

Leicestershire Children and Family Services

Departmental Plan 2026 - 2029

This plan sets out our vision, ambitions for children and our high-level priorities for Leicestershire County Council's Children and Family Services Department for the next three years.

The plan is shaped by the voices of children, young people, and families, reflecting their needs and experiences. Their input will continue to guide our priorities, services, and success measures

What Children, Young People and Families have told us

“ Take time to understand me and get to know me before asking me difficult questions

“ Keep me involved in the decisions being made, I am nearly an adult myself and I do understand things.

“ Don't rush from one thing to another, let me have time to think and explain it to me

“ (my worker) was just so understanding and empathetic, and she listened when I needed to rant

“ Because at hard times in life it's sometimes difficult to talk to people, but (my worker) made me feel valued and heard

“ Being trained to be on an interview panel and doing mystery shop feels like I'm being heard and I can make a change. It's helped my confidence

“ The way everything was planned out ... it gave me my own voice

“ Don't talk down to me, make the relationship feel equal

“ The worker that ran our group was really nice and I didn't feel that she judged me at all. This made me talk more openly about my problems I was having about my low mood and my history with domestic abuse. Things got better for me and my children

“ My worker has been fantastic in helping my family and finding a provision for my son to attend, she has not given up in her quest to do this, I feel she has gone above and beyond, not only in finding us support for our son, but also listening to me

“ I've never felt judged and my children always felt really safe and comfortable around the worker

What we will do

One Vision

Leicestershire is a place where all children can build strong foundations, be safe and belong, and enjoy and achieve



Three Ambitions

We want to support all children and young people to:

Build Strong Foundations

Be Safe and Belong

Enjoy and Achieve



Nine priorities

To support children and young people to Build Strong Foundations we will:

Focus on development, readiness for learning and learning as a driver of wellbeing for all children and young people

Work in partnership to offer support and opportunities to children in their own communities, to help them reach their full potential, and transition well into adulthood

Work in partnership to identify those children and young people who would benefit from support and provide a shared response to them

To support children and young people to Be Safe and Belong we will:

Work with families to ensure risk is understood and reduced, and targeted support is provided at the right time, in the right place by the right service and agency

Develop and use partnerships to prioritise safety for children and young people and to ensure it is understood that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Create an understanding of “belonging” across partnerships so that children feel they matter and can maximise positive opportunities and links in their families, early learning and education settings and communities

Empower families to build positive relationships and support systems to create safety for children to live within their family or family network

To support children and young people to Enjoy and Achieve we will:

Ensure children and young people have access within their communities to good quality early learning and education that enables them to achieve their full potential

Develop a shared understanding of the impact of inequalities and trauma across partnerships, and a shared approach to supporting vulnerable children

How we will work with children and families

Voice:

- Putting children and young people at the heart of all our activities by involving them, hearing them and ensuring their voice is influencing the planning, design and delivery of our services



Belonging:

- Supporting children and young people to feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in their school, social and wider environment so they can "Live Their Best Life"
- Enabling all children to grow up with a sense of belonging, with at least one adult who provides unconditional care/love



Purposeful Leadership:

- Leading with integrity and purpose and being clear in our expectations
- Leading with empathy, innovation, creativity and with high support, high challenge, high expectations
- Leading by valuing others, being meaningfully inclusive, being an ally to those around you and challenging barriers
- Leading with a clear vision that demonstrates ambition for children, families, the workforce and services
- Leading across the Department, taking accountability for making and being the difference



Developing and retaining an excellent workforce:

- Creating an environment that enables good practice to flourish by equipping our workforce with the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to best support improved outcomes for children and young people in Leicestershire
- Creating an inclusive culture that nurtures talent and allows every individual to flourish and reach their potential
- Recognising and valuing the differences in each of our members of staff and believing that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect



Being Responsive:

- Providing a safe, compassionate and inclusive environment that recognises the pervasiveness and potential impact of trauma on our children and families, our staff, our organisation and our communities
- Ensuring that this understanding is incorporated into every aspect of our administration, culture, environment and service delivery and acknowledge that every interaction is an intervention and that relationships are at the core of our work



Robust Commissioning, Planning and Management of Resources

- Having processes, tool and skills in place that ensure innovation, best value and quality, market engagement and support sufficiency needs
- Exploring opportunities for joint commissioning across partners to ensure collaboration and partnership working where it is appropriate
- Using value for money interventions that make a difference
- Having detailed service plans in place that outline how each ambition will be achieved and how progress will be monitored



Data and Performance:

- Informing planning and driving performance by ensuring the right data and business intelligence is available to the right people, at the right time and in an accessible form



Underpinning Values

- Ensuring that Flexibility, Trust and Respect, Openness and Transparency and Positivity underpin our delivery of services for children and their families
- Being Aspirational - achieving the best outcomes for children and families
- Being Curious – by digging for detail using purposeful practice
- Being Collaborative - building relationships built on respect, valuing others and a focus on solutions



How we will measure success

- Children and families tell us we have made a positive difference
- Children and families are involved in service design
- Performance indicators show improving outcomes
- Interventions are timely and avoid delay
- Decision making is evidence-based, supported by robust management oversight
- Early help is effective in reducing the number of children requiring social work intervention
- Audit tells us our interventions are robust and measure impact

Strategies that will underpin delivery of the Plan

- Alternative Provision Strategy
- Business Intelligence Strategy
- Care Placements Strategy
- CFS Placement Sufficiency and Market Position Statement
- Community Safety Strategy
- Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Early Help Strategy
- Education Belonging Strategy
- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy
- Maternity and Early Years Strategy
- Permanence and Adoption Strategy
- Recruitment and Retention Strategy
- Road to Excellence: Achieving Excellence via Purposeful Practice
- School Places Strategy
- Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire
- Voice and Influence Strategy
- We Care Strategy
- Youth Justice Plan