

Education, Children Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Children, Young People and Families (CYPFS)

Analysis of strengths, areas for development, opportunities and risks.

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CYPFS

Introduction



- Summary of key strengths, areas for development as well as some current challenges for the CYPFS Service and is based on our Self Evaluation shared with Ofsted in March 2021.
- Our ambition continues to focus on providing social work services that are at least good in all areas. We are focusing on getting the basics right every time for children and improving the quality of our interventions through service development and effective supervision and management oversight.
- Plymouth has continued its progress to become a trauma informed city and in CYPFS we are working on integrating this into our practice model. This model is informed by a restorative and relationship based approach.
- A Permanent Leadership Team is in place to support continued service improvements.
- A Bright Future – Vision for Children in Plymouth – a strong strategic partnership approach (Priorities - Safe, Achieve and Aspire Healthy and Happy).

Strengths I



- **Adolescent Support Team** – working with young people at the edge of care and working to reunify children in care with their parents.
- **PAUSE Programme** - reducing the number of recurrent care proceedings by supporting women to pause and benefit from a range of support to improve outcomes for them and any future children they may have.
- **Youth Offending Service** working to divert children and young people from offending.
- Timely **assessments** of need for children and families referred into CYPFS
- Continuous Service offered to families throughout the pandemic including regular visits and supporting children open to social work to attend school regularly.
- Improvements to increase the number of **in-house fostering** households in the city.
- **Care experienced young people** experience increased Personal Advisor support, regular contact and support beyond 21 years of age as they require it.

Strengths 2



- Improved legal planning, **pre-proceedings** and decisions about commencing care proceedings with strong management oversight.
- Improving **placement sufficiency** in the city for children in care via a range of providers for all children, including 16+ placements. This includes the development of crisis provision to support emergency placements.
- Children in care **placement review** and the consistent **stable care arrangement** practice to support all children looked after by Plymouth.
- Effective Corporate Parenting Group overseeing work with children in care and care leavers.
- Improved **case audit** arrangements to support a regular review of the quality of interventions by practitioners and outcomes for children.

Areas for Development



- Recruitment and retention of experienced social workers to support increased demand.
- Work to improve responses to contacts and referrals at the Gateway, MASH and Referral and Assessment service to ensure effective responses at first contact including universal and early help responses to families needing some support.
- Retention of existing foster carers and opening up existing family placement capacity.
- Reduce the number of children living outside the city in children's homes.
- Continue to increase long term stability of children's placements.
- Improve Education, Employment and Training inclusion for care experienced young people.
- Reduce the need for children to remain on child protection plans for long periods of time or having a plan on more than one occasion through improved interventions.

Opportunities/Innovations I



- Children's Commissioner (Rachel De Souza) visit to Plymouth on 16th July 2021.
- Practice Model development to embed a restorative and trauma informed approach.
- Realignment of CYPFS service to improve preventative work with children in need.
- Front Door Review to improve our first response to families.
- Out of Hours Review to ensure our emergency response to children and families.
- DfE Care Leaver Champion (Mark Riddell) visiting the service on 28th/29th September 2021 to reflect on our progress with care experienced young people.
- Barnardos Care Journey's collaboration - positive destinations for care leavers.
- NSPCC Together for Childhood partnership to reduce sexual abuse in the city.
- Work to find a sustainable approach when the PAUSE programme funding ends.
- Implementation of a child exploitation framework in September 2021.

Risks and issues likely to impact



- Continued increase in demand for Children's Services and impact on capacity to respond. We have secured funding for permanent additional capacity to address this as well as additional short term interim additional capacity agreed. We are appointing social workers and family support workers and will keep this under close review
- Continued increase in the number of children requiring care placements and the costs associated with this. A weekly panel meeting is held to review all children in residential placements to ensure their placement matches their care plan needs.
- Any limitation in both universal and early help service provision of services to intervene to prevent risk escalating for children. We are working with multi-agency partners to ensure post lockdown service provision is re-instated to support families.
- Unregistered placement arrangements for children under 16 years of age will become unlawful in Sept. 2021. We are working with placement providers to ensure sufficiency to mitigate against this.