

Children and Family Services

Childrens Social Care –
Placement Sufficiency Statement
and Market Position Statement,
2021-23

April 2021



Continuous Improvement Plan 2021 - 2023
The Road to Excellence

Introduction

Leicestershire County Council's Children and Family Services department is committed to ensuring that Leicestershire is the best place for all children, young people and their families. Children and young people in Leicestershire are safe and living in families where they can achieve their potential and have their health, wellbeing and life chances improved within thriving communities.

Our Childrens Social Care Placement Sufficiency Statement and Market Position Statement provides the basis for commissioning decisions, setting out our intentions for improving life changes of children and young people in care. It sets out the current position and our objectives for placements for children and young people from within our internal services and those we source from the external market with a specific focus on residential and fostering placements, as well as services for older young people (such as 16+ Supported Accommodation).



Why we need a Sufficiency Statement and Market Position Statement and plan for the future

The Children Act 1989 (section 22g) requires all local authorities to take steps that are reasonably practicable to secure sufficient accommodation for children and young people under their care who cannot live at home and whose circumstances indicate that it would be in their best interests to be accommodated within the local authority's area (for example, in order to stay at the same school or near to other family where contact can easily take place). This is commonly referred to as 'the sufficiency duty'.

This Placement Sufficiency and Market Position Statement will set out how we will ensure our 'sufficiency duty' between 2021 and 2023. It is aimed at both existing and potential providers of placement and support services to children in care (Leicestershire's term used for Looked after Children) and those young people who have left our care. The evidence provided in this document will help the Council and its commissioning partners to take a strategic approach to understand and meet the needs of Leicestershire's children and young people – both through our internal services and through working with the external market.

Strategic Background

This document is informed by a number of local strategic documents and reports (see: <https://www.lsr-online.org/>), including:

- Leicestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2018-21
- Children and Families Departmental Plan, 2017-20
- Children and Families Partnership Plan, 2018-21
- Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2018-2021
- Permanence and Adoption Strategy 2018-2021
- Children and Family Services Care Placement Strategy 2018-2021
- Engaging all Young People – NEET Strategy
- Leicestershire Adoption Service Annual Report, 2019-2020
- Leicestershire Fostering Service Annual Report, 2019-2020
- Adoption and Permanence Statement of Purpose 2019-2020
- Children in Care and Permanence Annual Report 2019-2020
- Children and Family Services Care Placement Strategy 2018-2021
- Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2017-2018
- Permanence and Adoption Strategy, 2017-2021
- Joint Leicester City, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) SEND Commissioning Strategy 2021-24

We believe that all children and young people in care should have the opportunity to live and thrive in family-based care determined by their needs and wishes. We are committed to providing services that are focused on promoting positive relationships, the best outcomes and permanence. Where children and young people cannot remain within their own families, alternative homes should be within Leicestershire and close enough to their local communities to maintain their schools, friendships and other networks.

The Local Context

Leicestershire's Fostering Service works in partnership with children and young people, their families and carers to provide safe, caring homes which value the differences in children and young people and help them to achieve their full potential.

For a small number of children and young people, residential care will be needed for a period of time. In December 2018, Barnardo's was awarded the Children's Innovation Partnership contract. A Children's Innovation Partnership Board (CIP) was established in December 2018 to provide governance and challenge. The key objectives of the CIP are to co-designed services by sharing expertise and knowledge in the delivery of innovative solutions, contributing to transformational change through new and shared service delivery models. The partnership has produced a new model of residential care - Leicestershire for Leicestershire children. This includes the acquisition of a number of properties to meet the needs of certain groups of children and young people and support services for these residential provisions.

In some circumstances it is necessary to seek a residential or fostering placement from the external market. In February 2020, Leicestershire County Council launched a new dynamic purchasing system (DPS) known as Gateway2Resources (G2R) to provide a framework within which placements for children and young people with residential children's home providers and independent fostering agencies (IFAs) can be sourced. In December 2020, a new DPS for 16+ Supported Accommodation was also set up – providing a framework within which to make placements for young people aged over 16 years for semi-independent supported living with external providers.

In November 2020 a programme of work known as 'Defining Children's and Family Services for the Future' commenced in the department, working in partnership with consultants, Newton Europe. One of the workstreams within this programme has been focused on placements and settings (internal capacity and use of the external market). Initial findings of this work have been used to inform this Placement Sufficiency Statement and Market Position Statement and work coming out of the programme will inform some of the improvements listed in the rest of this document.



Leicestershire placements:

Setting the scene

As of April 2021 (less specified otherwise):

706,155

resident population
in Leicestershire¹

23%

projected rise in the total
population of Leicestershire
from 698,268 to 860,618²

15%

projected rise in the 0-24
population of Leicestershire
from 202,122 to 232,198³

The Leicestershire population
estimate from 2018 for under 18s
is 141,860. There are currently

690

Children in Care (CiC) which
as rate per 10,000 is 48.6

44%

of children in care live with
a Leicestershire foster carer
(26% with a connected carer)

19%

of children in care live with
an independent fostering
agency (IFA) carer

26%

of children in care live with
connected carers
(family & friends)

320

children are supported to live
with family or friends permanently
(Special Guardianship or
Child Arrangement Orders)

63%

of children living in independent
foster agency carer are placed
with a sibling group

9.3%

of children in care
live in residential care
(excluding Parent and Bay and
children at a residential school)

25%

of children living in residential
homes have a significant disability

63%

of children living in residential
homes are male

65%

of children living in residential
homes are between the
ages of 14-17 years

4%

of our children in care live in
supported accommodation⁴

4%

of our children in care live
in a Leicestershire supported
lodgings provision⁵

3%

of children in care
are asylum seekers

35%

of asylum seeking children in
care living with an independent
fostering agency carer

33

children have a permanent
home with an adoption family

49%

of children in care live with
a Leicestershire foster carer
(19% with a connected carer)

¹ mid-2019 population estimates, ONS, 2020 ² 2018-based Population Projections to 2043, ONS, 2019

³ 2018-based Population Projections to 2043, ONS, 2019 ⁴ Based on H5 placement code ⁵ Based on H5 placement code

Leicestershire Placement Sufficiency Statement

In Leicestershire, placements for children looked after are provided both through our own internal services and through services commissioned from and delivered by the external market, principally:

Internal provision:

The Fostering Service is led by Head of Service for Fostering, Adoption, Children in Care and Virtual School, managed through a Service Manager for Retention and Recruitment with an Assistant Service Manager to support the Service. This role ensures that both recruitment and retention receive the same high-quality management oversight, development and to be inspirational and aspirational for the Fostering Service.

In September 2019 Leicestershire's Children and Family Service was inspected by Ofsted. Whilst the Fostering Service was not subject to its own inspection the feedback for the service was exceptional. The overall judgement for services for children in care, was Good.

Nationally there was a significant decline as potential carers stopped making contact, and this was the initial experience of Leicestershire. We still had carers progressing through the recruitment and assessment progress. Due to lockdown we had to change our method of assessing in line with Government revised regulations and for some carers there was a delay as we / carers responded to pandemic meaning their panel dates were delayed. Subsequently that meant their approval moved into the next reporting period.

We approved 12 foster carers (including 5 IFA carer transfers who had made an active choice to be part of our fostering family, recognising the level of support our carers receive, 1 specialist carer and 12 supported lodgings carers, giving us 25 new foster placements.

We went live with our UASC Foster Scheme hosted by Leicestershire on behalf of the region in September 20.

Leicestershire's Dedicated Placement Support Team has been in operation since 2016. This team can support placements to promote stability, support our specialist One2One, Pathway carers and young people in Staying Put and Supported lodgings arrangements. The team is unique to Leicestershire in that the service can provide the right support at the right time to maintain placement stability.

The Support workers work in a holistic way with the household, recognising the importance of giving everyone a voice, and helping them to reach their own resolutions and outcomes. As each worker carries their own caseload, they can be very creative in their engagement offering support in the evenings and weekends as the case requires. They will also offer direct work to young people and be an additional listening ear to carers to support them when times become difficult. In our 2019 Inspection Ofsted recognise this as one of Leicestershire's "Unique Selling Points".

In addition, in December 2020 Leicestershire, in partnership with Barnardo's, launched the Assessment and Resource Team (ART). The ART delivers a peripatetic support service comprising a range of social work, medical and psychological professionals. This team will undertake child and young person assessment of need and identify appropriate resources required to ensure "right placement first time".

The team will also provide wraparound services to support local residential provision, to share risk as appropriate. The ART team will ensure, strong staff to child ratios, and the skills to provide the following types of intervention according to the presenting needs of the child:

Crisis Intervention

Providing emotional and behavioural containment to young people, helping them to reflect on their reactions to triggers, and learn to manage their behaviour and emotions more effectively. Crisis intervention may also be needed where there are other needs e.g. DTOC

Comprehensive Assessment and Care Planning

Risk management coupled with behaviour management strategies to help children and young people learn constructive and adaptive ways to deal with frustration, failure, anger, rejection, hurt, and depression. ART will offer holistic assessment of developmental needs, including devising strategies and interventions to assist in encouraging positive behaviours/ outcomes. This process includes identifying starting points, setting targets and evaluating outcomes.

Transitional Support Packages

Move on packages will ensure 'right placement first time', which will remove episodic changes. There is a commitment to move young people on in a positive and planned way, with the ART team where required providing specialist wraparound outreach to the next placement. Children and Young People will move on with a 'parachute' of professional services, which will ensure they are supported as will their placement provider. This is essential to maintain consistency of support.

Family work to facilitate a return home

Where appropriate there will be a joint working with parents of the development of the behaviours in a "no-blame culture". Development of family strategies to cope with and change negative behaviour will be a focus, through using such techniques as sleep overs, family meals, sibling visits, parenting courses etc. which would revive responsibility in parents to sustain the improvements long-term.

Using trauma informed and trauma responsive approaches, ART invests in people and relationships to manage interventions that genuinely meet need and includes families or significant others.

Our Fostering Service consists of six separate teams -

- Recruitment – fostering and adoption
- Assessments – Fostering
- Team around the Child
- Kinship
- Dedicated Placements Support – Placement Stability, Independent Visitors, Supported Lodgings Scheme, Staying Put, Specialist Foster Carers
- UASC Carers recruitment and Assessment Team

External Provision:

- We have developed a local procurement solution in collaboration with the market to ensure the availability and sustainability of placements from a range of external providers
 - Gateway2Resources – Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS) set up to provide a flexible framework from which we can call-off placements for residential, fostering and 16+ Supported Accommodation placements
 - As of April 2021 we have a total of 114 approved providers on the G2R; use of the DPS has seen a steady influx of new applications from the market to join the G2R and the number of approved providers continues to grow. Within these approved providers are:
 - 34 approved Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs)
 - 37 Residential Providers
 - 43 16+ Supported Accommodation
 - Of these approved providers, 39 providers have placements (as at April 2021) (34%), with a fairly equal distribution of placements across residential IFA and 16+ providers.
- Projected growth of the population aged – 24 years and growing complexities in the needs of vulnerable children and young people is likely to place increasing demands on Children and Family Services in Leicestershire
- Around 36% of placements were not made in the setting of care that was requested (at point of referral)
 - 2/3rds of our residential placements were not originally a request for residential (a significant number of children and young people who were requested a foster placement are currently placed in a residential setting)
 - Less than half of internal foster requests were actually placed internally
- LCC has around 42% of placements in internal fostering provision (compared nationally to a figure closer to 66%)
- Only 55% of our internal fostering placements are filled (not included Connected Carers)
- The average duration of a residential placement is 75 weeks
- Of our older young people:
 - 70% are suitable for Supported Lodgings
 - 96% of young people in Supported Lodgings are in employment, education or training (EET). For those in external 16+ Supported Accommodation placements on 52% are EET.
- The external market typically struggles to meet our demand for residential or fostering placements for children aged 14-17 years and those presenting with complex and challenging behaviours.
- We tend to find it difficult to struggle to source secure placements in a timely way to meet the needs of children and young people when that support is required. This can lead to delays in moving children and young people in to appropriate placements and support.

Our vision for the future

The Children and Family Services department has the following vision and mission:

“

“For Leicestershire to be the best place for all children, young people and their families”

“Children and young people in Leicestershire are safe and living in families where they can achieve their potential and have their health, wellbeing and life chances improved within thriving communities”

”

The delivery of this with vision and mission statement is underpinned by the following defining principles:

- Putting Children at the heart of what we do
- Delivering consistently outstanding practice: everywhere, every day
- Building resilience through value-adding, strengths-based support linked to levels of need
- Staff who feel they belong, are valued, supported and recognised for what they do
- Working with our partners in an evidence-based, child-focused approach to safeguarding
- Putting the service on a sustainable financial footing that achieves its budget targets



In terms of placement sufficiency, we want to take:

“

“a whole-system approach that brings together the re-design and refinement of our processes, best practice and culture in order to ensure that we are able to find the right placement for every one of our children in care. This will ensure that we maximise the opportunities for our children and young people, providing them access to the highest quality of care that we can offer.”

”

This means that we will focus on the following priorities in order to meet our sufficiency duty:

1. Expanding our in-house fostering provision
2. Making best use of in-house fostering capacity
3. Avoiding unrequested residential placements
4. Reducing the amount of time children and young people spend in residential care
5. Providing the best care of our older young people
6. Increasing our in-house residential provision
7. Continue working in collaboration with the external market to ensure placement sufficiency

Whilst many of these priorities are focused on developing our in-house offer, there is a recognition that we will continue to work with the external market and work in partnership with care and support providers to meet the needs of our children and young people.

Priorities:

Placement Sufficiency

PRIORITY 1: Expanding our in-house fostering provision

We know that we could place more children and young people in internal fostering. One way in which we can do this is to increase our levels of internal foster carers who will be able to provide care for children and young people with emotional-behavioural needs, siblings, parents with their babies, children with a disability requiring a short-break and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Having more internal foster carers will help reduce making placements with unrequested settings, such as residential placements when a fostering placement is more suitable and reduce our reliance on providers in the external market.

To do this, by the end of 2023 we aim to we aim to:

- Achieve 60-80% utilisation of in-house mainstream fostering placements (currently 42%) through improved matching and governance
- Recruit of mainstream carers (stretch target 30)
- Increase the number of specialist carers (including Supported Lodgings, target 10).
- Make changes to the way we recruit and retain internal foster carers – this will include:
 - Continuing to improve how prospective carers can get information about becoming a Leicestershire Carer and easier ways to apply – we need to ensure that the number of queries converts in to a high number of applications
 - Improving and streamlining the approval process – including reducing the average time for assessment and approval (currently 7.1 months) to increase throughput (conversion from application to approved carer)
 - Improved visibility of and reporting on data about our internal foster carers (the ‘fostering pipeline’– ensuring that we have clear data about applications, assessments, and tracking of prospective carers. This data will enable able us to drive continuous improvement across the system.
- Continue to deliver an excellent standard of training to new carers

PRIORITY 2: Making best use of in-house fostering capacity

Another way to expand our in-house fostering provision is to ensure that we use the capacity effectively – that is, making full use of the foster cares that we have. We need to know what our existing capacity and utilisation is and have effective ways of matching new placements to our carers.

To do this, by the end of 2023 we aim to we aim to:

- Continue to deliver an excellent standard of training to existing carers to ensure they feel support and to ensure retention. This will include ensuring that our carers have a good understanding of trauma and therapeutic parenting and that carers feel able to address the priority needs of children and young people particularly preparing older children for independence.
- Introduce a dedicated team to oversee matching. The process will also be simplified and provide improved visibility of vacancies and utilisation.
- Ensure we continue to support placement stability within in-house foster placements – so that we can minimise placement breakdowns and our reliance on other fostering or residential provision (e.g. with the external market)
- Ensure foster carers have the training they need and support when they need it through annual review of the training offer, seeking carers voice through the annual survey, use of training and personal development plans for all carers and through enhanced offers like DPST and ART.
- Ensure that continue to have a focus on employment, education and training for our young people – the Fostering Service, the Virtual School and Children in Care Service recognises the potential of all our children and young people. As an organisation we are driven to help them be the very best they can be and prepare for adulthood. We do this by ensuring there are ringfenced apprenticeship opportunities, commercial contracts have a social value element, commitment to an ASDAN, a passionate Care Leavers Team who work with young people from age 16 and where needed, commissioning additional support and advice for young people living in semi-independent accommodation.
- Leicestershire also has internal Supported Lodgings provision which gives young people aged 16+ the chance to live as a lodger in the home of a supportive host. The provider/host might be a family, a couple, or a single person. Leicestershire supported lodgings carers go the extra mile, ensuring that young people are provided the care and support they need to become successful, confident adults. Many of our young people choose to remain with the carers under Staying Put once they turn 18.
- Leicestershire also has a strong Independent Visitor offer. Independent Visitors are adult volunteers who give up some of their free time to take a special interest in a child or young person, especially those placed in a residential setting who would benefit from a more individualised relationship. The Fostering Service has a dedicated IV co-ordinator who ensures IV's are well supported, receive training and are well-matched to the child or young person. Leicestershire has 40 independent visitors and aims to exceed 50 by March 2022.

PRIORITY 3: Avoiding unrequested residential placements

An analysis of recent placements activity suggests that close to 70% of the residential placements we have made in the last 12 months started as a search for a non-residential setting. This reflects a combination of factors: shortage of foster placements (in-house and in the external Independent Foster Agency (IFA) market; needs of the child higher than referral suggested; insufficient time to source the right (requested) placement; or because of direction from the Courts. We know that the needs of our children and young people in external residential placements is very similar to those of children and young people that we have been able to place in fostering placements (including Parent & Child; High Risk CSE; older young people; those with a history of allegations). This suggests that it should be possible to avoid unnecessary residential starts if sufficient alternatives existed.

To resolve this situation, by 2023 we aim to:

- Grow internal specialist foster career capacity (see Priority 1, above)
- Ensure that we have good visibility of an understanding of availability and utilisation of our in-house foster carers so that we can make best use of internal capacity (see Priority 2, above)
- Develop our internal processes to ensure that there is a process in place to identify and review referrals for placements that are at high risk of becoming an unnecessary start. We will adopt a multi-disciplinary and solutions-focused approach to discuss those referrals and explore all possible options to avoid a residential start. This will bring together, at different times, representatives from Social Care, Fostering and Adoption, Dedicated Placement Support, Commissioning, and, potentially, strategic partners and external providers.
- Develop own internal residential provision so that we have an increased range of in-house options (see Priority 6, below)
- Work with operational staff, supported by our Practice Excellence Team (PET) and through additional training for workers, to ensure that the quality of assessments is maintained at a high standard having a critical focus on the needs of children and young people.
- Ongoing work with the external market, in particular IFAs to develop their availability of specialist foster carers (including Parent & Child; High Risk CSE; older young people; those with a history of allegations). We will do this by continuing to work collaboratively with providers through our Gateway2Resources (G2R), building a strong relationship and understanding of current demand with the market to meet the needs of our children and young people

PRIORITY 4: Reducing the amount of time children and young people spend in residential care

As well as avoiding unnecessary residential starts we recognise that it is important that where a child or young person is placed in a residential setting that we have clear trajectory detailing the work that needs to be achieved to enable that child or young person to move back in to a family setting as soon as appropriate. These processes, which includes our new Residential Review Group (RRG) will continue to be reviewed to ensure effectiveness. At the moment, our children and young people spend on average 75 weeks in residential care settings. Where possible and appropriate, we therefore want to reduce the time that our children and young people spend in residential settings.

To do this, by 2023 we aim to:

- Grow internal specialist foster career capacity (see Priority 1, above)
- Ensure that we have good visibility of an understanding of availability and utilisation of our in-house foster carers so that we can make best use of internal capacity (see Priority 2, above)
- Continue to review and where appropriate, refine the effectiveness of Residential Review Group and ensure that this is discussed as part of regular improvement cycles relating to placements
- Work with the external market, in particular IFAs to develop their availability of specialist foster carers (including Parent & Child; High Risk CSE; older young people; those with a history of allegations; and, SLD). We will do this by continuing to work collaboratively with providers through our Gateway2Resources (G2R), building a strong relationship and understanding of current demand with the market to meet the needs of our children and young people.



PRIORITY 5: Providing the best care of our older young people

Analysis of current placements for our older young people who are currently in an external 16+ Supported Accommodation placement reveals that:

- **70% have needs that could be met by Supported Lodgings**
- **Only 52% of those older young people in an external 16+ Supported Accommodation placement are EET (in employment, education or training) as opposed to 96% of those in Supported Lodgings**

We recognise that we need to increase the availability of alternatives to 16+ Supported Accommodation and where a placement with the external market is necessary, that there is a focus on improving the standard of care and support, in particular to avoid those older young people becoming NEET (not in employment, education and training).

To do this, by 2023 we aim to:

- Increase the availability and capacity of our Supported Lodgings provision by 10 by March 2022
- Ensure that support is in place – whether within Supported Lodgings provision and/or 16+ Supported Accommodation provision with the external market – to ensure that our older young people are encouraged to be EET. This will include continuing to embed the use of ASDAN by carers and providers to help young people be ready for adulthood
- Ensure that all Pathway Plans that are focused on independence and that those supporting these older young people are aware of these plans
- Ensure that our approach to the commissioning, quality assurance and contract management of 16+ Supported Accommodation in the external market remains compliant and that it is adapted should changes to the regulatory framework around these types of provision change (see DfE 2021: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/unregulated-accommodation-banned-for-vulnerable-children-under-16>)



PRIORITY 6: Increasing our in-house residential provision

We know that 9-10% of the Council's Looked After Children require specialist care because of the complexity of their needs or because of the level of risk they pose to themselves, others or the level of risk they are in when living in their communities. All of Leicestershire's children who require this care through residential provision are placed in private provision which brings additional complexities, including – children and sometimes their families (parent-child assessment placements) are placed at a distance making continuity of services (like education or access to CAMHS) difficult and breaking ties with their families and networks, and of course increased cost for the local authority (cost of the provision and cost of officer time e.g. due to travelling).

Leicestershire County Council has been working with Barnardo's as an official partner to understand the needs of these children and to plan for providing the right provision at the right time and providing this care locally so that the children remain close to their communities, friends, schools and other provisions like CAMHS. The partnership is called the Children's Innovation Partnership.

Whilst the properties will be owned by Leicestershire County Council, it is the intention that Barnardo's will run the residential homes – providing the staff and care for the children, young people and families. Leicestershire County Council maintain responsibility for the children, young people and families placed in these homes.

The 2021-23 focus will be on the delivery of:

- Two local provisions. One for children younger than 16 years of age and one for children aged 16-18 years of age.
- One parent-child assessment provision.
- Continued development of an Assessment and Referral Team (ART) with our strategic partner, Barnardo's. This team comprises a group of professionals who will work with children in residential or at risk of residential care, their families and other professions to improve their resilience and prevent the need for more costly interventions or reduce the amount of time the costly intervention will required. The ART will also work with children in residential care who have more complex health care needs to assist step-down from residential support.
- Assessment bed provisions - a home where children or young people may live short-term whilst ART undertake an assessment and provide the initial intervention to the child/young person and their support network. This home is being built alongside a hub where ART will be based.

PRIORITY 7: Continue working in collaboration with the external market to ensure placement sufficiency

We recognise that there will always be a cohort of children and young people who require a fostering or residential placement that cannot be met by our in-house settings. We have established Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS) for the delivery of residential, fostering and 16+Supported Accommodation provision for our children looked after known as Gateway2Resources(G2R). We will continue to develop our relationship with the market and work in collaboration with providers to ensure placement sufficiency and a sustainable external market to meet the needs of our children and young people when our internal capacity is not suitable or available.

To do this, by the end of 2023 we aim to we aim to:

- Continue to work with and shape the market based on an analysis of demand and need to ensure we have access to placements in the external market than can deliver the best outcomes for our children and young people.
- Develop the number of providers on the G2R by:
 - Publicising the G2R and holding provider events to encourage new providers to join the DPS
 - Working with our existing providers on the DPS to address any barriers to making placements (refining brokerage processes; review of paperwork etc)
 - Work with the market to try to expand the number of providers on the G2R who can offer:
 - Residential and fostering placements for teenagers aged 14-17 (especially fostering placements for male teenagers)
 - Residential and fostering placements for children and young people (especially those aged 16 and above) who present with aggressive behaviour
 - Foster carers for young people with challenging behaviour
 - Foster carers to support children and young people stepping down from residential placements
 - Innovative solutions – working alongside other services provided by LCC such as the ART team and respite services – in order to best meet the needs of children and young people
- Ensure that all commissioning is undertaken within a compliant framework, reflection Nation and local Contract Procedure Regulations, best practices and standards set by regulatory bodies such as Ofsted and the CQC
- Ensure robust approaches are in place for the quality assurance and contract management of all types of provision that are used by children and young people in Leicestershire
- To work with the market to understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and to provide relevant support to ensure that external provision of placements is sustainable, in line with National guidance.

Measures of Success

Our progress to achieve the priorities and actions set out in this statement will be monitored and reviewed in a number of ways:

- Review of actions and progress against targets as part of monthly Improvement Cycle meetings chaired by the Assistant Director, Targeted Early Help and Children's Social Care. These Improvement Cycle meetings have been developed as a product of the Defining Children and Family Services for the Future programme and are designed to provide an opportunity for work around placements (both internal capacity and work with the external market) to be discussed by senior managers
- Quarterly summary reports to the Children's Social Care Senior Management Team (SMT) in order to provide an update on progress against each priority and identify any risks or barriers to achieving the actions and targets set out in this statement (and activity required to resolve them). Where appropriate, these will include feedback (Voice) from children, young people and their families/carers.
- Annual summary reports to the Children and Family Services Departmental Management Team (DMT).



