

Sufficiency Action Plan

Highlight Report

July 2022



1.0 Our Response

The Corporate Parenting Strategy for Children and Young People in Middlesbrough was presented to and signed off by Corporate Parenting Board in December 2020.

The strategy sets out our vision and action plan for how the Council and our partners will support children and young people who are in our care, and our care leavers, to achieve the best possible outcomes in their lives. Transforming our approach to corporate parenting.

Our Sufficiency Action Plan was developed in consultation and is built around the priorities set out in our Corporate Parenting Strategy. The action plan sets out actions we feel need to be undertaken in order to better meet our needs.

Our Sufficiency Action Plan will be reviewed and updated as actions are completed or as new work is identified in the event of any changes to our sufficiency needs over the 3-year cycle of our plan.

The overall responsible Council officer for the Sufficiency Action Plan for Children and Young People is the Director of Children's Services (DCS). For each of the six priority themes, senior Council officers have been delegated by the DCS as the accountable lead for maintaining an overview of the priorities set out in the action plan.

Themes and Responsible Officers

Theme		Lead Accountable Officer
1	Strengthening Commissioning For Children & Young People	Head of Service Futures for Families Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager
2	Increasing Placements Close to where Children & Young People Live and Learn	Head of Service Future for Families Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager
3	Growing Early Intervention & Prevention	Head of Prevention Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager
4	Improving Placements & Support for Care Leavers	Head of Service Children Looked After Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager
5	Enhancing Learning Outcomes for Children & Young People	Virtual Head Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager
6	Building Our Fostering Capacity and Adoption Outcomes	Head of Service Future for Families Specialist Commissioning & Procurement Senior Manager

2.0 Progress against Each Theme

The Commissioning Action Plan has been reviewed and updated in November 2021.

Theme 1 - Strengthening Commissioning for Children and Young People

- Work continues in relation to Controcc for Children's as well as the potential benefits that the new Supplier Incentive Programme (SIP) that has recently been commissioned by the Council could bring to streamlining the invoicing process for children's.
- A Market Engagement Plan did not get presented to the April Children's DMT and will now be presented at Children's DMT in August 2022.

Theme 2 – Increasing Placements Close to where Children and Young People live and learn

- The Tyne Tees Foster Care Service regional framework went live on 1st July 2022. Work on mobilisation and use of the framework is ongoing and this will be closely monitored to ensure it is working effectively for Middlesbrough.
- The Regional Children's Commissioning Group continues and at present Peopletoo have been commissioned to support with further driving the Regional Hub following an unsuccessful recruitment process.
- There are a few new providers opening homes in Middlesbrough and the Commissioning Team are working with those providers in order to understand the provision coming on line. At present registration has not been achieved but we are anticipating one provider obtaining Ofsted registration in July and just waiting for confirmation.

Theme 3 – Growing Early Intervention & Prevention

- PAUSE continues to deliver and the region is now reviewing our future commissioning intentions as the contract is due to end in 2023.

Theme 4 – Improving Placements & Support for Care Leavers

- Daniel Court has been constantly occupied and is effectively supporting young people with support needs to move into independence.
- There continues to be a need above the capacity of Daniel Court, however, we do have a number of young people turning 18 this year and as such planning on their move to independence is being focused on at present.
- We continue to awaiting further guidance on the new requirements from Ofsted for unregulated provision moving forward.

- Some of our unregulated providers are currently in the process of or considering registering some of their current provision with Ofsted as children's homes and again we are working with those providers to understand how this change can further support our sufficiency requirements.
- Placement planning meetings are being scheduled by the Director of Children's Care with the first focus being young people moving to independence and how they are being supported and managed effectively to ensure their needs are met and the transition to adulthood is smooth.

Theme 5 – Enhancing Learning Outcomes for Children & Young People

- Work on a free school application is being progressed and as part of that there is consideration about residential capacity which could further support meeting our children and young people's needs locally.
- The SEND review continues and sufficiency of placements is a work stream of that work.
- Alternative Provision (AP) has been reviewed and work to commissioning additional capacity in this market is being taken forward by Middlesbrough in light of significant increases in exclusions.

Theme 6 – Building Our Fostering Capacity and Adoption Outcomes

- In-House foster placements continue to increase and there are currently 190 active placements which is approximately 57% of our over fostering placement numbers with the IFA market having 43%.
- Recruitment campaigns continue to be run and promoted locally.
- Roll out of Mockingbird internally is progressing.

3.0 Impact/Performance/Data

- Weekly reporting on residential placement activity continues and is providing greater level of data on placement changes and needs.

5.0 Risks

- Recruitment continues to be a national issue in a number of areas and work to ensure levels of staffing both internally and externally continues.
- Agency staff are being utilised and internal recruitment campaigns are on-going.

6.0 Next Steps

- A full refresh of the Commissioning Action plan is needed and will be completed by November 2022.

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