

Somerset Sufficiency Statement for Children Looked After and Care Leavers, 2016-2019: Action Plan

Actions	Relevant Challenge in Sufficiency Statement	Action owner	Success measures (Data for measures in bold is shown in the Dashboard)	BRAG Status (July 2017)	Progress commentary	
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)						
1	Commission a specialist CSE service in Avon and Somerset, covering Bristol, Bath, North East Somerset, South Gloucestershire, North Somerset and Somerset (including needs of any UASC under 16, who may be targeted for trafficking, or at risk of CSE). Ensure that the service specification is informed by the needs and requirements of Somerset, to work alongside practitioners, and not to be a standalone 'refer to specialist' service.	Challenge 2	Louise Palmer, Strategic Commissioner	West of England CSE project delivers a service specification and eventual award to a specialist agency who will raise awareness of CSE across Somerset and support practitioners to have the skill and expertise to work with victims and their families. Incidences of CSE are reduced.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A competitive tendering process has recently been completed, led by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). • The successful bidder is Barnardo's, who have made contact to implement their set-up plan. • The new service will commence on 1 October 2017.
Commissioning						
2	Commitment to market development activity to ensure providers prioritise Somerset children in Somerset provisions.	Challenge 4	Louise Palmer, Strategic Commissioner	Increased engagement with fostering and residential providers, building stronger relationships and ongoing dialogue.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of visits to Fostering providers booked to discuss capacity and barriers to effective working. • Fostering Provider event booked for July 18th - focussing on stability and capacity. • Regular contact made with a number of residential providers to solve problems and progress work.

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3	Produce and deliver a new Quality in Care framework, embedding a systemic approach to ensuring the quality of placements for children and young people.	Challenge 4	Louise Palmer, Strategic Commissioner	Framework is drafted, consulted on and in place by March 2018.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researching current practice within the placements team to evaluate quality in residential placements.
Early Help						
4	Establish early help hubs in local communities that offer multiagency integrated services to identify and support children and families who need additional help and can intervene quickly and effectively. Deliver a successful Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Troubled Families Programme that is embedded in the mainstream delivery of the early help hubs.	Challenge 5	Philippa Granthier, Assistant Director - Commissioning and Performance	Increase in children, young people and families having their needs met early before they require specialist help.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme of work established initially including integration of getset (children's centre services and family support work at L2 and L3) with public health nursing services (health visitors and school nurses) to be in place by April 2018.
Edge of Care						
5	Develop an Adolescent Support Strategy to improve 'edge of care' services and place adolescent preventative support in the family.	Challenge 1	Lise Bird, Strategic Manager - Prevention / Emma Good, Senior Commissioner	Strategy document to be completed by end December 2017.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope of adolescent strategy agreed by Children's Service Senior Management Team. Focus on tier 3 intervention services for families and young people. Strategy governance through Early Help Board. Strategy deadline December 2017.

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Emotional and Mental Health					
6	Complete the ongoing review of our current services for children with emotional and mental health needs, as well as those at risk of or victims of abuse.	Challenge 2	Louise Palmer, Strategic Commissioner	CAMHS transformation prioritises the emotional and mental health needs of CLA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of workshops have been completed to map emotional wellbeing and mental health intervention services in Somerset. • Partners have produced a mental health toolkit which can be found online: http://www.cypsomersethealth.org/index.php?site=mental_health_toolkit • Kooth online counselling service has been commissioned by the CCG and is currently being piloted to a limited audience.
7	Ensure appropriate health and social care placements and properly skilled staff for children and young people with high level mental and emotional health needs. A gap has been identified for those young people coming out of tier 4 specialist mental health provision where the level of need is high and requires high level skills and competence for ongoing/daily management of need.	Challenge 4	Julie Skorupka, Strategic Manager - Children Looked After and Leaving Care Services	<p>Improvement in the emotional and behavioural health of CLA (SDQ score).</p> <p>Increase in jointly funded placements between children's social care, education and CCG, reflecting the need to jointly support our most vulnerable children looked after.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Manager and 3 Social Workers have been recruited to the Emotional Health and Wellbeing team. • New Psychologist has recently been interviewed and will start with us in September 2017. Recruitment of second psychologist underway. • Currently undertaking work on a re-design and improvement of the services that meet the emotional health and wellbeing needs of our CLA within Children's Social Care. • In discussion with colleagues in CAMHS to develop a more joined up service. Forthcoming meeting planned at senior manager level with our Deputy Director and the equivalent in CAMHS. • Actively involved in the Health Task Group and increasing the use of Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs) among CLA. • Educational Psychologist currently seconded to the team is undertaking a specific piece of work on SDQs.

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Pathways to Independence: P2i					
8	Work within the P2i contract, with district councils, key stakeholders and housing providers to implement the outcome based homelessness prevention service for young people 16 to 25 years.	Challenge 1	Emma Good, Senior Commissioner	Reduction in homelessness amongst young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P2i contracts issued and running at capacity in all areas of the County Jan 2017. • All young people successfully transitioned over to new services as required. • P2i Allocation Panel now in place in all areas. • P2i Hubs for young people now in all areas of the county. • P2i Housing Prevention worker posts are being recruited through District Councils. • Outcomes based contract management in place for all areas. • Wider strategic commissioning work being undertaken to look at synergies with Adults Housing Services for future joint commissioning possibilities.
9	Effective pathway planning and preventative support for each and every young person as they approach the time when leaving care becomes a reality for them.	Challenge 3	Julie Skorupka, Strategic Manager - Children Looked After and Leaving Care Services	<p>Increase in the number/percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation.</p> <p>Minimise the number of care leavers coming into the P2i service as an emergency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increased number of pathway plans are being completed and to an improved quality. • Weekly tracking of our older young people is proving successful in reducing the occurrence of emergency situations. • We continue to promote available Early Help services with/for our young people and in consultation with them. • Our Leaving Care teams are now supported by 2 Social Workers.

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Permanence						
10	Implement new arrangements for the delivery and management of the adoption service via the regionalisation work, which supports the improvement journey of our Adoption and special guardianship support service.	Challenge 2	Becky Hopkins, Strategic Manager - Child Placements and Resources	Working with Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Councils, Families for Children and Barnardo's to establish a single Regional Adoption Agency (known as Adopt SW) to be operational by March 2018.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of work ongoing to move to an RAA LA hosted model by April 2018. Full business case to be developed by October 2018. • Move to joint Adoption Panels by October 2017. • Progress of work monitored by the Governance Board.

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11	<p>Review the effectiveness of our permanence arrangements for all CLA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embed good practice in relation to the early consideration of permanence options and subsequent achievement of permanence without unnecessary drift or delay; - Increase staying put arrangements. 	Challenge 2	Becky Hopkins, Strategic Manager - Child Placements and Resources	<p>Increase in the percentage of children ceasing to be looked after due to adoption, special guardianship or successful return home.</p> <p>Increase in the percentage of permanent fostering matches where this is the care plan.</p> <p>Increase in the number/percentage of care leavers remaining with their former foster carer beyond age 18 ('Staying Put').</p> <p>Improved placement stability - Reduction in the number/percentage of CLA with 3 or more placements in a year.</p> <p>Maintenance of performance re. adoption timescales.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanence pathway and workshops reviewed and revised. Delivering 4 workshops targeted at SWs and TMs between June 2017 and October 2017. • 24 children placed for adoption in 2016/17. 40% of these children were placed in early permanence (Fostering for Adoption) placements. • Performance in relation to adoption timescales remains good. • From 01.04.16 – 31.03.17 29 permanent matches (49 children) have been presented to Permanence Panel. Of the 49 children, 20 were in sibling groups. • 66 SGOs granted in 2016/17 compared to 44 in 2015/16. Of the 66 29 of these children were children who had been in care. • In 2015/16 13.3% of children experienced three or more placements, compared with 11% nationally. At the end of 2016/17 the target of 11% was met. The target for 2017/18 is 11%. YTD target is 2.5% and current performance is 1.2%.

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Placements						
12	Enhance the support package for in-house foster carers to improve both placement stability and enable a broader range of complex needs to be met in local foster care placements.	Challenge 3	Becky Hopkins, Strategic Manager - Child Placements and Resources	<p>Grow and diversify the skill, capability and capacity of our in-house foster carers, particularly in relation to emotional resilience.</p> <p>Keep sibling groups together.</p> <p>Improve placement stability - Increase in the percentage of CLA remaining in the same placement for two years or more.</p> <p>Reduction in number of children placed out of County or in residential provision where this is not their assessed need.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of children looked after for 2.5 years who have been in the same placement for 2 years. Performance in relation to this indicator remains at 56/57%. Currently this is 57.9% which is 88 children out of 152. A new training programme for newly approved foster carers has been launched and is based on a learning sets model which has worked successful for the already embedded KEEP training programme. Work has been undertaken with a group of foster carers to review the support offer to carers including the fees and allowances. A proposal has been developed and will be presented to Cabinet in August 2017. The % of children placed 20 miles for their home address and outside Somerset is 20%. Target is 15%. This indicator is directly impacted by the lack of sufficient placements both nationally and locally.
13	Implement a new process for identifying high quality effective IFA placements by reviewing the existing IFA framework and introducing a new system and process, strengthening the links between Commissioning and the Placements Team.	Challenge 4	Louise Palmer, Strategic Commissioner	Increase in the percentage of CLA in foster placements remaining in the same placement for two years or more.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peninsula Framework re-tender is being worked on now, due to deliver a new framework in April 2018. Fostering event in July will look specifically at stability of placements and how to increase this. The placements team has now moved into the Commissioning Team, thereby strengthening links.

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14	Ensure specialist residential placements made outside of Somerset are a minority compared to placements provided within Somerset, ensuring most children stay in their communities and schools with the right support whenever possible.	Challenge 4	Louise Palmer, Strategic Commissioner	<p>Reduction in the number of out of area specialist residential placements as capacity to meet complex needs by the LA and its partners increases, i.e. development/transformation of CAMHS, working of Complex Needs Panel, improved Early Help position.</p> <p>Decrease in the number of CLA placed more than 20 miles from their home address.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions have started with residential providers about potential expansion of their business in Somerset. • Residential framework contracts are being developed with the Peninsula and potentially with a wider group of authorities. • A proposal is being developed to work closely with Somerset providers to provide a guaranteed supply of residential provision in Somerset.

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Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)					
15	Focused planning with partners to meet the needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking young people placed in Somerset. Supporting UASC to settle and achieve the same outcomes as all other looked after children.	Challenge 1	Julie Skorupka, Strategic Manager - Children Looked After and Leaving Care Services	Ensuring the same processes are in place - care plan and IPA for all UASC - as for all CLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently 20 UASC in Somerset and we are about to receive 4 more. Our total number is 76. • We have recruited a Team Manager and 4 social workers to this team. • We have developed our systems and processes and are working closely with health and education colleagues, including the Virtual School, to make sure that UASC are treated as CLA. • The majority of our UASC are aged 16+ and in semi-independent living accommodation. We are working closely with YMCA to ensure that the most appropriate accommodation and support in that accommodation is provided. • We are putting in place an Individual Placement Agreement (IPA) for every UASC. • We are working with Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) to ensure the small number of UASCs in foster care are having their needs met. • Information updates on UASC are being shared with partner agencies via the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).