



Independent Review of Childrens Social Care 2023

Worcestershire Children
First Business planning
2023/24

Stable Homes, Built on Love Childrens Social Care Reform

Commissioned by the government to take a fundamental look at children's social care and understand how to transform it to better support the most vulnerable children and families

Published February 2023 the review set out reforms under six pillars and identifies a range further consultations and a phased approach to implementation over two years with mission statements as measure of outcome by 2027

WCF business plan sets out our plans for 23/24 – we will build on this 24-26 taking into account further outcomes of the care review and our Ofsted outcomes

Family Help – Provides the right support at the right time so children can thrive with their families

Independent Care Review

Piloting in 12 LA's "Families First for Children" pathfinders – co design and deliver "End to End" services

Principals: Local, Multi Disciplinary and a focus on family networks

Worcestershire Children First

- "End to End" – ensuring we work together through the children journey through our services
- Supporting Families First (SFF) Child Protection and Care prevention –
- Multi Disciplinary teams in locality area's
- Targeted Early Help and Children In Need continuum

A decisive multi- agency child protection system

Independent Care Review

Families First pathfinders to test a new child protection practitioner role – to co work with family help teams

Consultation on new National Multi Agency Child Protection Standards

As part of revised Working Together 2018

Worcestershire Children First

- Advanced Social Work Practitioners supporting multi disciplinary teams (SFF)
- Specialist multi disciplinary CP teams needs to be re-proved
- WSCP interviewed as part of new guidance on education role in Safeguarding Boards – good example

Unlocking the potential of family networks

Independent Care Review

Using Families First pathfinder LA's (three in 2023 and up to nine in 2024) test how to implement :

“family group decision making”

“family network support” packages in family help pilot areas

Publish a national Kinship strategy and investment plan for training and support

Consider a case for mandating financial allowances for SGO/CAO currently means tested

Worcestershire Children First

- Family Group Conferencing exists as part of our safeguarding services – development plans on hold for outcome of care review/funding
- WCF Kinship Strategy revised 2022 – training and payment equal to mainstream carers
- SGO/CAO are means tested - we also use the discretionary option in many cases

Putting love, relationships and stable home at the heart of being a child in care

Independent Care Review



Two year programme to invest in fostering recruitment and retention – trialled in the North East



National min allowance increased by 12.43%



Registration of Supported accommodation 2023 / inspection 2024



Two regional care cooperatives to commission and deliver care places



Introduction of financial oversight of largest care providers / external organisation to support LA in forecasting / procurements and market shaping



Leadership programme / CPD / and potential registration of residential workforce

Worcestershire Children First

- WWCF employed a dedicated recruitment lead 2022 – Recruitment is the priority of our business plan and we will learn from this trial
- We matched the fostering allowance fee when it was announced and we add an additional 2% for carers looking after children aged 11+
- WCF have 27 SBL properties and all are in the process of registering having prepared through 22/23 – refurbishment and SoP developments
- West Midlands is deciding whether or not to put fwd. for the regional commissioning pilot. We will continue with our regional framework for Residential provider and fostering and we

Putting love, relationships and stable home at the heart of being a child in care cont.

£30m investment over two years to fund evidenced programmes of family findings, befriending and mentoring

Consultation on extending Corporate Parenting principals to a wider set of relevant bodies (Autumn 23)

Virtual School Head focus on Pupil Plus and apprenticeships

Uplift in leaving care allowances including those in Staying Put and until age 23yrs

Update guidance on promoting H&WB of children in care to Care Leaver to age 25yrs

Consult on mandatory reporting deaths and services incidents for Care Leavers

- WCF launched “Connect” June 23. Supporting care leaver who are alone and have limited trusted friends and family
- Corporate Parenting –
- Development in WCC Jan 24 social value apprenticeships : but more needed by County and District Councils and Business on apprenticeships
- Funding of these intention needs to be understood – Guidance / Responsibilities and Principals v’s Expectations and Best practice

A valued, supported and highly skilled social worker for every child who needs one.

Independent Care Review



SWE to inspect education routes by 2025 and take a greater future role in overseeing them



Five year Early Career Framework for SW – starts 2023 within some early adopter LA's



500 additional child and family social work apprenticeships – bursaries and grants / international recruitment



National Workload Action Group



Reduce cost and reliance on agency Social Workers - consultations

Worcestershire Children First

- WCF business plans 23/24 looks at developing the route into social work and other social care roles – engagement programme in development with schools / colleges and Universities through our Student SW programme
- WCF fed into the consultation on use of agency SW- cost and quality
- WCF innovations in use of multi disciplinary roles to support the QSW functions
- National Workload Action group – must

A system that continuously learns and improves and makes better use of evidence and data

Independent Care Review



Children's Social Care National Framework and data DASH



Align inspection with the National Framework



Development of a suite of practice guides – overseen by national practice group



Enhance of DfE intervention and offer – via escalation pathway: “getting to good” for RI LA’s



New formula for Children's Services funding – before the next spending review 2025/26

Worcestershire Children First

- Ofsted have consistently praised our quality assurance approach 2019/23 and how we can demonstrate both case by case and services learning as a result
- Scrutiny / WCF board and Ofsted report we know ourselves well and use of performance data proactively and effectively to manage and develop services
- As regional Improvement and Alliance lead for West Mids. attended a national working group on initial stages of new National Care DASH board

WORCESTERSHIRE
CHILDREN FIRST



WORCESTERSHIRE CHILDREN FIRST BUSINESS PLAN

April 2023 – March 2024

Foundations to our success

- Our business planning year identifying the new priorities for improvement and development.
- First, we must recognise the importance of sustaining the timeliness and quality of practice that we have achieved to date. This day-to-day work, now “business as usual” is as important to sustain as it is to meet our new priorities.
- Progress is built on Partnerships
- 24/25/26 business planning will build on the progress of the Care Review





Quality Assurance – Voice of the child and parent carers

Understanding the impact of what we do

Quality Assurance – Audit Activity
Understanding quality of practice

Sustain stability within the workforce, deliver high support and challenge and be the employer of choice

- Engagement of future social care workforce
- Management and leadership development and training
- Care review five-year framework
- WCF social care workforce development

Prevent risk and needs escalating for vulnerable children and those who are “Children in Need” of support

- Access and attendance in education
- Raise attainment and meet emotional health and wellbeing needs
- Trauma Informed schools
- Delivery of our multi-disciplinary Supporting Families First: Care Review

Progress to achieve our vision for our 0-25 All Age Disability Service

- SEND Improvement Plan
- 0-25 Development of practice standards
- 0-25 Development of outcome measures
- Development of All Age transition pathways
- Implement our Delivering Best Value programme

Support, guide and enable schools and education providers to deliver high quality, inclusive education provision

- Reorganisation of education services
- Raising Attainment of Disadvantaged children programme
- Quality assurance intervention programme for those schools identified as requiring improvement or declining

Make effective use of child protection processes to bring about timely and sustained change for children

- Revise impact of application of Child Protection Thresholds to ensure we are providing support and interventions at appropriate levels to meet our duties to support and protect
- Engagement of all stakeholders to join this journey

Ensure looked after children have high quality, stable placements and timely outcomes for permanency

- Target recruitment of foster carers & Kinship Support
- New Children's Home
- Regional Safe Center
- Virtual School and 16+ pilot
- Develop UASC services and engagement in NTS
- Special Team for long term stable looked after children

Ensure we make progress against our school place sufficiency to meet short and longer term demand

- Progress Worcestershire secondary school build
- Progress our new ASD special school build programme
- Ensure foundations are in place to meet our five-year school organisation sufficiency plan, including Alternative and Special Provision

Ensure our Care Leavers have the best start for independence

- Access to comfortable and safe housing
- Access to education, employment, and training
- Early matching to a Personal Adviser
- Delivery of ASDAN with care providers
- Deliver against our Virtual school 16+ pilot
- Launch our Connect programme

Quality Assurance – KPIs
Timeliness of workload and workflow

Continue to use our resources (financial and non financial) to ensure value for money.

Progress is built on partnerships, key partnership activities include:

WCF contributions to Regional Priority Plan - West Midlands Secure Safe Centre Build - Local and Regional developments in the Care Review - WSCP understanding the effectiveness of Early Help for children and families - Development of our Children and Young People participation forums – Progress the Children and Young People Plan through its reporting groups (EHWB/WSCB/SEND/Early Help)