



# Children and Family Services Departmental Plan

2020 - 2023

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## Foreword



Jane Moore,  
Director, Children and Family Services



Cllr Ivan Ould OBE,  
Lead Member for Children,  
Families and Safer Communities

As a department we are passionate about improving the lives of all our children and young people. This plan will help us to drive forward the changes that will make a real difference to their futures.

The plan sets out our vision and our priorities for children, young people and families, how we plan to achieve these, who is responsible, and what success will look like.

### **Children and young people are at the heart of this Plan which sets out four clear ambitions for 2020-2023:**

- Help every child to get the best possible start in life;
- Help children and their families build strength, resilience, confidence and capacity
- Help children in Leicestershire to live in safe, stable environments and have secure attachments
- Help every child to have access to good quality education to ensure they achieve their maximum potential

The plan is intended to be a “live” document that provides an overarching framework to stimulate action and to help ensure that whatever we do genuinely makes a difference to the lives of children, young people and families. It also describes how, as a department, we will deliver the actions within the plan, including some innovative new ways of working.

We recognise that these ambitions cannot be delivered alone, and we are committed to working in partnership to achieve the best outcomes for the children and young people of Leicestershire. By working together on shared ambitions, we believe that we can make the difference that is needed.”

**Jane Moore**

**Cllr Ivan Ould OBE**

## Introduction

This plan is for all the children and young people living in Leicestershire and their families and sets out high-level priorities for Leicestershire County Council's Children and Family Services Department for the next three years. The plan builds on the work undertaken under the previous departmental plan and has been informed by what children, young people and families have told us about their needs and experiences.

The plan is a "live" document allowing us to recognise and respond to change. Progress against the plan will be monitored closely and a formal review will be undertaken annually to ensure it remains relevant, dynamic and aligned with local and national priorities. This plan is driven by our vision and mission and underpinned by our shared values.



## OUR VISION

### Leicestershire is the best place for all children, young people and their families

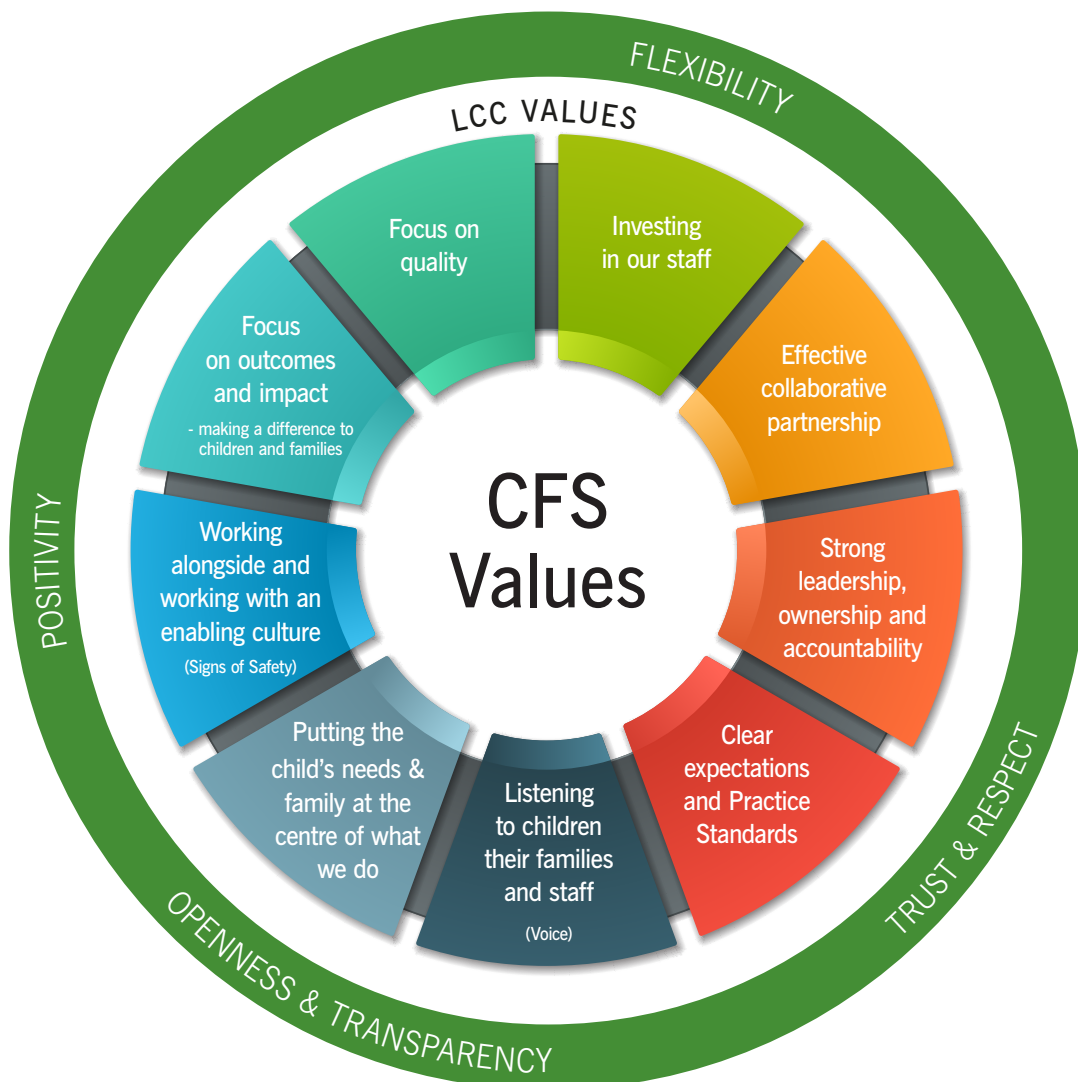
This means that we will describe the outcomes we want to achieve for children, young people and their families and identify measures that can tell us how well we are achieving them in comparison with other English local authorities. We will aim to be the best performing local authority in the country against these measures, and where we are not yet there we will set stretching targets for annual improvement.

## OUR MISSION

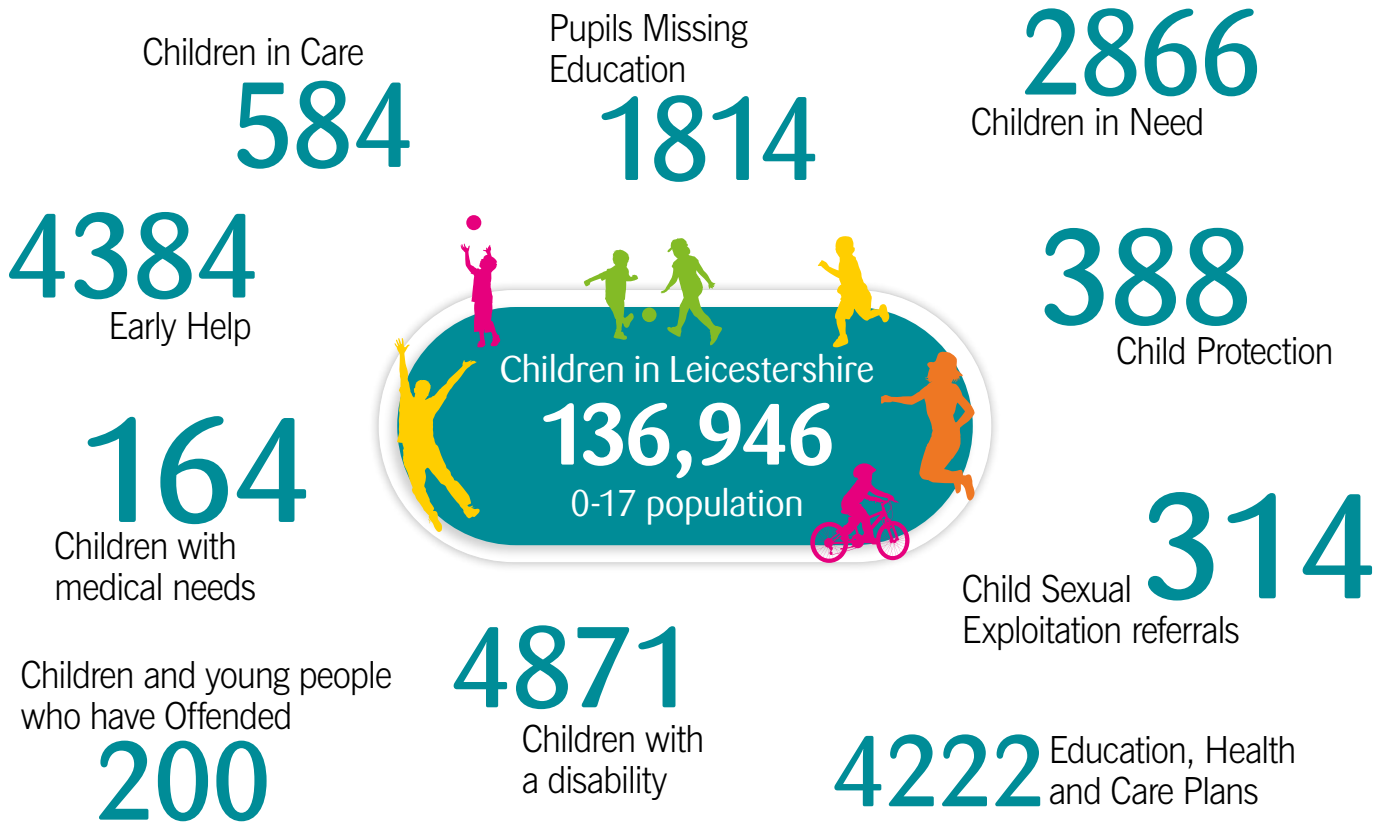
Children and young people in Leicestershire are safe and living in families where they can achieve their potential and have their health, wellbeing and life chances improved within thriving communities.

## OUR VALUES

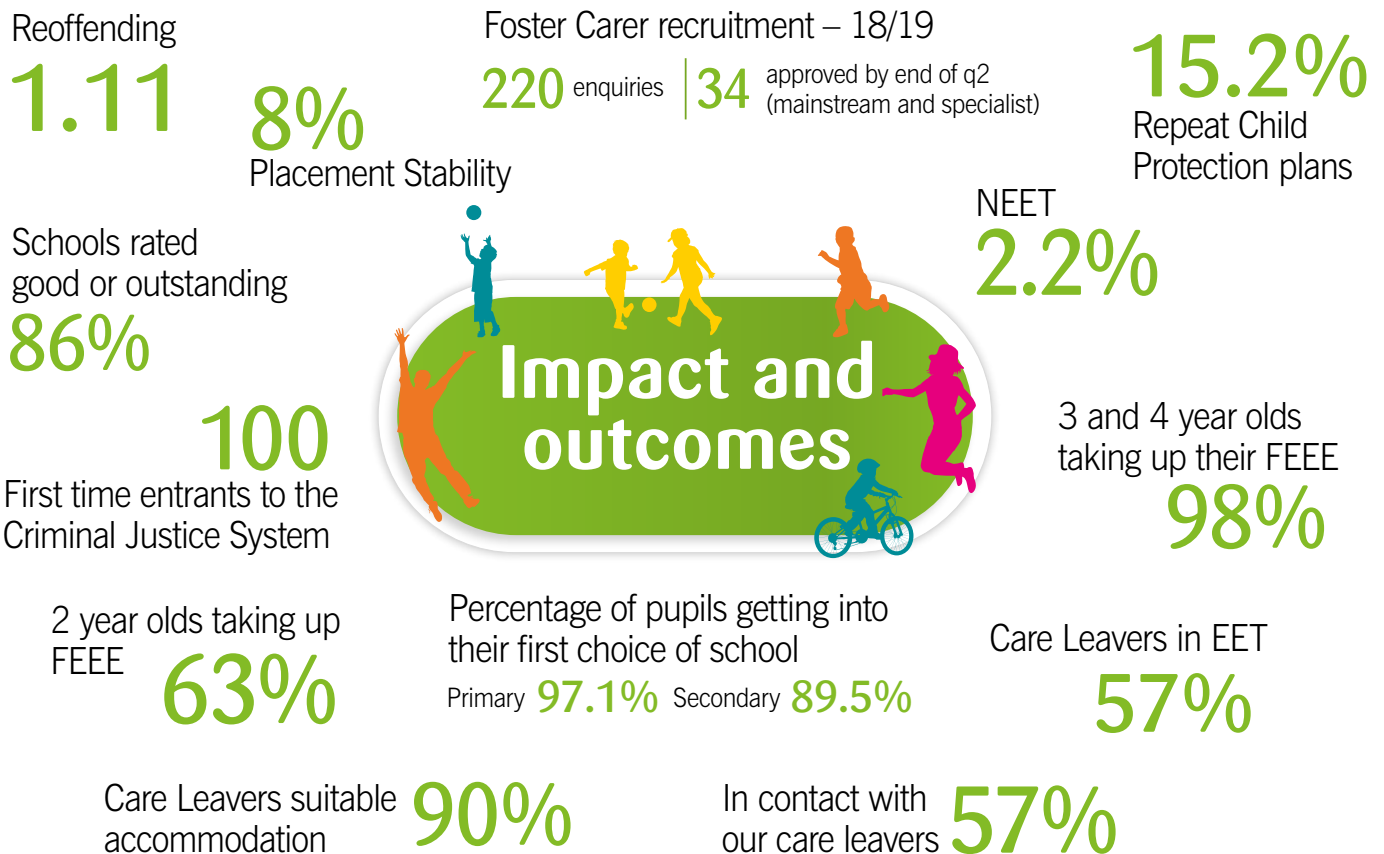
Leicestershire County Council's (LCC) organisational values set out the attributes and approach to work that can be expected from all council employees. Children and Family Services have devised a core set of values based on the work within the department, which demonstrate how we will meet the LCC Organisational values.



## Our Children 2018/19



## Impact and Outcomes



# Departmental ambitions for 2020-2023

## Ambition 1 - Help every child to get the best possible start in life

This is about helping families with babies and very young children to promote their health and development.

There is now a wealth of research and policy information which points to a child's early years playing a pivotal role in later life outcomes. We want all children to have all the opportunities they need to develop their health, skills and knowledge so that they are ready for school and have the best possible start in life. A great start will shape their lifelong health and well-being.

### What is important to children, young people and families?

#### Feedback from parents on services they received

"... whilst you were helping our son you were a massive help and support to me."

"I feel that I have been supported to support my child's communication ... been given the tools to support my child to play"

"Not just a help to the child but a support to parents"

#### The actions we will take:

- Priority 1:** Identify those children who would benefit from support at the earliest opportunity
- Priority 2:** Embed our offer around school readiness and children's early language skills
- Priority 3:** Promote clear and consistent messages relating to 1001 critical days and the life chances of young children

#### The measures that will tell us if we are making a difference:

We will focus on tracking data on narrowing the attainment the gap for vulnerable groups and increasing the proportion of reception children reaching a "good level of development"

- % of eligible 2 year olds taking up their FEEE
- % of eligible 3 and 4 year olds taking up their FEEE
- % of eligible 2, 3 and 4-year olds taking up their FEEE in a high-quality provision
- % of reception pupils reaching a 'Good level of development'
- % of reception pupils with FSM status achieving 'Good level of development'
- % of Reception pupils with SEN statement/EHCP achieving 'Good Level of Development'
- % of children working at expected levels at the end of the foundation stage
- % of children with improved communication, language and literacy skills
- % of children excluded from settings and schools

## Ambition 2 - Help children and their families build strength, resilience, confidence and capacity

This is about supporting children, young people and their families to tackle problems and helping them to feel more confident and capable of dealing with future problems.

Many families have emerging or complex needs which often require support to enable their children to achieve good outcomes in life.

Early identification of problems, joined-up working practices between agencies, and working together with families to meet their specific needs, is at the heart of providing an effective response.



### What is important to children, young people and families?

#### Feedback from young people

“listen to us and take our problems seriously”

“ (the worker) helped me to talk about my worries and sorted out me going back to school, I wouldn't be in school if it wasn't for her. I feel like I have a future now.”

#### Feedback from parents following parenting groups

“I feel me and the children are a team now and work with each other to make our home life happy.”

“The group really helped me understand why my children do certain things and there is a reason behind it”



## The actions we will take

- Priority 1:** Establish a revised Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFWS) offer following the evaluation of early help services and the integration of family, youth, and children centre services.
- Priority 2:** Develop effective multi-agency identification, assessment and support for families with children who require additional support or who have special education needs.
- Priority 3:** Work with partner agencies to develop early help assessments and early help support at Tier 2 of the multi-agency Safeguarding Children Partnership threshold.
- Priority 4:** Provide effective, co-ordinated support for children at key transition points, such as school readiness and the journey to adulthood.

## The measures that will tell us if we are making a difference:

- Reduction of cases stepped down to early help services that result in a step back up to statutory services
- Increase in the % of families receiving 1 to 1 intervention from the CFWS who show significant and sustained improvement
- Continued monitoring of the % of parents involved with CFS who move into employment
- Decrease in children in mainstream schools with EHC Plans, with more children supported effectively at SEN Support
- Reduction in children missing education or educated at home



### **Ambition 3 - Help children in Leicestershire to live in safe, stable environments and have secure attachments**

This is about supporting children and young people to be safe and happy at home, and where this cannot happen, to have good placements and carers.

We want all children and young people to grow up in stable, healthy, happy, safe and supportive family environments.

Whilst every effort will be made to promote children and young people remaining or returning to parental or family care, this will not be a safe option for some children. In such circumstances, Leicestershire will seek to find other options for children.

We believe that our children deserve forever homes and that their parents and carers need access to the best support, training and resources to provide our children and young people with the best possible care.

#### **What is important to children, young people and families?**

##### **From a foster child**

“The best present I ever had was Julie and Phil and their family because my real family couldn’t look after me and my brother properly, they took us in and cared for us and I love them so, so much”.

##### **From an adult adoptee:**

“Thank you for your research and (birth records) support. From being scared of where I may have come from, to now being proud of who I am...”

##### **Feedback from an Adopter**

“Being able to talk to someone who really gets it is vital for adoptive parents, especially in the early stages of placement when challenges are coming thick and fast”



## The actions we will take

**Priority 1:** Ensure all children and families receive the Right Service, at the Right Time, in the Right Place

**Priority 2:** Ensure we have sufficient, good quality placements to meet children's needs

What foster children tell us they want from carers:

- “don't give up on me. I want dedication”
- “be able to love, care and show affection”
- “be patient and mindful of our feelings”
- “treat fosters kids like your own kids”

**Priority 3:** Children understand their care plan and have emotional permanence

**Priority 4:** Support young people to prepare for adulthood

## The measures that will tell us if we are making a difference

- % children with 3 or more placements during a year
- % children in same placement for 2+ years or placed for adoption
- % of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (end of quarter)
- The average emotional health strengths/difficulties score for children in care
- % child protection cases which were reviewed within timescales
- % of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for second or subsequent time
- % re-referrals to Children's Social Care within 12 months
- % continuous assessments completed within 45 days
- % of Child Protection plans lasting 2 years or more open at the end of the quarter
- % of Care Leavers in education, employment and training (EET) (end of quarter)
- The number of young people going missing reduces
- Take up of young people undertaking a return home interview (all young people and children in care)
- All children have a plan for permanence considered & identified at second review

## Ambition 4 - Help every child to have access to good quality education to ensure they achieve their maximum potential

This is about supporting children and young people to get the best education and to have opportunities that help them reach their goals.

All pupils irrespective of their level of ability or needs should have access to the best possible teaching and learning. This should be delivered through successful and high performing schools or other educational establishments, offering the best teaching practice, facilities and learning environments to enable all pupils to thrive and achieve their best potential.

### What's important to children, young people and families?

#### Feedback from a young person

“Before I came here I was really depressed and distant. I'm really happy I came here. I feel like I can control my life. Art therapy gave me someone to talk to without fear of judgement. Everyone here just wants you to be happy and do what you want to do in life. You can listen and trust what they say.”

#### Feedback from a young person

“(the support) helped me a lot. It helped build my confidence and happiness. My anxiety is now a lot better. Although there was lots of challenges, I enjoyed myself and had a lot of fun. I made friends. I am very thankful that they pushed me to go to this college”

#### Feedback from a school councils:

“At our school we enjoy celebrating achievements in a brilliant atmosphere, have lots of opportunities to try new things, teachers who listen and help us shine and are accepting of people and celebrate that we are all unique”



## The actions we will take

- Priority 1:** Ensure that pupils with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes delivered through appropriate education settings
- Priority 2:** Ensure that every child has access to good school places in all Leicestershire areas
- Priority 3:** Ensure best possible outcomes for all learners
- Priority 4:** Effective admissions arrangements promote diversity and choice and meet the needs of vulnerable groups

## The measures that will tell us if we are making a difference

We will track data across all key stages that demonstrate progress, outcomes and diminishing the difference for vulnerable groups, with particular attention to:

- % pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Mathematics at Key Stage 2
- Diminishing the difference at Key Stages 2 and 4 for children in care, children in need, those with a statement/Education, Health & Care Plan and those with SEN support
- % of pupils in Good or Outstanding schools
- Number of places developed for mainstream and special schools/resource bases
- Average cost per place for various types of school in the capital programme
- % of first preferences for First Time Admissions (FTAs)
- % of first preferences for secondary transfer
- % of 16-17 year olds who are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
- Number of children missing education and average time outside of school
- Number of medical needs cases, average length of time supported and cost
- Number of elective home educated pupils and frequency of visits
- % of eligible two and three year olds taking up FEEE
- % of looked after children admitted on school roll within 20 school days from date of application
- Number of permanent exclusions
- % of children receiving at least one day of fixed term exclusion

## Cross-cutting themes and enablers

We have identified the following cross-cutting themes and enablers as crucial to helping us achieve our ambitions for children and young people:



**Voice:** putting children and young people at the heart of all our activities by involving them and their families in the decision-making, planning, commissioning, design, development, delivery and evaluation of services that affect their daily lives



**Partnership working:** working together, aligning plans and resources, integrated commissioning and information/data sharing to improve outcomes



**Developing and retaining an excellent workforce:** equipping our workforce with the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families



**Culture and practice:** developing relationships in both leadership and practice that are based on mutual respect, support and collaboration



**Behaviours:** identifying the behaviours expected from our workforce that will underpin our work with children, young people and their families



**Commissioning:** processes that ensure innovation, best value and quality, market engagement and include the voice of children and families



**Data and intelligence:** that informs planning and drives performance monitoring

# Planning and Performance Framework

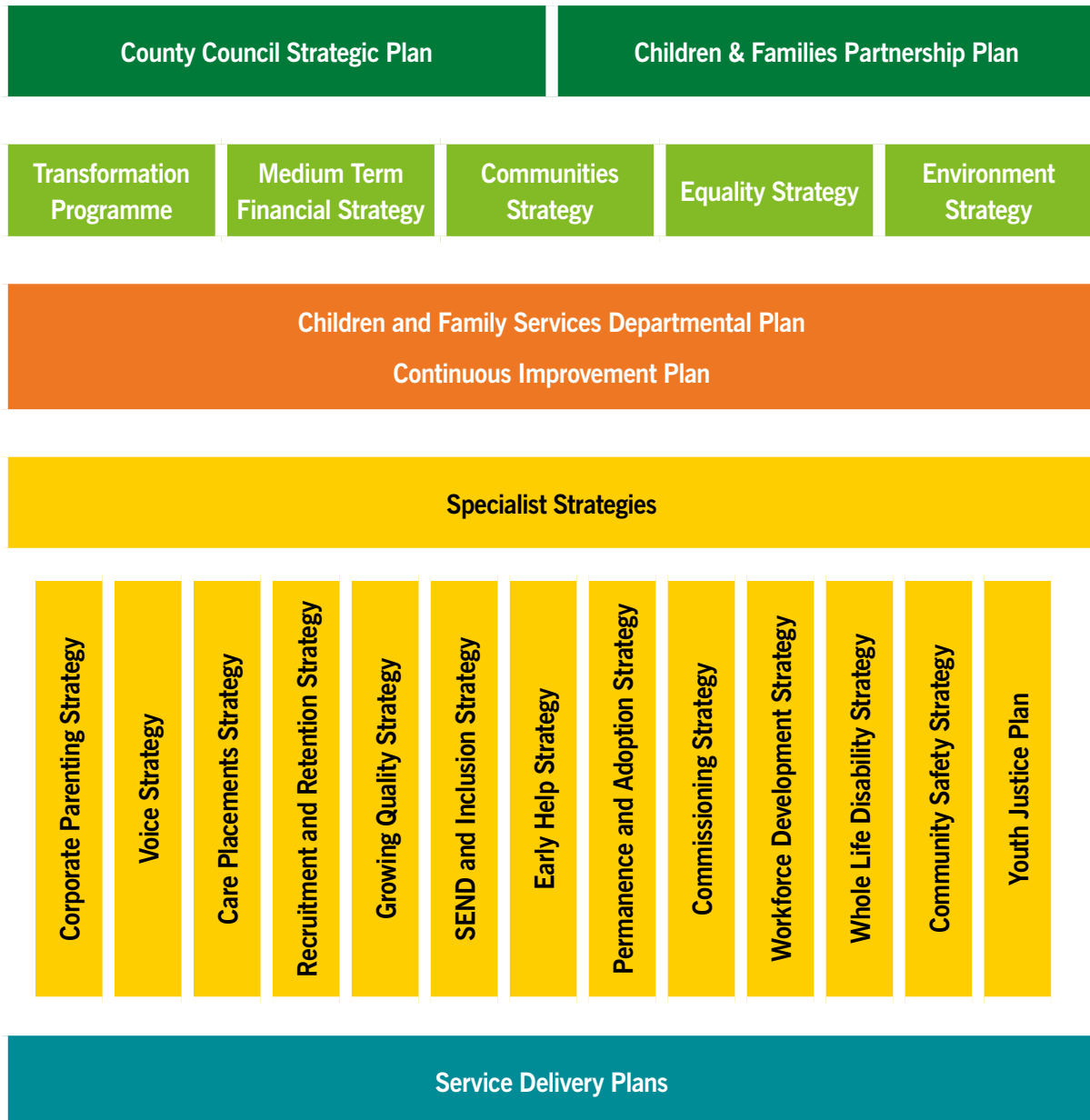
Our Departmental Plan sits within a Planning and Performance Framework that will help us to deliver our ambitions for children and families in Leicestershire.

Level	Planning	Performance management
<b>Partnerships and Corporate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children &amp; Families Partnership Plan</li> <li>LCC Strategic Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly review by Children &amp; Families Partnership Board</li> <li>Corporate Management Team</li> </ul>
<b>Departmental</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CFS Departmental Plan</li> <li>Continuous Improvement Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly review by CFS DMT and CFS Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</li> </ul>
<b>Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service Delivery Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly review by Heads of Service</li> <li>Bi-Annual review by Assistant Directors</li> </ul>
<b>Staff Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Performance Reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bi-annual review and monthly supervision by Line Managers</li> </ul>



Appendix 1:

# Strategy and Planning Bookcase





Appendix 2:

## CFS Departmental Plan Action Plan 2020 -21

### Ambition 1 - Help every child to get the best possible start in life

Priority	Action	Lead
<b>Priority 1:</b> Identify those children who would benefit from support at the earliest opportunity	<b>1.1a</b> Develop a neo natal pathway to help identify children who may require support to include: - identification of families who will require additional support at home on leaving the neo natal ward - understanding of the support and resources required in order to inform future commissioning e.g. specialist nursery places	Head of Service - Education Quality and Effectiveness
	<b>1.1b</b> Offer Portage support to those children identified by Health and the Children and Family Wellbeing Service	
	<b>1.1c</b> Utilise 2 year health review data to identify children who may require support in order to offer early interventions	
<b>Priority 2:</b> Embed our offer around school readiness and children's early language skills	<b>1.2a</b> Strengthen collaboration with partners to improve support for early language and communication skills	Head of Service - Education Quality and Effectiveness
	<b>1.2b</b> Develop universal and targeted training for the early years sector on "Narrowing the Language Gap"	
	<b>1.2c</b> Carry out a maturity matrix with partners and develop an action plan to address identified areas for development	
	<b>1.2d</b> Pilot 'two to school' project in targeted areas of the county	
<b>Priority 3:</b> Promote clear and consistent messages relating to 1001 critical days and the life chances of young children	<b>1.3a</b> Develop resources for parents, including an online information offer, that supports their understanding of their child's developmental needs from conception to 2 years	Head of Service – Early Help and Safer Communities
	<b>1.3b</b> Develop a practitioner's toolkit to help them support parent's understanding of the importance of the first 1001 critical days and the key role they play in their child's learning and development	
	<b>1.3c</b> Develop training for practitioners (e-learning and face to face training packages) which can then be rolled out to partners to deliver across their workforce	

## Ambition 2 - Help children and their families build strength, resilience, confidence and capacity

Priority	Action	Lead
<b>Priority 1:</b> Establish a revised Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFWS) offer following the evaluation of early help services and the integration of family, youth and children centre services	<b>2.1a</b> Develop a plan that identifies all Children and Family Wellbeing Service programmes and interventions offered to families	Head of Service – Early Help and Safer Communities
	<b>2.1b</b> Develop a communications plan, including digital and written strands, to promote the Children and Family Wellbeing Service offer on an on-going basis to families, other agencies and internal Council staff	
	<b>2.1c</b> Undertake scoping work with partner agencies (notably health providers, district councils, and the voluntary sector) to build a comprehensive library of early help services available within each locality across Leicestershire	
<b>Priority 2:</b> Develop effective multi-agency identification, assessment and support for families with children who require additional support or who have special education needs.	<b>2.2a</b> Develop a single point of access for co-ordinating information gathered from social care workers, Children and Family Wellbeing Service support workers and other professionals in relation to Education, Health and Care Plans.	Head of Service – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
	<b>2.2b</b> Develop a SEN training package and complementary handbook for schools and relevant support workers within the department in relation to LCC special educational services	
	<b>2.2c</b> Review the specialist pathways between CFS SEN service and Health to assist children to get the right support at the right time, including developing a neurological pathway between CFS and Health	Head of Service – Early Help and Safer Communities
<b>Priority 3:</b> Work with partner agencies to develop early help assessments and early help support at Tier 2 of the multi-agency Safeguarding Children Partnership threshold	<b>2.3a</b> Develop the Safeguarding Children's Partnership threshold protocol to include reference and guidance on early help provision across LLR linked to families with more complex problems (Tier 2 in the proposed new protocol)	Head of Service – Early Help and Safer Communities
	<b>2.3b</b> Develop the Early Help Partnership, including agreeing a governance structure through the Children and Families Partnership Board and extending membership to reflect all partner agencies delivering early help provision	
	<b>2.3c</b> Explore introducing a standard multi agency assessment for families with complex problems requiring early intervention and support (Tier 2) below the targeted service and statutory service thresholds at Tiers 3 and 4. This will most notably involve work with schools, other education settings, health providers, police and district councils	
<b>Priority 4:</b> Provide effective, co-ordinated support for children at key transition points, such as school readiness and the journey to adulthood	<b>2.4a</b> Embed protocols within the Transition to Adulthood handbook developed between CFS SEN Service and Adult Social Care	Head of Service – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
	<b>2.4b</b> Develop advice and guidance for effective transitions between schools and education settings	
	<b>2.4c</b> Develop the offer for transition from children and adult services within the Children and Family Wellbeing Service	Head of Service – Early Help and Safer Communities

## Ambition 3 - Help children in Leicestershire to live in safe, stable environments and have secure attachments

Priority	Action	Lead
<b>Priority 1:</b> Ensure all children and families receive the Right Service, at the Right Time, in the Right Place	<b>3.1a</b> Embed relationship-based practice that promotes purposeful, responsive and inclusive service delivery	Assistant Director, Targeted Early Help and Children's Social Care
	<b>3.1b</b> Embed the 16+ provision in the Children in Care service, re-focus the work of the Family Intervention Workers and strengthen management oversight of revocation of care orders to support children to remain within their families and, where possible, their communities	Head of Service – Children in Care & Head of Service – Field Social Work
	<b>3.1c</b> Improve the quality of assessments and plans to ensure they are sufficiently focused on need, strength-based actions that will keep children safe and ensure the best outcomes for children	
	<b>3.1d</b> Drive timely and appropriate responses and permanence decisions that improve outcomes through effective management supervision	
	<b>3.1e</b> Strengthen and develop our multi-agency response to Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) by building on learning from the work on CSE undertaken with partner agencies through the Vulnerability Hub and youth and youth justice service	Head of Service - Field Social Work & Head of Service – Early Help and Youth Justice
	<b>3.1f</b> Continue to develop and build on our partnership approach and response to reports of Domestic Abuse (DA) through our DA framework to ensure children and families receive appropriate support	
<b>Priority 2:</b> Ensure we have sufficient, good quality placements to meet children's needs	<b>3.2a</b> Introduce new placement referral forms that include the voice of the child to assist in finding the right placement to meet their educational, health and emotional needs	Head of Service – Children in Care
	<b>3.2b</b> Embed regular placement provider events to help providers understand Leicestershire's children and needs	Head of Service – Commissioning and Planning
	<b>3.2c</b> Establish residential provision and undertake fostering and adoption recruitment that will focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Sibling groups</li> <li>-Older children</li> <li>-Working with trauma</li> <li>-Preparing children for independence</li> <li>-Supporting children who have a behavioural disorder</li> </ul>	Head of Service – Children in Care
	<b>3.2d</b> Ensure the Council has a solid market presence through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leading on need-based assessment to influence private providers including IFA, 16+ supported accommodation and residential care</li> <li>- Identifying innovative partnership solutions to address need across the entirety of the child's journey.</li> </ul>	Head of Service – Commissioning and Planning
	<b>3.2e</b> Provide timely assessments for children living in Private Fostering Arrangements through a dedicated social worker and support, where needed, to help them to be healthy, achieve and be safe	Head of Service – Children in Care
	<b>3.2f</b> Offer support, training and peer support to foster carers, enabling them to feel they can influence support services, including those available to children	Head of Service – Children in Care

Priority	Action	Lead
<b>Priority 3:</b> Children understand their care plan and have emotional permanence	<b>3.3a</b> Support children to understand their journey and to have a voice in what happens to them through relationship-based practice that includes consistent use of purposeful direct work and consideration of the child's voice	Assistant Director, Targeted Early Help and Children's Social Care
	<b>3.3b</b> Ensure children are living within their permanent homes without unnecessary delay through timely IRO decisions and use of Permanence Panel	Head of Service – Children in Care & Head of Service – Safeguarding Assurance
	<b>3.3c</b> Children know that they have permanence and understand what this means because they are consulted before Permanence Panel and they celebrate permanence when it is agreed; and children have an explanation of their care journey like Words & Pictures and/or their life story work	Head of Service – Children in Care
	<b>3.3d</b> Provide access to a range of experiences that build confidence and provide children with a positive identity as a looked after child.	Head of Service – Children in Care
<b>Priority 4:</b> Support young people to prepare for adulthood	<b>3.4a</b> Embed the completion of the ASDAN to ensure children are supported by their carers and social workers to learn core skills and to have experiences that prepare them for adulthood	Head of Service – Children in Care
	<b>3.4b</b> Children and young people understand their education and career choices and are supported to test these choices by their Personal Advisors and, if needed, by accessing specific advice and guidance	
	<b>3.4c</b> Ensure young people who are vulnerable due to their health and developmental needs have clear pathways to services and understand their Leaving Care Health Summary.	
	<b>3.4d</b> Engage YOS, Transitions, Health provision, DWP, Housing and other parties early through the High-Risk Panels to develop shared care and pathway plans, particularly for the most vulnerable children	Head of Service – Children in Care & Head of Service – Early Help and Safer Communities
	<b>3.4e</b> Promote the Offer to Children in Care and Care Leavers in Leicestershire to ensure young people, families and other agencies understand this offer	Head of Service – Children in Care
	<b>3.4f</b> Establish regional opportunities for development of joint protocols to ensure care leavers across the region are afforded the same opportunities wherever they feel they have made appropriate, safe and stable attachments	Head of Service – Children in Care

## Ambition 4 - Help every child to have access to good quality education to ensure they achieve their maximum potential

Priority	Action	Lead
<b>Priority 1:</b> Ensure that pupils with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes delivered through appropriate education settings	<b>4.1a</b> Deliver the additional places set out in the HNB development Programme to meet the needs of children with SEN for September 2020	Head of Service – Education Sufficiency
	<b>4.1b</b> Review and improve our commissioning arrangements to enable better management of EHCPs and support for families	Head of Service – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
	<b>4.1c</b> Promote and develop more inclusive, attachment and trauma-aware practice within schools and educational settings	Head of Service - Education Quality and Effectiveness
	<b>4.1d</b> Manage the relocation and restructure of Oakfield Short Stay School and related outreach functions	Head of Service - Education Quality and Effectiveness
<b>Priority 2:</b> Ensure that every child has access to good school places in all Leicestershire areas	<b>4.2a</b> Deliver the school expansion schemes within the 2020/21 capital programme	Head of Service – Education Sufficiency
	<b>4.2b</b> Commence the free school presumption process to open new primary schools for September 2021	
	<b>4.2c</b> Review the school place planning strategy 'In the Right Place'	
<b>Priority 3:</b> Ensure best possible outcomes for all learners	<b>4.3a</b> Undertake targeted development work through LEEP for reading, writing and mathematics	Head of Service - Education Quality and Effectiveness
	<b>4.3b</b> Evidence based practice for literacy and numeracy	
	<b>4.3c</b> Promote understanding of SEMH and in-school provision that enables pupils with SEMH to access learning	
	<b>4.3d</b> Recruitment and retention of a suitably skilled workforce	
	<b>4.3e</b> Continue to strengthen relationship with MATs and TSAs	
<b>Priority 4:</b> Effective admissions arrangements promote diversity and choice and meet the needs of vulnerable groups	<b>4.4a</b> Implement a revised school admissions policy	Head of Service – Education Sufficiency
	<b>4.4b</b> Restructure the admissions service to provide a fit for future model	

