

## **SOUTH WEST REGION ADCS CHILDREN'S SERVICES SELF-ASSESSMENT 2018**

<b>Local Authority:</b>	<b>Devon County Council</b>
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## INTRODUCTION

This self-assessment provides an up to date evaluation of the needs of children and families within our area, the effectiveness of current service provision and performance in improving outcomes for children and young people. As part of the South West Region annual programme of sector-led improvement, it also provides an opportunity to receive peer challenge within the region; share good practice; and identify regional priorities and programme of support for the coming year.


The Self-Assessment has been completed by senior officers from within the department, with wide collaboration. The document has had sign off from the Lead Member and Chief Executive.

## PART A: CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

### 1. Key Personnel

Job Title	Name	Start date in current role
Director of Children's Services (Chief Officer)	Jo Olsson	September 2016
Lead Member	Councillor James MacInnes	March 2014
LSCB stood down October 2018, replaced by Devon Children and Families Partnership	Jo Olsson	July 2017
Chief Executive	Phil Norrey	February 2006
Head of Children's Social Care (Deputy Chief Officer)	Darryl Freeman	December 2017
Head of Education and Learning (Deputy Chief Officer)	Dawn Stabb	September 2016

### 2. Key Documents

Publication of key over-arching documents		
Document	Date	Link to website or document where appropriate
Corporate Plan	June 2014-2020	<a href="#">Better Together</a>
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	June 2018	<a href="#">JSNA Assessment</a>
Health and Well-being strategy	November 2016	<a href="#">Health and Well-being strategy 2016-2019</a>
LSCB Annual Report	October 2018	 DSCB Annual Report 2018.pdf

DCFP Safeguarding Arrangements	2018	 Devon Safeguarding arrangements FINAL v
SEND Multi Agency Strategic plan	2017-2020	<a href="https://new.devon.gov.uk/supportforschools/services-and-contacts/send">https://new.devon.gov.uk/supportforschools/services-and-contacts/send</a>

### 3. About the Local Area and Services for Children

*Demographic and Service Information: About the local area, demographic information, deprivation, diversity within communities and understanding well individual needs of children and young people (e.g. disability, ethnicity, faith, gender, language, race and sexual orientation) are identified, and key local issues. This is about telling your local story, similar to the initial section in Ofsted reports and evidences how well the LA understands its local community and specific areas/groups of children*

#### Information about this local authority area

##### Children living in this area

- Approximately 144,720<sup>1</sup> children and young people under the age of 18 years live in Devon. This is 18.4% of the total population in the area.
- Approximately 14% of the local authority's children are living in poverty<sup>2</sup>.
- The proportion of children entitled to free school meals<sup>3</sup>.
  - in primary schools is 9.6% (the national average is 13.7%)
  - in secondary schools is 8.8% (the national average is 12.4%).
- Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 7.6% of all children living in the area, compared with 32% in the country as a whole<sup>4</sup>.
- The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the school-age population are Mixed and Asian or Asian British.
- The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language<sup>4</sup>:
  - in primary schools is 4.2% (the national average is 21.2%)
  - in secondary schools is 3.3% (the national average is 16.6%).
- Additional contextual statement: The local authority's coastal areas have a transient population due to seasonal work and this is echoed in the agricultural areas of the county. There are a significant number of children from other authorities who are looked after in Devon.

##### Child protection in this area

- At 31 March 2018, 3,983 children had been identified through assessment as being formally in need of a specialist children's service. This is an increase from 3,816 at 31 March 2017.

- At 6 September 2018, 2513 children and young people were the subject of a child protection plan. This is an increase from 488 at 31 March 2018.

<sup>1</sup> HM Revenue and Customs (Personal Tax Credits Related Statistics - Child Poverty Statistics), 2014

<sup>2</sup> Performance Tables 8, School pupil characteristics Jan-18 by the Office of National Statistics.

<sup>3</sup> Local Authority Interactive Tool, Sept-18

- At 31 October 2018, 56 children lived in a privately arranged fostering placement. This is a minor decrease from 62 at October 2016.

#### **Children looked after in this area**

- At 6 September 2018, 718 children are being looked after by the LA (a rate of 49.6 per 10,000 children). This is an increase from 694 (48.3 per 10,000 children) at 31 March 2018. Of this number:

- 175 (or 24%) live outside the local authority area

- 68 live in residential children's homes, of whom 21% live out of the authority area

- 9 live in residential special schools, of whom 2% live out of the authority area

- 308 live with foster families, of whom 32% live out of the authority area

- 19 live with parents, of whom 1% live out of the authority area

- 3 children are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

- In the last 12 months, there have been:

- 42 adoptions

- 18 children became subjects of special guardianship orders

- 277 children have ceased to be looked after, of whom 7.2% subsequently returned to be looked after

- 33 children and young people have ceased to be looked after and moved on to independent living





- 15 children and young people who ceased to be looked after are now living in houses of multiple occupation during the year 2018-19.

## PART B: SUMMARY

### 1. Review of the last year (October 2017 to October 2018)

#### 1.1 Progress on LA Areas for Improvement from Last Self-Assessment

*What improvements have been made in your key areas for improvement last year? Please reference relevant section in the self-assessment document. You may wish to add a short summary paragraph here of inspection/evaluation/improvement planning or intervention as appropriate.*

Area for Improvement	Outcome	Reference to further information
<b>Early Help</b>	<p>The Early Help Improvement Board has created a robust partnership of providers and services to ensure an improved early help system and much wider understanding of everyone's role in it.</p> <p>Achievement of Troubled Families Payments by Results are on target</p>	<p>Section 5</p> <p><a href="#">Early help website</a></p> <p> Early Help Maturity Matrix .pdf</p> <p> SEN Improvement Plan.pdf</p> <p> Early Help Improvement Board Roadshows Locality meetings Training</p>
<b>Increased consistency in the quality of core social work</b>	<p>The consistency in quality of core social work remains a priority, progress has been made, there is more to do</p>	<p>See separate evaluation of social work practice</p>
<b>Reduction in the number of children entering care as adolescents</b>	<p>The Council has agreed a very significant investment to be supported by partner contributions to enable the development of a full edge of care service. This will allow us to accelerate our progress</p>	<p> Edge of Care and Crisis Care Proposal</p>
<b>Improved timeliness and</b>	<p>Significantly increased numbers have impacted on improvements in respect</p>	<p>Section 4</p>

<b>quality of Education and health Care Plans (EHCPs)</b>	<p>of the timeliness of plans. 1400 new plans have been issued this year, the percentage of these issued within the statutory 20 weeks is very low. The main contributing has been the timeliness of professional advice, (95% late in academic year 17/18) however the use of escalation routes and changed processes reduced this to 25% by Dec 2018. We expect that 95% of new plans will be issued on time by Oct 2019.</p> <p>In spite of this, the number of tribunals has not increased. The SEND improvement board is an example of effective multiagency working. Educational outcomes are above the national average.</p>	<p><a href="#">SEND webpages</a></p> <p><a href="#">SEND Multi-Agency Strategy</a></p> <div data-bbox="1050 315 1110 376" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>SEND Implementation Plan</p> <p><a href="https://new.devon.gov.uk/supportforschools/services-and-contacts/send">https://new.devon.gov.uk/supportforschools/services-and-contacts/send</a></p>
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## 1.2 Regional Areas for Improvement Last Year

*What improvement has been made in your LA against regional priorities?*

Area for Improvement	Outcome	Reference to further information
Tackling and Preventing Neglect	Neglect strategy and toolkit published and disseminated across the partnership	<a href="#">Neglect Strategy</a> <a href="#">Neglect Toolkit</a>
Improving recruitment and retention in the social care workforce	Excellent progress has continued in relation to ASYE and overseas recruitment leading to reduced staffing turnover. Recruitment of experienced social workers remains a significant challenge; we have had to set aside the MOU for agency staffing, once to secure safe staffing in the North Locality and more recently in the South.	<div data-bbox="1086 1200 1147 1261" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Workforce Profile Dara.docx</p>




## 1.3 Top Three Outcomes We Are Proud Of Achieving This Year

*Please include ways that you think your success can benefit others in the region and learning shared, including innovation.*

Strength or Outcome	Reference to further information
Key investments confirmed by Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edge of Care Service</li> <li>• Crisis Care provision</li> <li>• Early Help 4 Mental Health</li> </ul>	
Successful re-tendering of Children's Community Health Services and agreement to in-source Public Health Nursing from 1.4.19	
Significantly strengthened multi-agency partnerships, strategic and operational <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCS leads the CYP workstream of the STP</li> <li>• Early Adopter for new safeguarding arrangements; DfE resource allocated</li> <li>• SEND Improvement Board</li> <li>• Early Help Improvement Board</li> </ul>	Safeguarding Arrangements   Devon Safeguarding arrangements FINAL \
Foster carers' fees restructure	

## 1.4 Summary of Reviews, Evaluations and Inspections

### a) Ofsted Social Care, School Improvement Inspections, CQC inspections of health services, peer reviews, etc.

Title	Date	Outcome Reference to further information
Focussed Visit – Services for Care Leavers	September 2018	<a href="#">Focussed Visit letter.</a>
Peer Review – Services for Care Leavers	June 2018	
CQC Inspection of Children's Community Health Services, good rating achieved	February 2017	 CQC REPORT.pdf
Peer Review SEND	2017	 Review of SEN Provision 2017 Repo
Deep dive SEND commissioning practice	August 2018	 Final Devon review of placements - Kari

### b) School Inspections

Source: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/latest-monthly-management-information-outcomes-of-school-inspections>

	Total number inspected	Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate	% Good or Better
Nursery	2	1	1	-	-	100%
Primary	304	55	210	35	4	87.2%
Secondary	42	6	26	8	2	76.2%
AP academy/ Hospital school	4	-	1	1	2	25%
Special Schools (LA maintained)	10	1	8	1	-	90%
Non-Maintained Special Schools	3	-	2	-	1	66.7%

## 2. Looking Forward To 2019

### 2.1 Top Three Outcomes We Need To Improve

Please provide reference to the chapter/page in the self-assessment which provides further information about current performance, reasons and what you will do to improve.

Area for Improvement	Reference to further information
1. Further strengthen core social work practice (assessments, plans and supervision)	
2. Embedded QA culture	
3. Timeliness of EHCPs	

### 2.2 Top Three Risks For The Future

Risk	Reference to further information
Recruitment against specific skills and capacity shortages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experienced social workers</li> <li>Health Visitors</li> <li>Residential staff</li> <li>Education leaders and teachers</li> </ul>	
Sustained improvement within the context of increasing demand and significant budget pressures (DSG/HNB and CiC Placements)	



Further depletion of early help resource/capacity	

### 3. INNOVATION, PILOTS AND GOOD PRACTICE

*This is optional additional information to capture what is being done well, involvement in regional pilots, good and innovative practice. The region may wish to collate some of these so that it can be shared with others*

Title and Description	Start and completion date
Personal health budgets for children in care	May 2017 - March 2019
UASC initiatives	January 2018 – March 2019
Early adopter investment, a new approach to multi-agency practice audit	June 2018 – March 2019

## PART C: CURRENT ILACS SELF-EVALUATION

[see separate document]

## PART D: MOST RECENT OFSTED ANNUAL CONVERSATION LETTER.



2017-11-17 Letter to  
Jo Olsson DCS Devo

Next Annual Conversation scheduled for 30 January 2019

## PART E: CURRENT SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR SERVICE AREAS

### 4. EDUCATION – STRATEGY AND SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS

**Self-assessment**    **Good**

6.1) There are sufficient school places, with appropriate school place planning,

6.2) There is a high proportion of children attending a school which is good or better.

6.3) The LA promotes high standards in schools in their area. Strategies, support and challenge are effective in raising standards in schools and other providers and the LA has clearly defined its monitoring, challenge, support and intervention roles. There are regular meetings between schools and the School Improvement Service to review performance and provide challenge and support. Evidence of action where appropriate to tackle issues within schools, including the use of formal powers.

6.4) There is evidence of the effectiveness of support for schools (including Governor Services, Education Welfare, Educational Psychology, Safeguarding and other advice and support).

6.5) Available funding, including DSG and pupil premium, are used to effect improvement, including on areas of greatest need.

***Summary and evidence:***

6.1 - 94% of pupils gain their first-choice place and 98.9% gain one of their first three choices this is significantly better than national and regional averages. Devon has the lowest rate of admission appeals in the South West<sup>1</sup>, with only 0.8% of admissions resulting in an appeal being lodged and 0.5% of admissions resulting in an appeal being heard. This is significantly better than the national picture with 4% of admissions resulting in an appeal being lodged and 2.9% of admissions resulting in an appeal being heard.

Early Years sufficiency planning ensures appropriate places are available [Childcare Sufficiency report 2018 –](#)

[SEN strategic review](#) of provision shows clear planning for SEN places. Delivery however is sometimes delayed through the Free school delivery model.

6.2 - 86.2% of children attend schools rated good or better – in line with national figures and better than figures across the South West. This does however reflect a drop from previous years and is the result of some large secondary schools moving from good to RI. The downward trend is of concern and the revised School Improvement Programme is being piloted as part of the Devon Schools Alliance work.

6.3 - EAP – Excellence for All Program - <https://www.babcockldp.co.uk/improving-schools-settings/improving-schools/excellence-for-all-programme-primary>

Defines the current school improvement offer and is available to all schools. The revised version ONE DEVON is being launched this autumn. The Devon Schools Alliance brings together the LA,

our commissioned provider Babcock LDP, the Teaching Schools and the Diocese on a regular basis to work on strategic basis to deliver school improvement across the county. In addition, they review information held across the organisations, identify schools in need or hotspots and co-ordinate support for schools across the county and MAT areas.

Through the contract the LA still employs School Improvement Officers and Advisors, this means we know our schools well and are able to offer timely support. Letters of concern and formal warning notices are used but are rarely necessary.

Champion All Our Children - <http://www.devon.gov.uk/championing-all-our-children-2014.pdf>  
Sets out of current vision of support for all children. This is being revised this year.

#### 6.4 – Effective support for Schools

Through the joint venture with Babcock LDP the Local Authority has been able to sustain effective support for schools across a wide range of areas including governance.

<https://www.babcockldp.co.uk/improving-schools-settings/improving-schools>. This support was recognised in a recent independent review as shown below.

*“Unlike many Local Authorities across the country, Devon Council continues to commission support services such as EPs, EWS, safeguarding in education, EMAS, sensory support services, literacy and numeracy leads and school improvement. Their work is focused on four key priority areas identified by the Local Authority: narrowing the gap, safeguarding, inclusion and governance. The Local Authority Management Board oversees the effectiveness of the support services delivered by Babcock.*

*The Local Authority has introduced a new governance structure of boards and strategic groups, which provides a good opportunity for partners to be fully engaged. They have a strong membership from across the Local Authority, schools, multi academy trusts, teaching schools and support services (Babcock).*

*There are good partnership arrangements of schools (primary and secondary associations, special schools SENient) and SEN networks for school SENCOs. These are appropriate forums to debate local strategic and operational matters .....This means that Devon Council is able to maintain good level of communication with all schools in Devon.”*

Overall, governance in Devon schools is strong, almost all governors of maintained Devon schools have accessed high quality training, support and advice which leads to more effective governance. This training is also available to Academies. Ofsted comments in inspection reports recognise the effectiveness of governance and very rarely does Ofsted comment on weak governance - even when schools are judged RI. Regular governor meeting, online training combined with weekly updates from the Devon Association of Governors ensure regular and accurate updates.

<https://dagdevon.uk/>

An area of concern is the number of children registered as Electively Home Educated (EHE). The number of children who, at some point during the academic year were registered as EHE has more than doubled since 2014 (as shown in the table below). The biggest percentage increase has been seen in KS4 where numbers have risen from 139 in 2014 to 407 in 2018.

Academic Year	Number of registered EHE students	% of total school population
2013/14	750	0.4
2014/15	766	0.4

2015/16	1018	1.1
2016/17	1275	1.4
2017/18	1588	1.6

The most common reason provided for children being Electively Home Educated is Lifestyle/Cultural/Philosophical, however 272 families cited dissatisfaction with the school environment as the reason for becoming EHE and a further 148 families said emotional or behaviour challenges were the cause.

Last year approximately 400 children returned to school following relatively short periods of time as EHE. The Devon Inclusion Project is seeking to identify the underlying causes for this type of move to EHE in order to try and ensure young people are appropriately supported in school.

#### 6.5 Effective use of DSG.

Average funding through the DSG means Devon receives £304 per pupil less than the national average. However, the council works closely with the Schools Funding Group and the Devon Schools Alliance to ensure this is used effectively. Commissioning is outcomes based and focused on 4 specific areas. Safeguarding, narrowing the gap, quality and leadership and inclusion. Each workstream is monitored by senior leaders on spotlight (6 weekly) and quarterly contract reports and meetings. Amendments are made to arrangements as needed. In addition, the partnership board review outcomes on an annual basis. Support linked to SEN is also reported to SEND Improvement Board. Quarterly Education performance reports are also monitored by Children's Scrutiny.

To ensure the effective use Pupil Premium, reviews are offered to schools. These can be undertaken at the request of the LA or traded by schools. The virtual school monitors the use of pupil premium plus payments and this is only released when the PEP has been assessed as good quality.

6.6) The LA fosters an inclusive and aspirational environment, ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training in schools and other providers that meets the needs of all pupils. This includes appropriate provision for excluded children; children with special educational needs; and children who may have English as an additional language.

6.6) There is evidence of an effective 'narrowing the gap' strategy to improve educational outcomes for vulnerable students.

**Summary and evidence:**

6.6 Championing All Our Children - <http://www.devon.gov.uk/championing-all-our-children-2014.pdf> . Defines the LA vision for all children and this is supported by our Fair Access policy - [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CBlu7UM\\_pTYJX5Xgaahwk3cZ89Xklka1/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CBlu7UM_pTYJX5Xgaahwk3cZ89Xklka1/view) .

In recent years, Devon has seen an increase the number of permanent exclusions which is being addressed though the school and multi-agency Devon inclusion project, led by the LA. This has included a protocol to prevent exclusion for Children in Care and an agreement based around Early Help to reduce all exclusions. It also involves a pilot between 10 schools to form a localised solution to support a no exclusion policy and an interactive toolkit to support schools. Whilst yet to fully launch; the work completed to date has seen permanent and fixed term exclusion in the academic year 17/18 reduce from the levels seen in 16/17.

A newly formed medical workstream bringing together Public Health Nursing, Education welfare, CCG, Hospital School, CAMHs and Early Help amongst others to secure better ways of providing early intervention, particularly in relation to anxiety-based cases.

The LAs provision for pupils excluded from school is sourced through a Multi Academy AP Trust. The quality of provision in the trust has been a significant cause of concern and has limited the placement of pupils causing increased pressure in the system. The Trust has now been re- brokered to an experienced AP group who currently have outstanding schools.

6.7 Outcomes for disadvantaged children are in line with or just below the national average and there is a significant gap between boys' and girls' attainment and progress. Addressing these issues is part of the narrowing the gap workstream within the Babcock contract and identified as a priority for improvement.

Provisional tables for 2018. The previous years National values are shown in brackets in blue, 2018 provisional figures if available in green.

	All	Boys	Girls	Disadvantaged
Good level of Development	71.8 (70.7)	65.1	79.1	55.2
Phonics	83.8 (81)	79.7	88.1	70.8
KS1 reading (teacher assessed)	74.7 (76)	70.5	79.2	58.1
KS1 Writing (teacher assessed)	69 (68)	62.1	76.4	50.7
KS1 Maths (teacher assessed)	74.6 (75)	74.2	75.1	56.6
KS2 Reading, Writing, Maths	64 (64)	60 (60)	68 (68)	47.2
English (ave Eng and Lit) 5+	60.4 (50.1)			44.81
Maths 5+	48.1 (40.3)			31.68
Progress 8	-0.03 (0.13)			-0.39 (-0.4)
Attainment 8				
A level Ave point score	33.44(31.14)			

## 5. EARLY HELP

*This section is taken from the Early Help Service Transformation Maturity Model - DCLG (November 2016).*

**The Devon Early help maturity matrix has been completed and provides detailed analysis of the service complete with evidence links. A summary of the key points are provided in the sections below**

### Self-assessment Requires Improvement to be good

#### 8.1) The family experience of transformed services

To assess the maturity of the impact of services for a family, we recommend local areas use evidence sources that capture the following:

The extent to which services are integrated around families – and having one person focusing on the family rather than several (one worker).

A recognition from services that individuals are operating in the context of a family and so need to be dealt with as such (one family).

Clarity of focus across all relevant services on what the family needs to change and a common endeavour around families (one plan).

#### **Summary and evidence:**

*Families now experience fewer “touch points” The family knows who their keyworker is and for those families there is a clear family plan.*

- All partners can access the Right for Children (multi-agency electronic case recording system) to share family information and support coordinated activity. The use of the system has significantly increased but is not yet fully embedded with all partners. Overall there are 3,653 current user accounts with an average 122 new user accounts created each month since the start of 2018.
- 93% of cases on Right for Children have a nominated Lead Practitioner. For those families with a Lead Practitioner there is a clear family plan that the family has developed with the Lead Practitioner. The family plan includes goals and milestones - including getting back into work. Children’s Centres and some other providers additionally make good use of the Outcome Star and increased use of worry scales on Right for Children.
- Pinpoint is a web-based community directory for families to identify local support and provision. Some services offer support for families to access the information they need.

#### 8.2) Leadership

To assess the maturity of the leadership strand, we recommend that local areas provide evidence of:

a clear focus on services that best meet local need

a visible commitment from leaders across partners to outcome-focussed, whole family working, which may include collaborative commissioning processes and shared or pooled budget arrangements

an understanding of demand management, using evidence and analysis to anticipate and manage future demand locally

an appreciation of links to wider local and national transformation programmes, including adult social care and health integration and reform of children's services

**Summary and evidence:**

Overall governance for the children and families' agenda is provided by the Devon Children and Families Partnership (DCFP) Executive (successor to the now stood down LSCB). The DCFP Executive is made up of senior leaders from core partners. Specific Early Help governance arrangements are in place through the Early Help Improvement Board. This sub group of the DCFP has a broad strategic membership with members from across all partnerships including community groups. Its senior officers are committed to leading Early Help transformation. In order to drive forward improvement in certain areas, subgroups have been set up to specifically look at Data, Inclusion in schools and Multi Agency Quality Assurance.

In addition, the Children and Families Partnership Commissioning Group provides the leadership for Devon's joint commissioning strategy and delivery of commissioning intentions. There is a strong track record of focusing on outcomes through our commissioning processes; with some good examples of co-production and engagement with children, young people, families and providers. The STP transformation programmes have determined, from needs analysis and engagement, phase one priorities of communication, emotional health and wellbeing and asthma. The focus in these areas is to strengthen delivery at a system level and to shape future service design and commissioning intentions. The Commissioning Group of the DCFP evaluate the STP footprint and the 3 LA boundaries asking the "do it once or do it three times?" question for areas of strategic change.

There is a better understanding of the Early Help system, and breadth and knowledge is growing. Links with the Safer Devon Partnership have been further strengthened, for example community risk plans are jointly constructed.

Joint strategic needs assessments are used routinely to evidence the needs of the population, including thematic needs assessments which allow a 'deep dive' in to particular areas of need to better inform commissioning of services.

The 'Early Help for Families in Devon: Outcomes Framework' sets out how families who need support will be identified, and what a good result or positive outcomes for families looks like. The outcomes framework is framed around six themes: crime and anti-social behaviour, education and attainment, specific support need, work and finance, being safe, and physical and mental health. A performance book at county, and local level supports this work.

Locality Partnerships provide governance at a local management level. The relationship between the Early Help Improvement Board and the Locality Partnerships is developing well and there are many good examples of partnership working at a local level. Attendance at partnership meetings is good. Practitioners are committed to working together to achieve a common purpose; however, whilst developed, this is not yet embedded across all agencies. The in-sourcing of Public health Nursing is an opportunity to further strengthen leadership and ownership of early help across the health economy.

Work is ongoing to embed consistent language to describe Devon's Early Help Offer and the use of Right for Children and associated systems, tools, outcomes and processes. One Minute Guides to

Early Help, Outcome Plans and Right for Children have been produced to support practitioners with basic information and signposting. Joint working with adults and newly appointed DCFP partnership managers have supported this work.

### 8.3) Strategy

To assess the maturity of the strategy strand we recommend that there is evidence of clear strategic commitments by all local partners to:

- deliver integrated family-focussed, outcome-based services
- commission services based on sound evidence of what works, working collaboratively with partners and service users on service design and delivery
- prioritise and commission services that manage future demand using data to measure and forecast demand on services
- use cost benefit analysis to understand the effectiveness of local services and act on the results

#### ***Summary and evidence:***

A whole family approach is evident in Devon's Early Help Offer and the commissioning of some services provided by local partners. Strengthening the Early Help system is a priority for the Devon Children and Families Partnership, and strategies relating to children and families align with the partnership's broader strategic delivery Plan. They also run as the golden thread through the local areas approach to improving outcomes for children and families.

Key partners have a commitment to integrated, whole family working and a recognition of an outcome focused approach to family working is evident but not yet consistent across services. The Troubled Families Programme and principles are included in Devon's overarching Early Help Programme, rather than a stand-alone programme.

There are good examples of joint commissioning focused on outcomes, and there is a broad spectrum of contracted and local plans in place for services to deliver Early Help, assess needs of children and young people and engage families with programmes of support. However, a strategy has not yet been described for wider system level commissioning to ensure that all partner organisations deliver coherent joined up services for children, young people and families. This is emergent in the STP children's mandate and will be resolved by the development of the Devon Children and Families Partnership Plan (publication April 2019).

The Early Help performance book has been developed which aims to evidence the impact of Early Help at a strategic, local and organisational level. Work has been commissioned to make all the performance data available via Power BI reports. This will mean that organisations and locality teams have access to their own geographical data to ensure local issues are spotted and addressed through locality plans. This strategy will also provide additional evidence of how partners are implementing the new Working Together 2018 guidance.



#### 8.4) Culture

To assess the maturity of the culture strand local areas should look for evidence that:

the principles that underpin meaningful system and cultural change are communicated clearly across partners and to the community in a way that is accessible and meaningful

staff are taking personal responsibility and ownership to ensure they work across boundaries to support families effectively

##### ***Summary and evidence:***

There is a shared vision and ambition from DCFP Executive, and from services working with children and families in relation to strengthening the Early Help system. Whilst this is communicated to staff, and across local organisations, this is yet to be seen consistently in practice and is not yet fully embedded.

There is a strong commitment to embed a strengths-based approach across the partnership. This has begun to roll out widely, but further work is needed to embed this as common practice.

Culturally there is still a lack of confidence in managing higher levels of risk within the Early Help system. However, there is an improved understanding of roles and responsibilities in some agencies and more generally there is much less resistance to change across agencies, who are very well motivated to improve outcomes for families.

Communication about Early Help has improved and publications including Early Help leaflets and newsletters along with multi-agency roadshows and website improvements have helped ensure better awareness of expectations and direction of travel. A newsletter has also been introduced.

Innovation and collaboration is encouraged and there is growing resilience to change. There are some real champions and examples of good practice in schools and across different services which need to be communicated more regularly. The subscription rates for the new newsletter for services and agencies are encouraging with 142 signing up in the first couple of weeks.

### 8.5) Workforce Development

To assess the maturity of the workforce development strand areas should look for evidence that frontline staff have:

- a clear understanding of the principles of family working (family intervention factors) – a focus on a whole family assessment and family plan and an understanding of the impact of their work

- access to the right training at the right time

- the ability to use sound evidence-based, outcome-focussed practice and learning from their own experience as well as from peers

#### ***Summary and evidence:***

Evidence based practice is emerging and there is shared training between professionals, the emerging approach to quality assurance in early help will enable us to better evidence the impact of training and development and the effect it has on performance across the county. It is important to note that our rate of referral into statutory social work, while increased, continues to be lower than the national and statistical neighbour rates which suggests that early help is successfully preventing escalations into statutory services

The DCFP Executive has identified a need to focus on workforce development and is committed to developing opportunities that include the voluntary and community sector. Training themes identified by the Locality Partnerships are based on local needs and determined by each area. Practitioner forums with representation from many agencies are in place in each of the local areas (North, Exeter, East/Mid, South/West) for those working directly with families. They provide opportunities to share knowledge, best practice and learning. The impact of the joint training programmes particularly evident through our Domestic Violence (as part of operation Encompass) and Prevent training.

Multi-agency work teams are developing improved Early Help practice in schools to support a reduction in exclusions and poor school attendance. Almost all schools have engaged in Early Help for Mental Health training. Many staff across children's community services are trained in the THRIVE approach to support emotional development and wellbeing of children. Inappropriate referral rates to MASH have decreased across all agencies but especially schools. The threshold tool is currently being updated.

Multi-agency training encompasses information about Early Help. Dates/venues are advertised on the website for multi-agency practitioners. VOYC deliver approved safeguarding training to the voluntary and community sector which also encompasses Early Help. Over 500 partner representatives attended the Early Help Roadshows held this autumn.

Job Centre Plus delivered Welfare Reform upskilling events to key workers across Devon. Presentations have been delivered to children's centres and private child minders, the purpose of which is to increase knowledge of how to support and signpost families. Job shadows have been undertaken by staff across services.

Devon is a partner in the South West Reducing Parental Conflict Contract programme.

## 8.6) Delivery Structures and processes

To assess the maturity of the delivery structures and processes strand, areas should look for evidence of:

- a clear commitment by partners to deliver integrated working structures with sound evidence based practice in place

- shared ambitions for outcomes for families, using the local Troubled Families Outcome Plan

- delivery structures that enable staff from different disciplines to work together to shared priorities and outcomes

- high-quality whole family assessments in a shared format across partners

- agreed data sharing protocols supported at strategic and operational level

- shared data systems enabling identification and prioritisation of families needing help, monitoring of family progress and outcomes and cost benefit analysis of interventions

### ***Summary and evidence:***

Professionals from different disciplines/organisations work together to achieve specific goals for complex families. There is evidence of shared commitment to analyse need/ deliver an integrated response and measure impact and early work to develop systems to support this.

There is evidence of shared commitment to analyse need, deliver an integrated response, measure impact and to further develop systems to support Early Help. Work to deliver services through shared data and case management systems from lead core partners is developing well. Right for Children, our system which holds family information and supports coordinated activity, is operational and can be accessed by a wide range of practitioners from different organisations. The system supports effective data sharing between professionals. Recent improvements will allow partners to drill down in to their organisational data and review hotspots by post code or district.

Devon's Early Help Assessment provides a single agreed tool to complete high quality, whole family assessments, electronically enabled by the Right for Children system. Enhancements to this system will shortly provide improved reporting and monitoring features that can be accessed through a BI interface.

Working Practice Agreements support effective data sharing. There is a clear understanding and confidence of information sharing between professionals, resulting in fewer agencies raising issues (GDPR temporarily slowed progress in this respect).

Locality Partnerships provide a multi-agency structure to coordinate approaches, these are aimed at managers to share best practice and improve service practice. Practitioner forums are in place and led by locality officers for those working directly with families. These enable practitioners to discuss any issues or obtain support and advice on cases.

Locality Early Help Hubs in four locality areas, support a centrally retained MASH and improved access to Early Help. Development in this area is still needed to further improve access to Early Help and reduce inappropriate contact with the MASH. This would provide a more efficient and cost-effective service whilst improving outcomes for children, young people and their families

***Summary and evidence:***

Overall Devon's Early Help Maturity Matrix has moved to Developing with some level of Maturing in all elements. Areas for improvement are covered in the Early Help Improvement Plan and the Troubled Families Recovery Plan, which is monitored by the multi-agency Early Help Improvement Board. Progress is monitored with the Early Help Performance Workbook, which is being developed further.

## 7. SEND

### Self-assessment Requires Improvement to be good

The Local Area can demonstrate its compliance with the Children and Families Act through its JSNA, SEND SEF and SEND strategy, which together evidence that:

18.1) The special educational needs / disabilities of children, young people and young adults aged 0-25 are identified and assessed early and efficiently, in partnership with families, health and social care

18.2) Co-production with parents, children, young people and young adults is embedded in all planning, review and improvement processes related to SEND outcomes and that

18.3) Agreed outcomes address individual needs in preparing for adulthood, promoting life skills and opportunities to enable independence, further training and employment

#### **Summary and evidence:**

The SEND Improvement Plan and Strategy (2017 to 2020) was created in full collaboration and consultation with parents/carers and young people and includes family performance indicators which were created by families linked to their vision.

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/supportforschools/services-and-contacts/send>. The strategy covers priorities for Education, Health and Care and includes links to advice and a graduated response toolkit for use by schools.

Partnership working is well established via the SEND Improvement Board and this includes representatives from parent and carer groups sitting on the board and on the workstreams. Local SENCO forums and the SENTIENT TRUST ensure good collaboration with schools. SEN Advisors support work in school and monitor the implementation of the principles of the SEND code of practice. Their work includes visits to follow on any complaints made by parents about a failure to meet the requirements in the EHCP plan etc.

Co-production is an integral part of the SEND strategy and clearly evident in strategic leadership however at individual level for children with EHCPs there is still some inconsistency. Parents report a clear improvement and commitment to a partnership approach to the SEND Board. Devon's early response to the 2014 reforms was too low-key; progress significantly accelerated from 2016, with interruption to progress on ASC through the re-procurement of children's community health services in 2018. This has left a powerful legacy of parental (and to some extent professional) dissatisfaction

There is some good evidence of early and efficient identification of SEN for example;

- in schools, through use of the graduated response, the number of pupils receiving SEN support has risen
- in 0-5, where multi agency assessment and partnership working is clearly working to support children with complex needs
- for children with sensory needs where work with parents has been undertaken to improve and align services.

There are however still some areas of need, for example ASC, when although identification can be timely, there are delays in the assessment processes. The DEAP project in Devon has ensured a level of awareness in schools about ASC and we have seen increased identification of these

children. However, the ASC pathway in particular has been adversely affected by the re-procurement of children's community health services.

There has been exponential growth in the number of requests for statutory assessment. 1161 EHCPs were issued between Jan 2018 and Nov 2018 (compared to 263 in 2015). The statutory 20 week timeframe was not met in the majority of cases. The timeliness of EHCP assessments therefore requires significant improvement. Additional staffing within the Local Authority and other services has been allocated and an action plan is in place to deliver this across all agencies.

Escalation processes to address the timeliness of professional advice resulted in a significant improvement in response times. (In 17/18, 95% of professional advice was late; by December 2018 this reduced to 25%, with only 12 outstanding late pieces of EP advice in Jan 2019.)

Clear targets and milestones for timeliness have been set, predicated upon:

- the team issuing 35 plans per week. This is based on our current delivery rate and analysis of capacity within the team. There is confidence that we will maintain this figure.
- since September 2018, on average 17 assessments per week have been accepted to proceed to full assessment.

All overdue assessments in the system (existing and those generated over the coming months due to the current delays) will be cleared by Oct 2019. Over that period, the balance between those issued on time and late will obviously improve as the number of overdue plans reduces week on week.

Date	Target % meeting statutory timescales	Total plans issued	Plans issued on time per week
Dec-18 to Mar-19	30%	490	10
Apr-19 to Jul-19	45%	595	16
Aug-19 to Nov-19	80%	630	28





A multi-agency team conducts a bi-monthly deep dive into SEND cases, these in-depth audits provide a window into the system to facilitate wide systemic learning and development. The number of cases is small but there is demonstrable evidence of improving quality standards. Weekly moderation is in place which identifies and tracks quality across all parts of the system with feedback to operational leads. We intend to strengthen our scrutiny of the impact of actions agreed from moderation and deep dives.

Educational outcomes for children with SEND have been consistently above the national average in all age ranges. Outcomes that demonstrate preparation for adulthood are evident in some EHCPs but there are inconsistencies. There has been considerable work done with local FE Colleges to improve the provision and opportunities for 16-25 learners with EHCPs (growth in numbers from 350 to 543 in last two academic years). While the provision has been developed to meet needs there is still further work to do ensure the outcomes for young people prepare them sufficiently for adulthood.

A detailed multi-agency improvement plan outlines the key actions being taken. A “Back to Basics” review is planned for January to clearly measure the impact of the work and projects to date and identify key areas of improvement moving forward.

## PART F: PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Attach three performance scorecards.

1. Children's services – this should be presented using the Chat Tool for your most recent Annex A report.	 2018 ChAT (ILACS v3.2).xlsb
2. SEND – attached your local authority scorecard.	 SEN Scorecard  2017-18 SEN annual report part A and B FI
3. Educational outcomes for vulnerable children – attach your local authority scorecard.	 CSLT Performan Framework

## PART G: REQUEST FOR REGIONAL OR PARTNER IN PRACTICE SUPPORT

*Include here any request for support from within the region or the partner in practice programme.*

*Please describe the focus, scale and expected outcomes of the requested support.*

*Please indicate if the request has been ongoing or is awaiting confirmation.*

A request for support from the Partners in Practice programme has been made and has been recently discussed with local representatives of the DfE.

The four areas identified for additional support are:

**Disabled Children's Service** – consideration of the process of assessment and resource allocation, together with how finance-only cases are monitored and reviewed.

**Quality Assurance Framework** – further development of the framework to focus more on the qualitative experiences of children and understanding what is making a positive difference in order to inform the development and improvement of services.



**Early Help** – accelerate deeper integration, to further strengthen multi-agency partnership, increased uptake of the early help assessment, and a fully consistent application of thresholds across the partnership.

**Care Leavers** – build on the improvements made in the past 18 months to further develop the service in line with current best practice.

## FINAL WORDS

Ofsted Annual Conversation November 2017

“...you recognise that to achieve your clear ambition to ensure that children in Devon receive a consistently good or better service, a wholesale cultural change is needed. You noted a positive shift in organisational culture that has accelerated due to increased stability within the senior leadership team. You anticipate that this will continue and you have recently appointed a permanent Assistant Director of Children’s Services who is due to take up the post in December 2018. However, you identify that this positive cultural change is recent and does not yet result in consistently good frontline practice throughout the county”

One year on, the ambition remains the same and good progress has been made. The recent acceleration in improvement is recognised in the Focused Visit letter October 2018.

“Following a period of changes to the organisational structure and senior management turnover, the local authority has recently made purposeful and well targeted progress in improving services for its care leavers. Corporate parenting is now a key strength in Devon and leaders have also ensured that this has been embraced by partner agencies. Senior leaders have good awareness of the key strengths and weaknesses in the service”

We anticipate more challenging feedback in our SEND inspection letter, which of course is an area, not a Local Authority, inspection. Our starting point in SEND in 2016 was very weak and there is still much for us to do, as a Local Authority and as a partnership. We are confident that the plans we have in place will continue the accelerated improvement we started in 2016.

Consistently good frontline practice throughout the county? Not yet.

Ofsted Annual Conversation November 2017

“You have identified that this (case management) system does not create the conditions for good practice to flourish and the council has commissioned a new electronic recording system which will go live in January 2018. You anticipate that this will be fully functional within six months”

For six months, January to June 2018, we moved resource in order to accelerate progress on the implementation of the CMS, a purposeful and calculated strategic risk management strategy. In that period, we relied on local systems to monitor and report on a narrow range of key performance measures. Not surprisingly this period saw a drop in our performance against some key performance indicators. The drop will not be entirely recovered by year end.

One year on, the implementation date has been put back to January 2019 and we anticipate being fully functional within 6 months! Meanwhile, “Senior leaders have invested in an interactive and user-friendly performance information tool that can be accessed by all practitioners in order to scrutinise performance across the service” (Focused Visit letter, October 2018).

Devon has a history of good performance in almost all aspects of education. However, the current educational landscape, along with national changes to funding, has reduced the levers for change the LA can utilise to bring about improvement. Whilst still working in close partnership with

schools and regional colleagues, there is a growing concern that standards in attainment and Ofsted outcomes will not be sustained.

Devon has very strong and sustained performance in adoption. In recognition, Devon is hosting the Regional Adoption Agency for four peninsula local authorities (Somerset, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay). The RAA went live at the beginning of October 2018. The fostering service has successfully undertaken a very challenging restructure of foster carer fees this year, evidence of its significantly increased confidence and competence.

Last year we identified two areas that required significant improvement to be good, early help and quality assurance. Both have been the focus of determined and tenacious management action at all levels and across the partnership, resulting in strong progress. We were delighted to get some DfE Early Adopters resource which we are using to work with Research in Practice to further develop authentic, systemic multi-agency learning that will sustain. We think this will give us something that is genuinely innovative.

Last year partnership and commissioning were both self-assessed as RI because whole system thinking, culture and practice was under-developed. As a consequence, those things that are dependent upon strong partnership and whole system practice were inevitably also RI. Again, determined and tenacious action by leaders across the system has achieved step change. The recent joint commissioning of children's community health services was described as 'ground-breaking', the Devon STP is nationally recognised as one of the national system leaders, with strong leadership of the children and young people's agenda and Devon is a recognised early adopter of the Wood reforms. We have published our Safeguarding Arrangements and are thereby fully compliant with Working Together 2018.

We self-assessed leadership and governance as good last year; these have continued to be strengths and we have secured further investment in the third and fourth tier infrastructure. In the coming year a focus for the DCS and lead member is the relationship between services and the parents of children with SEND.

Devon continues to be very proud of all staff and managers in Children's Services and in all the support services that have contributed to the excellent progress that has been made.