



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL



Summary of Trafford's Self Assessment – March 2018 Children's Social Care (CSC)



What is the Self Assessment?

- Produced by the Authority every year as part of a Peer Challenge programme run by the NWADCS (North West Association of Directors of Children's Services)
- The document is used to inform a process where Local Authorities in the region support and challenge each other to achieve sector led improvement.
- The same document is used to guide our annual conversation with OFSTED

We are asked to reflect and assess ourselves in key areas:

- **Creating an Environment where social work can flourish**
- **The quality of Social Work Practice**
- **Help & Protection**
- **Children in care and Care-Leavers**



Key CSC data – Year end March 2018



General data:

- The total cases open to children's social care = 1506 (381 children in Care, 260 Child Protection, 615 Children in Need, 149 Care leavers & 101 others)
- MARAT received 12,152 contacts in 17/18
- Of the 260 children on child protection (CP) plans - 76 children were re-planned - 30% of all plans starting in year.
- CP Categories: Neglect 49.62%, Emotional 46.15%, Physical Abuse 0.77%, Sexual Abuse 3.46%
- Public Law Outline (PLO): 46 families - 89 children
- SEAM (Sexual Exploitation and Missing) Panel: 42 cases were considered in March 2018.
- There were 29 Special Guardianship Orders (SGO's) in year. This compares to 3, 4 and 7 in previous 3 years.

Children in Care Data:

- Family and Friends Placement type = 91 (24%)
- Placed With Parents = 79. (21%)
- Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) = 42 (11%)
- In-house Foster Placements = 104 (27%)
- Residential placements = 31(10 in-house and 21 external)
- Independent living = 14



Creating and environment where social work can flourish

Key areas :

- **Integrated working (esp Health & Social Care)**
- **Strong Governance processes (DCS meetings, Lead Member meetings, CEX and Leader Meetings)**
- **Robust Quality Assurance Framework (Audits, Governance Visits & SW Health Check)**
- **Performance Monitoring (weekly & monthly reports, Senior Manager meetings, Panels and Finance meetings)**
- **Learning Organisation (Supervision, IPDR, Training & Development)**
- **Commissioning Arrangements (Integrated Commissioning, Early Help, Placement Finding etc)**
- **Safeguarding Board (strong governance and assurance systems, LIC process etc)**

Creating and environment where social work can flourish

What Trafford CSC knows about itself



- Our audit and supervision tells us we have a strong front-door process for children who require social care intervention.
- Our Assessments are strong and of good quality.
- We are less good at evidencing the support for children below the threshold for social care - Early Help Assessments could improve.
- We recognise the need to focus on planning for permanence to start at the Front Door
- We recognise that we are running a high volume system
- We have seen the start of an emerging picture of retention of staff not being as strong as in previous years. We have now developed more 'grow your own' type initiatives such as Front Line and the Graduate First programme.
- We monitor and deliver social care outputs, performance and quality to a high level but need to measure and understand outcomes better.
- We have some mechanisms in place to ensure the Voice of the Child is heard but these are in need of refreshing.



Creating and environment where Social Work can flourish

Areas of Development



We have embarked on a Social Care Sustainability Programme to reshape delivery through 5 key pillars:

Strengthening Early Help

Improving the Child in Need offer

Focussing Child Protection on children at significant risk of harm

Increasing permanence and supporting children on the edge of care.

Strengthening our care leaver offer.

- We have created a new team called 'Family Focus' who operate 7 days a week for extended hours.**
- We have increased our foster carer allowances to retain our existing foster carers and recruit new carers. We have also created a scheme called 'Fostering Plus' to work with some of our more challenging cohort of adolescents.**
- We have created a Review and Improvement Team to change our practice and support our reform.**
- A monthly dashboard to monitor the workforce is produced, a vacancy management action plan is in development and a well-being service offer which includes a range of holistic therapies, is available to all staff.**



The Quality of Social Work practice

Key areas:

- **The introduction of a new model of care – Restorative Practice**
- **Good Manager/social worker ratio's and management oversight.**
- **Monitoring of social work caseloads**
- **Strong and continuously updated Policy & Procedures (Tri-X)**
- **Use of Quality Practice Standards to guide approaches**
- **Continuous Professional Development including local professional development forums run by Trafford Principle Social Worker.**
- **Deployment of Peripatetic Social Work Team**
- **Robust ASYE Policy for newly qualified social workers**
- **Good progression models for social workers to grow in the job**
- **Good PLO and Legal Planning process.**

The Quality of Social Work practice

Areas for development



- **We need to engage our partners - including education, in a wider debate about early help assessments.**
- **We need to review our child protection processes, especially children who return to the child protection process, and how we carry out child protection conferences and help parents to make and sustain changes.**
- **We have an increasingly aging workforce, with a significant number of staff over 50 years old. Work on succession planning is a priority. We are refreshing our workforce strategy and will look at the skill mix in teams, reviewing traditional social work functions and who is best to carry these functions out.**
- **We have reviewed and reinvigorated our approach to Serious Incident Notifications and are reviewing all 2017/18 serious incidents to ensure we have been robust in our approach to notifications.**



Help and Protection

Key Areas:

- **We have a very strong Front Door (MARAT)**
- **All Child and Family Assessment completed within timescale (45 days)**
- **Re-referrals to MARAT are at or below regional average**
- **Our Early Help Assessment numbers are low and need to improve**
- **Early Help Panels are developing into a valuable forum for support and guidance**
- **SCIP Service very highly valued (for the schools who buy this service)**
- **Our numbers of Child Protection Plans are lower than previously but still higher than our statistical neighbours.**
- **Child Protection 'Re-Plans' are very high and this area needs significant attention**
- **IRO service are very efficient and Child Protection Conferences are well run and in timescales**
- **Child in Need offer is good but could be stronger.**

Help and Protection

Areas for Development

- **Further develop the links between our Front Door and our Early Help offer, encouraging and supporting our multi agency partners to confidently work with children and families who do not meet the threshold for social care intervention.**
- **Increase confidence in partnership working at Child in Need level and developing a robust de-escalation process.**
- **Ensure any new model of practice introduced as part of our transformation programme incorporates a strengths-based approach, assisting our workers to assess risk and work in partnership with parents in reducing risk and sustaining change.**
- **Review CP cases where plan has ended at first review, analyse findings and take any remedial action.**
- **Develop a robust action plan to address Child Protection Re-Plans**

Children in Care and Care Leavers



Key Areas:

- **The quality of care for LAC is generally good and any areas of concern are addressed very quickly.**
- **Outcomes for our children in care are good but can always be improved.**
- **We have a very robust virtual head-teacher and school.**
- **Our in-house Children's Homes are of very high quality.**
- **Our In-house fostering service is of very high quality but we need more.**
- **We have a developing Supported Lodgings offer.**
- **NEET for care leavers is good and all care leavers are in suitable accommodation.**
- **We have stabilised our children in care numbers by driving discharges and achieving more permanence for children through adoption and SGO's.**
- **The numbers of care leavers are growing.**
- **Placement Finding Team has significantly improved choice and driven down costs**
- **Placement with Parents is a regional issue that is being addressed with local Courts and Judges.**



Children in Care and Care Leavers

Areas for Development

- **Further developing the therapeutic models which will strengthen the resilience and skill base of in house foster carers and in doing so improve placement stability and placement choice.**
- **Embedding restorative practice in the work of the service and further developing a range of safe, well supported permanence options for children which are secured as early as possible in a child's journey.**
- **Increasing in house capacity and commissioning arrangements for young people age 16+ and for care leavers. Strengthening our Care Leaver Offer.**
- **Developing a dynamic approach to planning for children who are placed at home with their parents.**
- **Strengthening the support that is provided using short breaks to children on the edge of care.**
- **We are refreshing our Corporate Parenting Strategy and Corporate Parenting Board**