

Appendix B – Progress of the Ofsted Continuous Improvement Action Plan Submitted to Ofsted

1. Being a Learning Organisation			
Objective /Ofsted Ref	Actions Submitted to Ofsted	Progress	Further Work
a. Develop a quality assurance framework for children's social care Ofsted Refs : 1-17	Agree a Quality Assurance framework to govern all work that is called 'Growing Quality'. Growing Quality will set out the range of improvement activity required for 2017 to monitor and drive all improvement work. All quality assurance activity will be within Growing Quality and directly feed into Learning and Development of individuals and teams. As part of the framework an audit model is to be developed that will include: - Evidence of consistent use of thresholds, improved quality of assessments, care planning and strong management oversight at all stages of child's journey. - Mentoring and learning opportunities for social workers, team managers, service managers and heads of service. - Feedback from children, young people and families that evidences the quality and positive impact of interventions Establish additional Quality Assurance posts to deliver QAIF activity and oversight.	A Quality Assurance framework called 'Growing Quality' was published in June 2017 and launched at the Social Work Conference. The framework sets out the range of improvement activity that drives all improvement work and directly feeds into the Learning and Development of individuals and teams. Within Growing Quality is the agreement that all teams and services should have protected reflective learning time once a month and resource materials are being created to help managers facilitate these, starting with the Neglect theme. As part of the framework, an audit model is being tested that: - Evidences consistent use of thresholds, improved quality of assessments, care planning and strong management oversight at all stages of child's journey. - Provides mentoring and learning opportunities for social workers, team managers, service managers and heads of service. - Incorporates feedback from children, young people and families that evidences the quality and positive impact of interventions This audit framework is currently being piloted in First Response with a focus on the quality of assessments. Growing Quality is directly supported in Social Care through two quality assurance posts that have been made permanent through CFS' funding growth bid.	The evaluation of the pilot learning audit on assessment standards will be presented to SMT on 17th August alongside recommendations for the future operating model for auditing and practice development. The agreed model for auditing and practice development will be rolled out to all service areas in CSC from September to December 2017. Themed audits will take place on a quarterly basis. We will be recruiting to CSC Quality Assurance and Practice Excellence posts over September 2017.
b. Develop a clear learning programme for social work staff - from induction to exit Ofsted Refs : 17	Use the Practice Development group to develop and embed practice standards for practice and management across the workforce. Agree shared post with Learning and Development (L&D) to support social work learning pathway Review and consider infrastructure needed to support this work Consideration given to develop 'social work academy' and 'grow your own' approaches to ensuring a sustainable workforce	The Social Work steering group has been re-established and targeted support to ASYE workers began in December 2016. A review of ASYE training was also completed in April 2107 and a new model of training is being prepared and will be presented shortly. A review of the current learning and development offer for the department is underway to inform a revised offer linked to the knowledge and skills framework for social workers. Successful bidding for EIP means that a shared post with Learning and Development has been appointed to further embed the Signs of Safety methodology. CFS also established a practice leaders group known as the Practice Development Group to help ensure staff are influencing and shaping practice development. This group has actively contributed to the development of practice standards for both practice and management across the workforce. Routine exit interviews with social workers are helping build understanding of both recruitment and retention.	A new service area, Practice Excellence, is soon to be established in the department as a result of the recent growth bid. This team will be critical to providing tailored support to the social workers workforce to strengthen practice skills and build confidence. Work with learning and development and adult services will develop an approach to building a sustainable workforce through a 'grow your own' approach. Work to develop a recruitment and retention policy for this workforce is underway.

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		The first annual social work conference was delivered in June 2017.	
c. Develop approach to social work progression and accreditation at all levels Ofsted Refs : 17	Develop a methodology to implement the social work reforms and build career pathways for Leicestershire	Scoping work with colleagues from learning and development including work to learn from other areas has begun to shape a future pathway. Information on the reforms and future accreditation was presented to staff at the first annual social work conference.	We will consult widely on a new social work progression pathway through the appointment of a Principal Social Worker. The introduction of a robust gateway via a progression process and panel arrangement will be developed.
d. Strong leadership to create learning culture Ofsted Refs : 1-17	Extended Senior Management Team (SMT) to set standard and lead on implementation. Ensure there is good two-way communication between managers and staff to disseminate and embed learning from all improvement activity. Use good practice examples identified through inspection and audit to assist shared learning to build on good practice.	A number of forums that facilitate a learning culture have been established, including the Practice Development Group, monthly performance management meetings, monthly practice development meetings and the Social Work conference. Such forums complement the range of communication mechanisms, like the Extended Senior Management Team (SMT), WikiLeeks, Yammer and the weekly email bulletin. The agreement for monthly protected learning times within teams and services will be used for sharing good practice and deliver key practice development priorities. The department has agreed with corporate Learning and Development to provide training for team managers on leadership with one session already delivered.	There will be further work with Learning and Development to deliver bespoke training on leadership and management for all tiers of managers. A conference for all managers is being arranged for December/January as part of this developmental strand.

2. Embedding Excellent Practice			
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a. Fidelity to the Signs of Safety model Ofsted Refs : 6	Involve practice development group in ensuring fidelity to model. Establish posts within the infrastructure which will support practice development (advanced practitioners)	Work has continued to deepen Signs of Safety through the newly established Practice Development Group, and a dedicated lead role jointly funded by the department and corporate Learning and Development. This role has focused on the introduction of the SoS approach in First Response. Materials to support workers in relation to their SoS practice have been made available on the Learning Hub. Good levels of attendance at quarterly practice leads sessions ensure all those with a practice leadership role can learn and practice together. Advanced Practitioner posts are out to advert.	The successful EIP bid means that the second stage of implementing SoS will begin from Sept 2017. Reference material used to support SoS practice will be updated nationally and locally. The appointment to the posts of Principal Social Worker and Advanced Practitioners will provide opportunities to coach and mentor staff with particular aspects of practice development.
b. Application of practice framework, quality statements,	Ensure workforce strategy includes the practice framework and is embedded in day to day business. Consultation and launch with all managers	Cabinet agreed the departmental Practice Framework in 2016. This has been widely distributed and sets out clearly how we work with children and families in Leicestershire.	Introduction to the framework will be included in the new starters' induction process.

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practice standards and management standards Ofsted Refs : 6	Ensure consistency in using existing standards where there are gaps. Practice standards developed. Examples of good practice shared across the Service.	This has been used in the development of a coherent document for workers describing how we intend to ‘grow quality’ in social work practice. The framework is also underpinning activity planned in the workforce strategy. Quality statements were published as part of Growing Quality, whilst practice and management standards are being refined through quality assurance activity, beginning with the assessment process. Other areas for which practice standards are being developed include: • Contact and referral • Strategy meetings • Section 47 enquiries • Plans (Children in Need, Child Protection and Children in Care) • Special Guardianship Orders • Legal Planning Meetings • Fostering, Adoption and Placements In addition, policies and procedures have been undergoing review to ensure they reflect the standards and identifying whether there are any gaps.	A sister document will be produced to ensure there is clarity on the expected standards across all parts of the department: - Growing Quality in Early Help - Growing Quality in Support Services. The other Practice Standards will be developed and signed-off for October 2017. We will develop the current monthly service meetings to support managers to share success in meeting standards.
c. Identify good practice as exemplars to model good engagement. d. Ensuring we take account of issues of diversity and inclusion in families in all care planning. Ofsted Refs : 1-17	Each area to identify examples of good engagement for example: • Working with diversity and issues of identity • Working with transgender issues • Working with learning difficulties Action learning sets to be established across the service to share and build on best practice. Initially to focus on advice given in WikiLeeks on: • Chronologies • Genograms	The theme of neglect is being used to pilot a model for learning, development and dissemination of good practice. The model draws on quality assurance activity to identify areas that need strengthening and share cases judged as Good. Opportunities for sharing good practice are included in regular meetings and individual services also capture and discuss good practice, such as IRO Alerts and the Virtual School. Agreed practice standards and quality statements are used to ensure issues of diversity and inclusion are considered and addressed in care planning for all families. A focus on diversity has led to identity, diversity and transgender modules being part of core training for foster carers. Guidance on chronologies has already been circulated.	We will be drawing together good practice examples that are currently discussed only in service areas to publish more widely and share learning. Developments to the Intranet will mean good practice will be easier to share, but this is dependent on timescales for ‘work spaces’ to be available. The neglect pilot will be extended to a second area to deepen our understanding. A learning system will be established and led by the advanced practitioners that support a systematic approach across teams for the dissemination of learning. We will establish two practice conferences per year to share practice and model successful engagement We will have a continued focus on inclusion and diversity and using

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			families' existing resources in the development of plans for change.
e. Quality of assessment planning and recording supported by reflective supervision that shows effective challenge Ofsted Refs : 2, 6, 17	Practice standards set out expectations in relation to high quality assessment planning recording and decision making. Managers ensure that these are embedded in practice. Tracking of performance to evidence improved timeliness monitored through performance meetings. Develop a learning programme for senior practitioner and team managers to include training and mentoring approaches to develop supervisory skills and competence.	Our quality statements and practice standards clearly set out expectations in relation to high quality assessment, planning, recording, and decision making and an audit against assessment standards has been completed. Monthly audit returns show that regular supervisions have improved and guidance on reflective supervisions has been re-issued as well as being part of the discussion of the Practice Development Group. The supervision needs of particular services, such as fostering, have led to a programme of training being outlined for consideration. Monthly performance dashboards are being used to monitor the timeliness of assessments with recent months seeing positive improvements.	A focus on the quality of supervisions will be prioritised to ensure they are having the desired effect. Some service areas, such as Children in Care, will steer this focus to particular improvement areas such as completing actions, securing outcomes and timeliness. There will be further work with managers and practitioners to embed practice standards. This will include developing the skills of staff around assessments as part of closing the learning loop from the audits on assessments. In addition, identified good practice in the services will be shared.
f. Good case management Ofsted Refs : 7	Existing performance meetings are used to ensure that the practice standards, performance information and analysis of improvement activity are being used effectively by operational managers. Where we are working to get children home, or in permanence planning trajectories are used as a case management tool to ensure milestones and timelines are clear and robust.	Processes and responsibilities have been established and refined to deliver good case management that includes panels, reviews, alerts and trackers. This includes forward planning permanency decisions of children into the Permanency Panel, use of an adoption and pre-proceedings tracker and reviewing the permanency of all children that have been in care for 24 months. Existing performance meetings are used to ensure that the practice standards, performance information and analysis of improvement activity are being used effectively by operational managers. Where we are working to get children home, or in permanence planning, trajectories are used as a case management tool to ensure milestones and timelines are clear and robust.	All processes, panels and monitoring will be reviewed to ensure they are achieving the desired objectives.
g. Robust Commissioning framework across Children and Family Services Ofsted Refs : 1-17	Commissioning framework and monitoring in place for Children in Care.	A commissioning framework with aligned monitoring is already in place for Children in Care and will be extended to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	The review of the commissioning framework for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities will be completed and a revised model implemented.

3. Taking the Right Action at the Right Time			
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a. Achieving permanency at all	Early identification of adoption plans and tracking through	A Permanence Panel has been established and managers regularly look for permanency planning. A practice summit on Permanency Planning was held in	The role of Panel and project group will be developed further with a focus

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stages of the child's journey Ofsted Refs : 7, 14, 16	Permanence Panel. Development of permanence champions who provide the wider concept of permanence Permanence Panel established Review model and service specification to manage edge of care work. Focus on- - Percentage of children subject to a repeat child protection plan for a second or subsequent time reduces year-on-year - Length of time children are subject to a child protection plan reduces year-on-year - Practice standards and matching of children when considering placements. Practice Summit to be arranged on Permanence	March 2017 and led to establishing task and finish groups for Special Guardianship Orders, Legal Planning Meetings and Connected Carers. All groups have been reviewing processes, guidance, communications and support in respect of their area. A project group is also being drawn from the Permanence Panel to drive this area forward, including planning departmental progress and developing 'permanence champions'. A few focus areas for permanency have been identified that includes strengthening Edge of Care arrangements, helping to keep families together, improving the quality of support to Children in Need and ensuring permanency decisions for children on the Child Protection Register are timely. All areas have progressed well so that: - A review of our Edge of Care model and service has been completed and a new model is currently under consideration. - A multi-agency task and finish group has been established to revise stepdown procedures from Child Protection to Child in Need (CiN) and CiN guidance has been published. - A process to alert of drift and delay on Child Protection cases has been established and rolling programme of case reviews is underway.	on improving understanding of permanency so that it is considered at all stages of social work practice. Aligned work will include simplifying processes and pathways, as well as implementing any recommendations from the permanency DfE research we have been involved in. Permanency is a strand of the Growing Quality campaign and will be incorporated into the department's training and support offer.
b. Improving pathway plans Ofsted Refs : 6, 12	Structure review for Children in Care Plans are informed by up to date assessments. Plan audit- commissioned through Quality Assurance audit model Review role of PA and number required. Review NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) strategy to ensure focus on Care Leavers. Performance report is accurate for suitable accommodation, in contact and NEET.	A proposal for restructuring the Children in Care service area has been agreed and included a review of capacity, skills and roles. Five personal advisors are to be recruited which will have a direct impact of the quality of pathway plans. The service has also continued to undertake audits against refreshed standards for plans and frequently monitors that plans and assessments are up-to-date. A practice summit on care leavers was held in July 2017 that sought to establish consistency in applying standards, which will also improve the accuracy of relevant data. In addition, The NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) Strategy has been reviewed to ensure a focus on care leavers. Performance reporting is regularly reviewed and any inaccuracies are corrected for monthly reporting.	Audit and oversight of pathway plans indicate that they still need to improve in quality and consistency. A practice summit for this is being planned for autumn which will also review the impact of apply standards consistently. A key performance driver for children leaving care is whether they are 'in contact'. The service is exploring the use of social networking and other technological platforms to improve this.
c. Ensure Strong Front door including Out of Hours Service Ofsted Refs : 2, 4, 6	Action Plan and resource in place. All processes reviewed. Additional Social Worker and management capacity in place. Supervision and additional support to ASYE's. Admin and business support in place. Working group established to drive the work.	An Action Plan for First Response that is supported by several working groups that report to an overarching development group chaired by the assistant director has been in place since the inspection. All processes have been reviewed with the support of a business analyst and the Plan has already delivered new models of working, including an allocations model. Additional social work capacity is in place to reduce caseloads and increase management oversight as well as refocussed administration and business support. Targeted work with ASYE staff has meant they are more supported and confident in their roles. The review of Out of Hours has been completed with the new functional model beginning in August. The consistency of the OOH service is improving and a dedicated team manager is in place working on shift with staff to oversee	A review of the new model, processes and pathways will take place to ensure they are working as expected. Work on the development of an integrated front door will begin. Our approach to domestic abuse, particularly with respect to the volume of referrals and notifications from the police, will be a focus for

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		consistency and quality. The Out of Hours Handbook is also being currently updated. First Response are also piloting the new audit framework with a focus on assessment quality. The output will complement newly developed performance data that is currently showing improved timeliness of assessments having addressed a large backlog of poor quality data.	proportionate and appropriate responses through a partnership agreed prioritisation and grading framework. Further domestic abuse training that is targeted for First Response staff will be provided so that staff have a better understanding around the complexities of domestic abuse.
d. Ensure appropriate SGO arrangements and improve post-adoption and therapeutic support Ofsted Refs : 8, 11	Post adoption plan audit Review of CAMHS contract Introduction of consultation hubs Adoption website updated to include core offer and community links Offer to birth parents is in place	A Special Guardianship Order (SGO) task and finish group have developed a clear SGO offer and funding for a SGO support worker has been agreed. Post-adoption support has been improved by amending the therapeutic offer to parents, including counselling for birth families, and establishing consultation hubs. Work already started includes reviewing the adoption website and the CAMHS contract. In addition, a pamphlet for independent advice to birth parents is now in place, a dedicated post-adoption support worker has been employed and our first adoption newsletter is about to be published. A policy on post-adoption support is included as part of our local procedures and this will be used to develop further staff guidance.	An audit of post-adoption plans will be undertaken in autumn and the adoption website will be updated with new material, including community links and support. A micro-site to support SGO's will also come online in this period. The revised CAMHS contract will be in place for April 2018.
e. Ensure young people in care enjoy education, employment and training and reduce the % of NEET Care Leavers Ofsted Refs : 15	Revised NEET Strategy Reviewing IAG contract Implementing new Leaving Care team model	The NEET Strategy has been reviewed to include a focus on care leavers and our contract on Information, Advice and Guidance is being re-tendered. The restructure of Children in Care services will also strengthen ties with leaving care services.	The quality of Pathway Plans will provide a focus for ensuring care leavers are well supported into further education, employment or training.
f. Ensure that, when a child in need plan relating to a child who has disabilities is reviewed, it reflects an up to date assessment, informed by the voice of the child and undertaken by a qualified and registered social worker Ofsted Refs : 10		A review of CIN processes and the offer to those children who require a SW assessment and package of support but not ongoing SW intervention has been undertaken. Work is underway with Early Help colleagues to , where appropriate support children and families in this way. An audit of cases open to the Disabled Childrens Team was undertaken to identify areas for development in this area.	Work to be progressed and embedded

4. Developing Policy and Performance			
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a. Ensure policies supporting practice are in place Ofsted Refs : 8, 11-13, 15,16	Review/create policies or written statements on: • Staying Put • Care Leavers offer • Private Fostering • Post- adoption support offer • NEET	The Staying Put Policy was revised in February 2017 and the Private Fostering annual report formed the basis of an agreed action plan and communication strategy. This action plan is reviewed quarterly with Senior Management team (SMT). Work on adoption, care leavers and NEET has already been referenced above.	Whilst a Care Leavers Offer is in place, it is felt that a refresh is required for April 2018 to better align with work undertaken around the service's restructure, the NEET strategy and the development of an offer with housing partners. In addition, preparation for the new '25' legislation to launch in April 2019 will mean a range of activity, such as service modelling and contributing to regulations, will take place over 2018. In relation to post-adoption support, staff guidance is being developed for September 2017 and public-facing material for October 2017. Policies in relation to Legal Planning Meetings and SGO's will be reviewed via a task and finish group over September/ October.
b. Accurate performance data is available for all areas of service and to ensure that progress is made on the specific recommendations made by Ofsted. Ofsted Refs : 1-4, 6, 7, 9-16	Scope all performance data requirements Design of performance reports Test and implement new reports with business.	Work to scope performance data requirements has been completed with urgent performance reporting requirements already met, such as intelligence on contacts, referrals and assessments. The design of new performance dashboards to launch alongside our new Information Management System in September (Mosaic) has already been completed. Our monthly performance management service meetings have been used to discuss and address any performance issues of concern as well as highlight where progress has been made. The coordination and development of reports to assist with performance reporting and performance management has transferred to the Development and Support Service Manager.	A consultant has been engaged to help define performance management and IMS requirements for the fostering service in order to take advantage of launching Mosaic. The output of work for spring will include weekly performance dashboards that can identify practice issues and sufficiency requirements. The monthly performance management service meeting will be developed during September to December to include Service level evaluation reports with a broader selection of Quality Assurance information.
c. All managers actively use data to support monitoring and service management Ofsted Refs : 1-7, 9-16	SMT to ensure that service led performance management is consistent across all parts of the business	Performance meetings and reviews of service delivery plans are in place and supported by new reports around the management of contact and referrals that is produced daily and weekly. Principles underpinning performance reporting have also been agreed.	Monthly performance meetings will be complemented with outreach performance management clinics to individual teams. These clinics will support managers to understand their data and provide a mechanism for future reports to be tailored to managers' needs. This roll-out is

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			expected over winter/spring.
d. All staff understand the requirement of good quality data and their role in recording all information in the right way Ofsted Refs : 1	Work with business, BI and QAIF team to identify and rectify existing errors in system. Service managers to lead and drive everybody's changing behaviours to ensure all are responsible and accountable for their data. Performance indicators evidence improving outcomes for children and young people- This is an element of the Quality Assurance framework and will directly inform the audit activity.	A Data Quality Strategy is currently in place and being developed into an action plan that will include the review of learning and development requirements around the IMS. The strategy is supported by agreed data quality roles and responsibilities across the department and established forums for resolutions, such as the IMS user group and the Reporting Group. Data quality forms part of the discussion at monthly performance meetings and business intelligence reports have been developed specifically to address data quality issues. Support is in place to rectify existing problems in the IMS and is used to direct any targeted support to staff and managers.	Performance dashboards will be developed to incorporate data quality scrutiny so that managers are better equipped to address issues within their own teams. Data quality issues identified as a result of statutory returns will provide key focal points for improvement and be used as in-year benchmarking for improving data quality.
e. Use of data to support management oversight and quality assure effective case management and decision making Ofsted Refs : 1-17	Create reports which show when children have had management oversight/supervision Practice and Management standard clear regarding expectations Consultant commissioned to work with all stakeholders to agree requirements and deliver reports.	We currently have a mixture of digital and manual reports in place to secure effective case management and decision making and work to scope reporting requirements has been completed. The published management standards and quality statements set clear expectations on managers.	All reporting will be made available digitally through the Tableau platform. Additional work to Mosaic is planned that can allow for better monitoring of supervisions.
f. Caseload size Ofsted Refs : 3	Report on current position re caseload sizes run monthly Additional capacity (agency) across First Response, Child Protection + Supporting Families + Children with Disabilities. Review structure to see how best response is deployed. Recruitment strategy to be developed – JDs rewritten/rolling progress of adverts/reached with clear social work offer.	Caseload sizes are closely monitored through monthly reporting and trend information has been used to form the basis of staff growth funding bids. Additional capacity is in place for First Response, Child Protection, Supporting Families, Children with Disabilities, Fostering and Independent Reviewing Officers. The recruitment strategy is being developed and this incorporates a clear social work offer.	There is increasing demand for all service areas, but particularly child protection and children in care. The latter is placing considerable pressure on our sufficiency goals with implications for fostering recruitment, adoption assessments and leaving care. The extension of the leaving care age to 25 means demand is further compounded. Our Sufficiency and Permanency strategies set out a range of activity to mitigate and plan for this demand including investment agreements in areas like connected carers and fostering recruitment. The deployment of funding secured through the growth bid will be critical to achieving manageable caseloads for practitioners. Recruitment to aligned posts has begun and will be completed over autumn.

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g. Service Delivery Plans reflect all key areas of improvement are embedded Ofsted Refs : 1-17	Draft Service delivery plans being agreed to cover all key areas of practice, management assessment and performance.	All Service Delivery Plans cover key areas of practice, management, assessment and performance. These are reviewed on a quarterly basis and directly contribute to the outcomes of The Road to Excellence.	Service delivery plans will be reviewed each quarter between service managers and Heads of Service with a bi-annual review undertaken with the Assistant Directors.
h. Missing children are offered a return home interview and information gained informs risk management and shared intelligence Ofsted Refs : 9	Draft service delivery plan developed for the multi-agency CSE team who lead the coordination of the response to missing children Improvement driven by LLR Operations Group and scrutinised by LLR Exec Board	A service manager has been appointed to lead a multi-agency CSE team and the Service Delivery Plan that addresses missing children has been agreed. LCC had already developed a model to improve the completion of Return Interviews for CIC and how to ensure the quality of all RI's and the planning that takes place when OFSTED arrived. This model has now been well embedded and is seeing improved performance. Improvement in this area is also driven by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Operations Group and scrutinised by LLR Executive Board.	The Delivery Plan and aligned performance data/quality assurance processes will be used to monitor that this objective is being met.

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