



Medway Children's Services Action Plan

Version	Date	Author	Description & Reason for Amendment
V1.0	16/10/2019	Head of Special Projects (Improvement) / Head of Business Change (People) and ICT / Heads of Service	CMT, CADMT and CSMT have provided feedback and further amendments following Core Group discussion (held 16/10/2019)
V1.1	11/11/2019	Head of Special Projects (Improvement)	Additions of measures and baseline data
V1.2	18/11/2019	Head of Special Projects (Improvement)	Final amendments on timescales following feedback from Heads of Service

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Medway Children's Improvement Plan on a Page 2019-2020



Medway Children's Services Action Plan

1. Introduction

Our Improvement Action Plan has been developed in response to the formal recommendations and improvement areas highlighted by Ofsted during their 'Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILAC) which took place from 8 July 2019 to 26 July 2019. This action plan sets out the improvement priorities and the actions we need to take to transform our social care services for children, young people and their families from inadequate, to good quality. Improving the quality of services to children is a key corporate priority and we are fully committed to working with our partners to deliver this plan and achieve more positive outcomes for children and young people in Medway. It is also intended to demonstrate how the Council can respond to the requirements of the Statutory Notice, issued by the Secretary of State in August 2019, which appointed a Commissioner to review and report on whether the Council has the capacity and capability to improve and sustain improvement to its services.

We aspire to deliver good and outstanding services that keep children and young people safe and give them the right help, at the right time in their lives. In doing this, we will show strong leadership, we will challenge performance, we will ensure the right level of resources are allocated and used efficiently, and we will build a culture of continuous reflection and improvement.

Children's Services Improvement Board

Members of the Children's Services Improvement Board have signed up to the actions within the plan and are committed to delivering, monitoring and reporting through the appropriate organisational governance structures.

Ofsted Recommendations

The 10 priorities for improvement identified in the Ofsted report are:

1. Senior managers' oversight and understanding about vulnerable children's experiences, including through the quality, accuracy and effectiveness of audits.
2. Staffing capacity across children's social care, early help hubs and leaving care teams.
3. The response to risk for children who have experienced neglect, those exposed to parental domestic abuse and young people in danger of exploitation.
4. The coordination and management oversight of early help services to support children to receive the right help at the right time.
5. The quality and effectiveness of management oversight and supervision to make sure that children are protected from significant harm.
6. The effectiveness of managers' formal permanence planning and decision-making at every point in the child's journey.
7. The system for tracking children who go missing from home, care or education.
8. Services to help care leavers access suitable accommodation, education, employment and training and to understand their rights and entitlements.

9. The strategic relationship with health services, and operational delivery across a range of health functions to support children and young people in care and care leavers.
10. Leadership direction and assertive action to improve and develop the services to foster carers and prospective adopters.

This plan is designed around the following key improvement priorities which will support delivery of our aspirations to provide good services.

2. Improvement vision and priorities

Our vision is that our services will support children and young people in Medway to feel safe and secure, and any decision we make will be in their best interests and made in collaboration with them and their families. We want children and families to be able to access the right services at the right time to meet their needs, from robust early help services through to intensive and purposeful interventions to support children in need of protection and their families, with a focus on achieving a permanent family for children in care.

We will achieve this by building strong relationships and working with children and families, recruiting a skilled and permanent workforce, and establishing strong networks with our partners to maximise the use of all available resources.

We want to create a culture of ambition, professional respect and commitment to deliver quality services which achieve positive change for families.

We have five core priorities which will underpin the systemic and cultural change needed to drive improvement:

1. **Quality and effectiveness of our practice** – purposeful social work assessments, plans and interventions with families, high quality services to support our plans including early help, fostering, health services
2. **Capacity and capability of our workforce** – sufficiency of practitioner posts, manageable workloads, appropriate training, and practitioners who are well-supported, curious and child focused
3. **Effective leadership and management** – that all staff and managers know the improvements which are required, decisions are timely, resources are used effectively, systems are in place to track progress and provide insight into quality of practice, and performance is robustly and respectfully challenged
4. **Quality Assurance and Performance Management** – oversight, challenge and line of sight into practice; quality, accuracy and effectiveness of audits; accurate performance data to support decision making and strategic planning.

5. **Partnerships and engagement** – early help services support statutory provision, health services support children across service areas, staff, children and families are engaged and their views influence service delivery, and all partners understand the role they play and commit to supporting improvement

3. Governance and monitoring arrangements

In responding to the inspection report Medway has changed its Improvement Board arrangements. The Children’s Services Improvement Board will be independently chaired by Lucy Butler, DCS Oxfordshire, and will ultimately be responsible for the delivery of the Improvement Plan through effective scrutiny, challenge, support and measuring its impact. The Board is made up of the senior leaders from the Council, including the Lead member for Children’s Services and its key partners, to bring focus and pace to the implementation of the Improvement Plan. It will act as the primary driver of improvement.

There is also an internal Board chaired by the Director of People which oversees the detail of the implementation.

Reports on progress of the plan will be shared with:

- Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet
- Health and Well-Being Board
- Medway Safeguarding Children’s Partnership
- Community Safety Partnership

4. RAG Key

The RAG rating set out in the plan specifically monitors the delivery each action in the plan. The impact of the plan will be reported to the Improvement Board through monthly performance reports, deep dive reports into different aspects of the plan and regular quality assurance reports on audit findings. Each action will be RAG rated as actions become due, and reviewed from the December 2019 Board. The RAG ratings are defined as follows:

RAG	Key
B	Action completed
G	Good evidence of progress against plan /actions on track
A	Limited evidence of progress/action unlikely to meet timescale, but plan in place
R	No evidence of progress/action will not be delivered in timescale/multiple actions outstanding

1. Priorities and Actions

Priority 1: Quality and effectiveness of our practice	Lead: Assistant Director
What's working well?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed workforce, supported by their managers • A strong development programme for our NQSWs
What do we need to change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed core social work techniques and establish Signs of Safety as a practice framework, with evidence of purposeful interventions • Improve quality and timeliness of assessments • Improve response to risk associated with neglect, domestic abuse and exploitation • Improve tracking of PLO and proceedings to achieve timely legal outcomes to support plans, with no unnecessary delay • Improve permanency planning for all children in care • Improve access to health, education, accommodation and training for care leavers • Ensure fostering service is developed to fully meet the needs of Medway's children, and meets all statutory responsibilities
What does that mean for a child?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children say they and their families get the help they need at the right time, that supports them to stay safely with their family. • If they need to live away from their family, they have carers who can offer them a safe, stable and supportive home • Young people leaving care say they have a choice of places to live, they can access training or education and know where to go for help and advice about their physical and mental health.

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Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Measure	Current Performance	Target	National Benchmark	Stat Neighbour Benchmark	RAG rating	
1.1	3	Work with partners to improve quality of referral information and promote understanding of thresholds	Head of Service, Early Help and First Response	All partners	Ongoing from October 2019	Conversion rate of contacts to referrals and referrals to assessment	Officer time	<p>Contacts to referrals</p> <p>Referrals going on to assessment</p> <p>Rate of assessment closed NFA</p>	<p>51% (Year to date October 2019)</p> <p>93% (Year to date October 2019)</p> <p>57% (Year to date October 2019)</p>	<p>58%</p> <p>92%</p> <p>45%</p>	<p>92%</p> <p>29%</p>	<p>92%</p> <p>31%</p>		
1.2	3	Develop a suite of risk assessment tools which are embedded through workforce development	PSW/ Workforce Development	All partners	February 2020	Evidence of completed tools in case records; attendance at training	Officer time	To be measured through audit						
1.3	3	Refresh and relaunch the expectation for core social work skills and introduce Signs of Safety framework for practice	Assistant Director / HoS / PSW / workforce development	All partners	January 2020	<p>Shared language with practitioners and partners; evidence in case records</p> <p>Improved outcomes of interventions</p>	Yes	Staff attendance at launch and training events. Impact on practice measured through audit						
1.4	4	Undertake a review of early help provision to inform development of a robust strategy and a service delivery model which meets needs across all age groups, builds capacity with our	Head of Service, Early Help and First Response	All partners	January 2020	Strategy in place, shared with partners; availability of services for all age groups; reduced re-referral rates and step up rates and	Yes	Cases stepped up from early help to social care in month	25 per month					

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Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Measure	Current Performance	Target	National Benchmark	Stat Neighbour Benchmark	RAG rating
		partners to support identified additional needs, and reduces demand on statutory social care provision				increased step-down rates							
1.5	4	Engage widely with all partners to develop and implement the Early Help Strategy and delivery model	Head of Service, Early Help and First Response	All partners	February 2020	Partners contribution to launch events; reduced re-referral rates and step up rates and increased step-down rates	Officer time	Early Help contacts received %age of EH led by partner agencies	11 per month 23%				
1.6	3 and 5	Strengthen the timeliness and quality of assessments through development of professional curiosity, robust analysis of risk and establishment of professional standards regarding frequency of visiting	Head of Service, Early Help and First Response / Head of Service, Safeguarding		January 2020	Improved timeliness of visits and targets met for S47 and S17 referrals	Officer time	Initial child and family assessments where the child was visited with 1 working day (S47) and 5 working days (S17)	69% 58%	75% 75%			
1.7	3 and 7	Fully implement an approach to contextual safeguarding which identifies and responds to risk outside the family home, and ensures children missing and/or at risk of exploitation are robustly tracked and monitored	Head of Service, Early Help and First Response/ Head of Service, Safeguarding/ Head of Quality Assurance	Medway Task Force Police, schools, health and commissioned placement services	March 2020	A contextual safeguarding framework which is known and understood by practitioners; evidence of completed risk assessment tools, tracking, and a revised approach to planning to	Yes – specialist conference chair and business support. Additional Admin (RIO) to support recording and processes	To be measured through audit					

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Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Measure	Current Performance	Target	National Benchmark	Stat Neighbour Benchmark	RAG rating
						reduce risk outside the family	for missing and exploitation						
1.8	2 and 3	Review the case transfer process and ensure it promotes smooth transfer with appropriate handover arrangements for children and families, keeping them central to the process	Head of Service, Early Help and First Response / Head of Service, Safeguarding		November 2019	Reduced timescales for case transfer following completion of assessment	Within existing resources	Average working days to complete transfer including handover visits	13 working days	10 working days			
1.9	6	Embed a more systematic tracking/monitoring process for PLO to minimise delays for children and avoid drift	Head of Service, Safeguarding		October 2019	Reduced duration of time children are subject to PLO pre-proceedings tracker in place and up to date	Within existing resources	Number of weeks in PLO	38 weeks (average of PLO ending in last six months)	16 weeks			
1.10	6	Re-establish and develop links with the judiciary to build networks and better working relationships in order to improve practice	Head of Service, Safeguarding / Head of Service, Early Help and First Response	Legal services and courts	Quarterly from September 2019	Evidence of regular meetings with judiciary attended by operational managers. Fewer incidents of managers required to attend court.	Within existing resources	Number of meetings per year held with judiciary	1 in 2018-19	4 meetings per year			
1.11	6	Establish a process for ensuring all children in care have a permanence plan which is tracked and reviewed to avoid delay, and ensures children have a	Head of Service, Safeguarding / Head of Service, Children in Care	Commissioned placement services; legal services	October 2019	Evidence that every looked after child has a plan for permanence by second review. Tracker in place and up to date	Within existing resources	% of children with long term fostering as their plan, where the child, carer and service have agreed	32%	60%			

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Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Measure	Current Performance	Target	National Benchmark	Stat Neighbour Benchmark	RAG rating
		placement which is formally recognised as permanent by them and their carers.						for the placement to be permanent					
1.12	6	Establish a tracking and monitoring system for children with POs waiting 6 months and POs that require revoking that captures ADM oversight.	Head of Service, Children in Care / Head of Quality Assurance		October 2019	Reduced duration of time children are subject to POs prior to AO.	Within existing resources	Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (days)	578 (3 year average)	500	486 (England 3 year average)		
1.13	6	Ensure all children in care have the opportunity to undertake life story work and put in place a training programme that builds skill of social workers to do this work. Training to be delivered to foster carers on supporting children to understand their life stories.	Head of Service, Safeguarding/ PSW/ Workforce Development / Fostering Manager	Commissioned placement services	From November 2019 Foster Carers will be trained by March 2020	Audits evidence life story work has been undertaken. Programme of training in place and attended by practitioners	Officer time and externally commissioned trainer	To be measured through audit					
1.14	6	Fully implement the placement sufficiency strategy to improve choice and availability of placements for children in care	Head of Service, Children in Care/ Head of Children's Commissioning	Commissioning	Strategy signed off by December 2020	Increase in number of in-house foster carers. Fewer placement disruptions	Within existing resources	Net gain in number of Medway foster carer households % of CIC aged under 16 years who have been in	-2 (last 12 months) 73%	+ 10 75%			

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Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Measure	Current Performance	Target	National Benchmark	Stat Neighbour Benchmark	RAG rating
								same placement for at least 2 years					
1. 15	10	Implement a project to further support placement stability for more difficult and challenging placements, by introducing therapeutic support for foster carers	Head of Service, Children in Care/ Fostering Manager	Health	September 2020	Increase in number of in-house foster carers for adolescents. Fewer placement disruptions	Yes – project will require detailed costing	Number of in-house carers approved for 14-17 years olds 14-17year olds with more than one placement move in last year	102 8	110 5	N/A	N/A	
1. 16	8	Work with commissioning and housing colleagues to source and oversee appropriate accommodation for care leavers to ensure they can live independently if they are ready to do so.	Head of Service, Children in Care/ Head of Children's Commissioning	Housing	By April 2020 As part of Contract Monitoring	Increase in % of care leavers living in appropriate accommodation	Within existing resources	In suitable accommodation on 19 th to 21 st birthday (rolling 12 months)	90%	92%	N/A	N/A	
1. 17	6 and 10	Fully implement plans for RAA	Head of Service, Children in Care	Kent CC and LB Bexley	October 2020	RAA operational by agreed timescale	Within existing resources	RAA operational by October 2020					
1. 18	6 and 10	Develop a strategic service plan for the Fostering Service to establish priorities for next year, and ensure it meets the needs of	Head of Service, Children in Care		End January 2020	Service Plan produced, with clear actions and timescales	Officer time	Plan in place which sets measures for service improvement					

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		the service, to include training needs, induction programme and process for reviewing Standards of Care											
1. 19	6 and 10	Review the functioning of the Fostering Panel to ensure it meets statutory requirements	Head of Service, Children in Care		In progress	Revise Terms of Reference, evidence of annual report from Chair of Panel	Officer time						
1. 20	8	Develop and implement employment opportunities and apprenticeships with partner agencies for care leavers.	Head of Service, Children in Care / Skills and Employment	All partners	In Progress Pilot Project commenced October 2019 April 2020	Increase in number of care leavers undertaking apprenticeships or employed by Council and partners Implement a rolling programme of apprenticeships and employment opportunities for care leavers	Officer time	Number of care leavers undertaking apprenticeships		To be agreed			
1. 21	8	Develop initiatives to strengthen the proportion of young people staying in education, training and employment.	Virtual School Head	Regeneration (RCET), IAG 17-17yrs Libraries Adult Education	March 2020 phased approach	Increase in percentage of care leavers in EET	Additional administrative support due to proportion of late entries to care.	Available care leavers in employment education, training or parenting	39%	50%	51%		

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1.22	7	Strengthen the process for tracking children missing education and facilitate data recording on synergy system to support reporting. Embed this through staff training.	Assistant Director Education / AASSA team	Schools	End of November 2019	Improved understanding of children's needs who miss education.	Within existing resources				N/A		

Priority 2: Capacity and capability of our workforce	Lead: Assistant Director / Lisa Morgan
What's working well and how do we know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners who are committed, hardworking, and know their children well
What do we need to change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staffing establishment to adequately meet the demands of the service Reduce reliance on agency personnel Achieve manageable caseloads Ensure all practitioners and managers understand the expectations of their roles and are equipped to meet them
What does that mean for a child?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children say they have a social worker who is committed to them, who they trust to do their job well, who listens and responds to their views, and carries through their plan

Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Current Performance	Target	RAG rating
2.1	2	Appoint a project team to manage capacity across the service and reduce caseloads to manageable levels	Head of Service, Early Help and First Response / Head of Service, Safeguarding		End of September COMPLETED	Team in place	Yes – already committed	Project team in place		
2.2	2	Implement a process for recruitment which supports swift and streamlined appointments to vacancies. Review impact.	HR Business Partner / All HoS	HR	Ongoing – review impact in January 2020	Reduction in unfilled posts; increase in proportion of permanent post holders % unfilled posts (includes agency)	Within existing resources	5.2%	1%	

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Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Current Performance	Target	RAG rating
2.3	2	Review impact of recruitment initiatives e.g Jobs Go Public, use of MCG	HR Business Partner	HR	January 2020	Increase in proportion of permanent post holders Agency social worker rate (in assessment and area teams)	Within existing resources	34.6%	20%	
2.4	2	Review and fully implement induction programme at both corporate and service levels	HR Business Partner	HR / Workforce development	From January 2020	Proportion of staff who benefit from induction and give positive feedback	Within existing resources			
2.5	2	Implement an approach to career progression, which supports retention of staff, supported by development opportunities	HR Business Partner / Workforce Development	HR	Launched by April 2020	Increase in proportion of staff who progress their career within the organisation No. of staff who progress within the organisation each year	Within existing resources		To be agreed	
2.6	2	Review the structure, demand and capacity in safeguarding teams to ensure	Assistant Director	HR	January 2020	Reduction in caseloads in	Yes			

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		the differing priorities of child in need, child protection and work with looked after children and work with vulnerable adolescents are appropriately addressed and caseloads are manageable				area teams; Evidence that work with looked after children is not de-prioritised (visits, plans etc) % of Social Workers above target caseload in the area teams (CS dashboard)		64%	20%	
2.7	10	Review and streamline the structure for Provider Services	Head of Service, Children in Care	HR	By the end of January 2020	Business case agreed to support any structural changes	Officer time			
2.8	2	Carry out a review of Business Support resources to ensure they are used to support delivery of an efficient social work service	Head of Business Change (People) and ICT /Transformation Team		Report by November 2019	Reduced social work time spent on administrative functions	Officer time			
2.9	2	Develop and implement a Workforce Strategy which includes a core skills training and development offer for all staff and a management and leadership offer for managers	HR / Workforce Development / PSW		Strategy by end of December 2019; Practice Managers programme in place to run from November 2019	Production of strategy and training programme. Practice managers programme.	Yes			
2.10	2	Maximise the benefits of the Kent and Medway Teaching Partnership to deliver a bespoke programme of training	HR /Workforce Development	Kent and Medway Teaching Partnership	Training programme commissioned by March 2020	Numbers of staff attending programme;	No – funds identified			

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Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Current Performance	Target	RAG rating
						feedback from staff and managers				
2.11	8	Develop a separate care leavers service and review the operational model, considering a 16+ team	Head of Service, Children in Care	Housing / Virtual School	Options paper complete by end of December 2019; Decision by January 2020	New service launched; Clarity about arrangement for looked after children at age 16 years	Yes – additional SW and PA posts to ensure focused work with young people in care aged 16+			
2.12	2	Work with Young Lives Foundation and MCYPC to involve young people in all interview and appointment processes	Head of Youth Service	Young Lives Foundations / HR	Ongoing September 2019	Proportion of job interviews which include a young person on the Panel	Within existing resources			

Priority 3: Effective Leadership and Management	Lead: Director of Children's Services / Chief Executive
What's working well and how do we know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the quality of services for children is a priority in the Improvement Plan. Senior Leaders and elected members are aware of the improvements required. Supervision is taking place and is recorded
What do we need to change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior leaders across the Council, and partner organisations, as well as Councillors, know how they are contributing towards improving frontline practice and supporting better outcomes for children and families. Resources are committed to support sustained improvement Performance reporting which is focused on giving Members and senior leaders the right information to be able to monitor the quality of services and take remedial action when required. Leadership and governance which creates a culture of openness and transparency, with positive two-way communication Supervision of practice which is reflective and purposeful
What does that mean for a child?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and their families say that they get the help they need at the right time, and they feel that their views are respected, listened to and influence the plans that are made for them They understand why they have a social worker and know what the objectives are of any work we do with them and their family

Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Current Performance	Target	RAG rating
3.1	1	Councillors and senior leaders from across the Council are members of the Improvement Board, take ownership for actions in the plan and commit resources to support implementation and sustain improvements	Chief Executive / Leader of the Council	All Board members	From October 2019	% attendance at Improvement Board meetings Resources committed	Time and resource to support the working of the Board			

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Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Current Performance	Target	RAG rating
3.2	1 and 5	Managers across the service have access to a targeted training and development programme to support them in reflective supervision and decision making	Workforce development / Teaching Partnership		Programme to run from November 2019	No. of managers who have completed programme; audit findings on quality of management oversight	Yes			
3.3	1 and 5	Promote a vision for the service and agreed manager standards and values	CSMT / PSW	Partners to be aware	End November 2019	Published standards	Within existing resources			
3.4	1 and 5	Convene regular opportunities for frontline staff to meet with DCS and Lead Member	Improvement Team		Meetings in diary from November 2019	Evidence of meetings and attendance figures	Officer and elected member time			
3.5	1 and 5	Convene regular opportunities for Senior Council Leaders and elected members to participate in training and quality assurance activity in order to better understand the service priorities and challenges	Head of Quality Assurance / Head of Special Projects (Improvement)	Corporate leaders and elected members	From February 2020	Evidence of engagement in quality assurance activity	Officer and elected member time			
3.6	1 and 6	Review and extend CPB membership to all key partner agencies	Head of Service, Children in Care / Lead Member	Partners	From December 2019	Attendance of key partners at CPB	Within existing resources			
3.7	6	Implement a themed programme of work and data set for CPB	Head of Service, Children in Care / Lead Member		From December 2019	Agenda and dashboard	Yes – business support for the work of the Board			
3.8	1 and 10	Finalise arrangements for RAA and transfer responsibility for adoption services to the RAA	Head of Service, Children in Care	Kent CC / LB Bexley	October 2020	Agreement signed; service transferred	Within existing resources			
3.9	1 and 10	Put in place additional project management resources to support	Director of People		December 2019	Smooth running of Improvement Board	Yes			

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Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Current Performance	Target	RAG rating
		operational managers in the delivery of the Improvement Plan and support regular reporting to the Improvement Board				with clear project plans for each area of priority				

Priority 4: Quality Assurance and Performance Management	Lead: Assistant Director
What's working well and how do we know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular programme of case audit • Regular performance reporting • Performance meetings which involve front line managers, HR, performance and QA
What do we need to change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach to case audit to improve understanding of impact on child • Consistency in audit grading – shared understanding of what good looks like • Clear link between audit findings, learning and development activity and practice outcomes • Accessible performance reporting, which support managers to exercise their responsibilities and understand the story behind the data
What does that mean for a child?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children say they can share their views about the service they receive and understand that they will be taken seriously.

Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Current Performance	Target	RAG rating
4.1	1	Review, update and fully implement the Quality Assurance framework which brings together information from case audit, performance data and practice development	Head of Quality Assurance		Launch January 2020	Framework launched and audit programme implemented No. of audits completed	Officer time			
4.2	1	Review and update the audit tool, integrate into FWi, provide training to auditors to promote consistency of grading and implement an approach to moderation to test consistency of practice.	Head of Quality Assurance		From November 2019	Auditor attendance at training; No. of audits requiring moderated grades	Officer time			

Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Current Performance	Target	RAG rating
4.3	1	Increase capacity of auditing team	Head of Quality Assurance		January 2020	Number of audits completed by cycle	Yes – additional posts		To be set	
4.4	1, 5 and 6	Increase capacity of Child Protection Chairs (CPC) and Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) and support them to have manageable caseloads in order to effectively challenge practice and address delay in implementation of plans – monitor through use of escalation	Head of Quality Assurance		Business case produced by end of November; decision by end of December 2019	Caseloads in CPC and IRO Service reduced	Yes – additional posts	CP: 87 IRO: 75	CP: 75 IRO: 70	
4.5	1 and 5	Review the suite of performance reports to ensure they focus on PI's which will support practice improvement	Performance Team, Head of Business Change (People) and ICT / All HoS		From November 2019	New dashboard in use; PI's relevant to practice improvements in use	Officer time			
4.6	1 and 5	Introduce performance clinics for each service area	AD / HoS / Performance Team		Commencing November 2019	Clinic dates set and clinics taking place	Officer time			
4.7	1 and 6	Streamline the CPB performance digest with the revised pledge to monitor impact and performance	Head of Service, Children in Care / Performance Team	Virtual School	Commencing December 2019	Dashboard presented to CPB and new PI's agreed which monitor outcomes	Officer time			
4.8	10	Review the systems for recording Fostering and Adoption data	Head of Service, Children in Care / Head of Business Change (People) and ICT / performance Team		February 2020	All Adoption and Fostering data accessible on FWi	Yes – system changes			
4.9	1	Implement cycle of individual and whole service meetings	Head of Special		From November 2019	Dates of meetings and attendance	Officer time			

Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Current Performance	Target	RAG rating
			Projects (Improvement) / Head of Business Change (People) and ICT			recorded. Staff report improved communication. 3 whole service meetings a year				

Priority 5: Partnership and Engagement	Lead: Director and Assistant Director of Children's Services
What's working well and how do we know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners have been engaged in the Transformation programme and other strategic boards Medway Safeguarding Children's Partnership (MSCP) is now in place and working to a shared set of priorities
What do we need to change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners share responsibility for practice improvement across children's services Staff feel engaged and able to contribute to plans for service improvement The culture of the organisation supports transparent decision making, respectful challenge and values learning
What does that mean for a child?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people understand that they or their representatives can contribute to service planning and to staff recruitment, and their contributions will have an impact on how decisions are made.

Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Target	RAG rating
5.1	1 and 5	Implement a staff engagement strategy, which increases visibility of senior leaders and improves their line of sight into staff views and perspective			End November	Strategy produced; evidence of 'You Said, We Did'	Officer time		
5.2	1 and 5	Establish a staff reference group with representation on the Improvement Board	Head of Special Projects (Improvement)		October 2019	Meetings take place; staff attendance numbers	Officer time		
5.3	1 and 5	Councillors, Chief Officer and Senior Leaders for all key partnership agencies are represented on the Improvement Board and contribute to actions in the plan	Director of People	All partners	October 2019	Attendance at Improvement Board	Officer and elected member time		
5.4	9	Review commissioning arrangements to ensure quality and effectiveness of	Director of Public Health	Health	December 2019	Improved access to health provision			

Ref	Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Partner Involvement	By When	Success Measures	Resource Requirements	Target	RAG rating
		health provision for looked after children and care leavers				% of Initial Health Assessments within 28 days of coming into care		80% (59% year to date)	
5.5	1	Establish links with the Participation Group and other existing engagement opportunities to ensure children's views influence planning and service delivery	Head of Youth Service	MSCP also have this as a priority for 2019-2020	From October 2019	Evidence of 'You Said, We Did' supported by young people	Officer time		
5.6	8	Introduce Care Leaver representation onto CPB	Head of Service, Children in Care		December 2019	Evidence of young people attending CPB	Within existing resources		
5.7	8	Improve and develop career guidance offer to inspire children in care's future access to education, employment and training	Virtual School Head	Schools	March 2020; phased approach	Offer published; young people report improved access	Links to 1.21 in terms of capacity		
5.8	1	Undertake a Bright Spots survey of views of children in care, in partnership with Coram Voice	Head of Special Projects (Improvement)	Schools / Health / Young Lives Foundation / Virtual School	October to December 2019	Report of findings published; evidence of 'You Said, We Did' % of completion	Funding already committed	30%	
5.9	6 and 8	Fully implement the Virtual Schools strategy for improvement and track progress on actions	Virtual School Head	Schools	Termly reviews in line with academic year	Evidence of actions; completed and impact PEP Reviews in timescales	Additional capacity in Virtual School	95% (current performance 85%)	
5.10	8	Review and strengthen the joint work with Housing to assess and respond to the needs of 16 and 17year old young people	Head of Service, Early Help and First Response / Head of Service, Safeguarding / Head of Service, Children in Care	Housing	Ongoing from October 2019	Implement and embed housing protocol	Within existing resources		

Appendix A

Views of children and Young People

Ascertaining views of children and young people and the impact our interventions have on their lives, should be central to all our improvement planning.

There are already mechanisms in place for engaging with children and young people, and these will be strengthened as the plan is implemented. However, young people have already worked together to identify their Top 10 Professional Standards for practitioners and managers who work with them, and these will continue to be promoted with our staff and managers.

TOP 10!

- A Good Listener**
Have at least 1 ear for me
- Non-Judgemental**
If we are in care does that make us a problem?
- Consistent and Stable**
Be there for me, stick by me
- Contactable**
Can i reach you? Will you make time for me?
- Understanding**
Put yourself in my shoes, don't feel sorry for me
- Honest**
Don't beat around the bush, just tell me!
- Focused**
See me for me, I'm not just another number
- Realistic**
Don't make me a promise you can't keep
- Good Timekeeper**
It's just good manners!
- Resourceful**
Be creative, the same approach won't always work!

Do you meet Medway Young People's TOP 10 professional standards?

The Young Lives Foundation

MAYPC
14th REGISTRATION YEAR
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1119628

Medway
Serving You

Appendix B

	Ofsted report priority for improvement	Action in plan to address Ofsted priority	
1	Senior Managers' oversight and understanding about vulnerable children's experiences, including through the quality, accuracy and effectiveness of audits. (21 actions)	3.1	4.4
		3.2	4.5
		3.3	4.6
		3.4	4.7
		3.5	4.9
		3.6	5.1
		3.8	5.2
		3.9	5.3
		4.1	5.5
		4.2	5.8
		4.3	
2	Staffing capacity across children's social care, early help hubs and leaving care teams. (11 actions)	1.8	2.6
		2.1	2.8
		2.2	2.9
		2.3	2.10
		2.4	2.12
		2.5	
3	The response to risk for children who have experienced neglect, those exposed to parental domestic abuse and young people in danger of exploitation. (6 actions)	1.1	
		1.2	
		1.3	
		1.6	
		1.7	
		1.8	
4	The coordination and management oversight of early help services to support children to receive the right help at the right time. (2 actions)	1.4	
		1.5	
5	The quality and effectiveness of management oversight and supervision to make sure that children are protected from significant harm. (11 actions)	1.6	4.5
		3.2	4.6
		3.3	5.1
		3.4	5.2
		3.5	5.3
		4.4	
6	The effectiveness of managers' formal permanence planning and decision-making at every point in the child's journey. (14 actions)	1.9	1.19
		1.10	3.6
		1.11	3.7
		1.12	4.4
		1.13	4.7
		1.14	5.9
		1.17	
		1.18	
7	The system for tracking children who go missing from home, care or education. (2 actions)	1.7	
		1.22	

	Ofsted report priority for improvement	Action in plan to address Ofsted priority	
8	Services to help care leavers access suitable accommodation, education employment and training and to understand their rights and entitlements. (8 actions)	1.16	5.6
		1.20	5.7
		1.21	5.9
		2.11	5.10
9	The strategic relationship with health services, and operational delivery across a range of health functions to support children and young people in care and care leavers. (1 action)	5.4	
10	Leadership direction and assertive action to improve and develop the services to foster carers and prospective adopters. (8 actions)	1.15	2.7
		1.17	3.8
		1.18	3.9
		1.19	4.8

Glossary

Abbreviation	What it stands for
PSW	Principle Social Worker
HoS	Heads of Service
PLO	Public Law Outline
POs	Placement Orders
AOs	Adoption Orders
DCS	Director of Children's Services
AD	Assistant Director of Children's Services
RAA	Regional Adoption Agency
CSMT	Children's Services Management Team
PI	Performance Indicator
FWi	Frameworki
MSCP	Medway Safeguarding Children's Partnership

Name	Job Title
Ian Sutherland	Director of People
Jean Imray	Assistant Director
Neil Davies	Chief Executive
Councillor Alan Jarrett	Leader of Medway Council
Councillor Josie Iles	Lead Member for Children's Services
James Williams	Director of Public Health
Carrie McKenzie	Director of Transformation
David Watkins	Assistant Director of Education
Kelly Cogger	Head of Service, Early Help and First Response
Christine Impey	Head of Service, Safeguarding (until January 2020)

Paul Startup	Head of Service, Safeguarding (from January 2020)
Becky Cooper	Head of Quality Assurance
Vanessa White	Head of Service, Children in Care (until January 2020)
Andrew Willetts	Head of Commissioning
Jackie Brown	Head of Business Change (People) and ICT
Michael Hood	Head of Business and Intelligence
Sue Brunton-Reed	Head of Special Projects (Improvements)
Celia Glynn-Williams	Head of Communications
Lisa Morgan	HR Business Partner (Children's Services)
Sharon Alimo	Programme Manager for the Social Work Teaching Partnership
Theresa Gardiner	Fostering Manager
Sarah Hall	Virtual School Headteacher