



**Director of Children's Services
Report on progress – Jan 2020**

Key Messages



- The Children's Improvement Programme has now completed 4 months of its 2 year cycle since its formal launch in Aug 2020. As has been evidenced over previous Board meetings, many of the agreed key activities required to mobilise and respond to the requirements of Ofsted are either completed or underway. As our knowledge of both ours and our partner's services matures, we are becoming more aware of the areas which require continued improvement and also those areas which present new challenges, which also demand a response. Focus will now shift toward embedding change, quantifying impact and planning for a sustainable legacy of continuous improvement
- As preparation begins to welcome and transition in the new DCS , so too does the work around reviewing both the successes and challenges of our improvement journey so far. Work is already underway to better understand where Trafford is positioned against the milestones it set out in the improvement plan and to acknowledge whether key tasks are in the responding, strengthening or embed phase of the improvement arc. The next few months represent a key stage in not only consolidating what improvements we have but also being able to evidence the impact and target those areas which still remain a challenge
- Progress continues across the 9 work-streams with the majority of tasks either complete, on target or being managed within agreed tolerance levels. Where there have been delays or issues around delivery, these have been noted in either the highlight report itself or in the risk summary

Highlight Report



- Our performance clinics are now reporting on the use of liquid logic for capturing children cultural, religious and identity needs.
- The First Response Team have split their front door resource into a screening team and assessment team . The impact of this has being monitored and outcomes are positive
- A multi- agency group from health, police, schools, commissioning and VCSE are attending various forums to consult on a series of proposed Early Help Offers
- New monthly reports on the outcome from Early Help triage in First Response enable analysis of timescales, decision making against levels of need, referrers and number of families in each neighbourhood – all analysis to be shared at DCS Quality and Performance
- Results of the Aftercare Survey have been shared with Service Managers who will share with the team. This will be fed into and embed within the new team plan
- Commission completed for Gorse Hill Studios to facilitate the Aftercare Forum and develop the group



Performance



Doing well

- Despite the 'volatility' at CP, we continue to see lower numbers of episodes starting at the higher levels of intervention whilst maintaining the numbers of episodes ending. The consequence is that in recent months we have seen reductions in the number of children & young people subject of a Child Protection Plans and latterly, the number of LAC, which is now at its lowest level since August 2018 
- CP plans open for more than 2 years and the current rate of CP re-plans are both performing well, at levels not seen for a number of years and on current levels, better than comparators 

Could do better

- There has been some month-on-month volatility with regard to the number of CP Plans since August, moving up and down month to month & ranging between 192 and the 215 at the end of November. 
- Some LAC health measures, most notably the timeliness of Initial Health Assessments, continue to perform below the levels we would expect. Whilst the proportions in time have been much better in October and November, the numbers involved are small (3 & 4 respectively) and so the 12 month rolling figure continues to decrease. 
- The Agency headcount remains very high. This is the number of agency staff used in the month NOT a count of the number as at the end of the month. As a consequence spend in this area is high. Staff turnover is at a level higher (worse) than target and continuing to deteriorate 
- Team caseloads are below the levels we want to achieve long-term. The aim is to have 1 manager, with 6 workers holding 20 cases each. 

