery of a full Needs Analysis and Commissioning Strategy for 2017-18 onwards</li> <li>17. Children’s Commissioning have identified a dedicated resource (on loan from Adults Commissioning Team) for 3 months to undertake the Needs Analysis work, as the 2015-16 data will soon be available</li> </ul>
<b>15</b>	Expand the membership and influence of the Children in Care Council so that it is able to communicate effectively with and represent the views of all children who are looked after	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Currently reviewing the new participation and involvement strategy it will highlight this as a priority area of work.</li> <li>2. IRO service (1<sup>st</sup> August) has included in their consultation document for children in care a question ‘do you wish to be a member of the CIC, and is there anything that may prevent them doing so?’</li> <li>3. QA Board have a standing item to capture key themes from complaints re quality of practice</li> <li>4. A review of the terms of reference and membership of the board and sub groups is currently underway to ensure full partner involvement to deliver positive outcomes for looked after children in line with ‘Every Child Matters Outcomes’.</li> </ul>