

## AGENDA FOR

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

*Contact:* Josh Ashworth  
*Direct Line:* 0161 253 5667  
*E-mail:* J.R.Ashworth@bury.gov.uk  
*Web Site:* www.bury.gov.uk

**To: All Members of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

**Councillors :** A Arif, D Berry, C Boles (Chair), U Farooq, E FitzGerald, J Grimshaw, S Haroon, K Hussain, J Lancaster, G Marsden and L Ryder

Dear Member/Colleague

### **Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee which will be held as follows:-

<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, 7 January 2026
<b>Place:</b>	Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bury, BL9 0SW
<b>Time:</b>	7.00 pm
<b>Briefing Facilities:</b>	If Opposition Members and Co-opted Members require briefing on any particular item on the Agenda, the appropriate Director/Senior Officer originating the related report should be contacted.
<b>Notes:</b>	

## **AGENDA**

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of Cabinet are asked to consider whether they have an interest in any of the matters of the Agenda and, if so, to formally declare that interest.

### **3 MINUTES** *(Pages 3 - 16)*

Minutes from the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025 are attached for approval.

### **4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

A period of 30 minutes has been set aside for members of the public to ask questions on the agenda for tonight's meeting.

### **5 MEMBER QUESTIONS**

A period of up to 15 minutes will be allocated for questions and supplementary questions from members of the Council who are not members of the committee. This period may be varied at the discretion of the chair.

### **6 FAMILY HUBS AND BETTER START UPDATE** *(Pages 17 - 38)*

### **7 IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE** *(Pages 39 - 70)*

### **8 EDUCATION AND INCLUSION STRATEGY** *(Pages 71 - 120)*

### **9 URGENT BUSINESS**

Any other business which by reason of special circumstances the Chair agrees may be considered as a matter of urgency.

**Minutes of:** CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date of Meeting:** 13 November 2025

**Present:** Councillor C Boles (in the Chair)  
Councillors A Arif, D Berry, S Haroon, M Hayes, K Hussain,  
J Lancaster and L Ryder

**Also in attendance:** Councillor S Arif  
Ben Dunne, Director of Education and Skills  
Rachel Everitt, Elections Manager  
Jeanette Richards – Executive Director, Children & Young People  
Tracey Staines, Head of Youth Justice and Complex Safeguarding  
CYP Representative

**Public Attendance:** 7 Members of the public attended the meeting

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor U Farooq, Councillor E FitzGerald and Councillor J Grimshaw

---

**CYP.77 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies are noted above.

**CYP.78 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**CYP.79 MINUTES**

It was agreed:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 16 September 2025 be approved as a correct and accurate record.

**CYP.80 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No questions were received in advance of the meeting.

The following questions were asked at the meeting

Kiera Delaney explained that in the Department for Education and NHS England Stocktake Letter to Bury Council (July 2025), the local area was recognised for making structural improvements, but the letter also made clear that further work is needed to strengthen data reporting and oversight including how the Council monitors the delivery of EOTAS and AP packages and demonstrates the actual impact of its actions.

Stocktake Letter, July 2025, p. 3–4 — “It remains essential to enhance data reporting capabilities”

The Ofsted SEND Inspection Report (February 2024) found inconsistent recording and monitoring of annual reviews and highlighted weaknesses in the timeliness of support and data accuracy.

Ofsted Local Area SEND Inspection Report, Feb 2024, p. 6–7 — “Leaders do not have reliable oversight of”

The Bury SEND Partnership Self-Evaluation and Annual Engagement document (October 2025) notes that, while the local area has “taken purposeful and effective action,” there is “still more to do to ensure every child, young person and their families receives the support they need, when they need it.”

That same report confirms 69 children are currently placed in Alternative Provision, though it does not specify how many are receiving a full-time, suitable education.

Kiera asked:

1. What is the current verified data, as of November 2025, showing:

- How many children and young people with EHC Plans are not receiving their full Section F provision;
- How many with EOTAS named have their full package implemented and regularly monitored;
- Of the 69 children in Alternative Provision, how many receive a full-time, suitable education; and
- The percentage of annual reviews completed within statutory timescales, and amended plans issued within 12 weeks of the review meeting?

2. Given that the DfE requires councils to demonstrate impact rather than planning, when will Bury publish verified evidence of measurable improvement — not just new structures or processes — showing that every child with an EHC Plan, including those educated otherwise than at school, is receiving their legal provision in full and on time?

Finally, I'd note that I raised a similar question in March 2025 regarding the Council's reported 97% compliance rate for EHCP assessments completed within 20 weeks, but no written response or supporting data has yet been provided.

Will the Committee ensure that both that information and the data requested tonight are published in full, so that members and the public can see the actual evidence of improvement?

The Executive Director Children and Young People explained that work was ongoing to ensure that data was collected accurately and was fully transparent. The Minutes of the Send Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB) meetings are published. Progress has been made to move to a position where we are collating the data alongside the key priority areas for full transparency.

Progress has been made behind the scenes to share data out in a way that is underscored and aligned to our key priorities.

With regards to the child-by-child specific data requested, the information will be provided in a direct response.

The Executive Director referred to the question asked at the meeting of the Committee in March 2025 and made assurance that the response would be provided.

- Kiran Hampson referred to fortnightly review meetings that were being held for parents of children awaiting tribunals. Kiran asked how many meetings were held, what was the purpose of the meetings, is there the opportunity for the Local Authority to agree changes to section 59 before the tribunal and if so what circumstances would lead to that outcome.
- Kiran also referred to new staff that were now in place and asked what steps had been taken to ensure that they were genuinely child focussed and empathetic and passionate in their approach to both children parents.

The Executive Director explained that she would ensure that a response was sent directly in relation to the question of fortnightly meetings.

With regards to the issue of challenges around communication, trust and confidence in was explained that this was at the centre of what the service was trying to achieve. There is still work to do to ensure that there is timely communication back to parents. Work is ongoing about how best to respond, and the service are looking to implement a multi-agency triage team that will be available to respond to requests in a more timely way. There is more to do in improving communication and in relation to ensuring that the workforce is child centred.

It was also explained that if there is recruitment to any positions from team manager or above, young people are part of that recruitment process.

The Executive Director also explained the role of the Change Maker group of young people who are working alongside the service to hold it to account and that this has been hugely impactful.

There was still a lot of work to undertake, and it was recognised that the service needs to do better but hopefully improvement were being seen.

- Sarah Morris referred to the recent 'Every Pair tells a Story' Protest that had been held nationally on 3rd November and which she had attended outside Bury Town Hall. A question had been raised at the meeting of Council on 13 November asking when the council will investigate all of the families that are being failed. The answer had been that 'we are improving'. Sarah asked when the families would be investigated.

The Director of Early Years stated that too many children were being let down, and this was not good enough, things were improving but not at a fast enough pace. It would not be possible to refer to each case by case but a strategic plan was in place and work was being done to improve the system going forward.

Jacqueline Daley explained that she had submitted a complaint regarding Children's Services which had taken 9 months to be dealt with which was passed the deadline for complaints.

It was explained that some complaints were more difficult to respond to due to the nature of the complaint and the complexity of the nature of the complaint.

The service have been reviewing systems and processes recently within children's services and working in partnership with the complaints team, and we've now established and much more robust tracking mechanism across those complaints. This is helping the Council to better understand our response and ensuring that as far as possible, we are keeping on track.

Councillor Shahbaz Arif referred to a post that he had seen on social media regarding a child with ADHD that had been out of school for a period of time and asked what the Council was doing to make sure that SEND children who were out of school were found suitable support and education.

The Director of Early Years explained that EOTAS were in place for when children were not in a mainstream setting and the team that worked with children in this situation aimed to get them back into mainstream as soon as possible. There were children that were out of mainstream, but the team were committed to work with all young people across Bury.

## **CYP.82 YOUTH JUSTICE REPORT**

Tracey Staines, Head of Youth Justice and Complex Safeguarding presented a report setting out the Youth Justice Business Plan 2025- 2026.

Bury and Rochdale Youth Justice Service amalgamated in 2014, and the partnership board is chaired by the Director of Bury Children's Services, with the Assistant Director of Rochdale Children's Services as co-chair. Strategically and operationally partners are drawn from both boroughs.

Bury retained responsibility for the Youth Justice Prevention element following the merge. There are close links and working relationships between the two services to ensure that we are identifying need at the earliest opportunity. One of our key priority areas is early identification of young people who may be at risk of offending, to intervene early and reduce the number of first-time entrants into the criminal justice service.

The Youth Justice Plan 2025/2026 was agreed by the Youth Justice Board in July 2025, and sets out the priorities for this financial year, in addition to the proposed outcomes for children and young people open to the service.

Issues covered in the business plan include:

- a. the need for a Bury town centre base for the service,
- b. higher numbers of children in Bury's care open to the service
- c. higher numbers of Bury children with EHCPs and identified SEND being worked with by the Youth Justice Service
- d. the disproportionality of some ethnic groups within the cohort of young people supported by the service

The Business plan notes performance against national key performance measures, with the number of first time entrants falling and the reoffending rate and custody rate being lower than the regional or GM average in Bury and Rochdale.

The plan also notes key risks, which include:

- a. Inconsistent attendance at the Partnership Board, with a change in governance structure being implemented to address this issue
- b. Differential access to expert additional resource as part of the Youth Justice offer, with Bury children not having access to a dedicated CAMHs practitioner, or a Educational Attendance specialist, or a Speech and Language Therapist

c. The absence of a seconded probation officer for children moving between children and adult youth justice services.

Six priority areas for 2025/26 are identified within the plan:

- a. Governance & Leadership
  - b. Prevention and Diversion
  - c. Remand, Custody and Resettlement
  - d. Victims and Restorative Justice
  - e. Serious Violence and Harmful Sexual Behaviour
  - f. Quality Assurance and Workforce Development
- and these broadly map to the inspection framework for Youth Justice Services.

Those present were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and the following points were raised:

- Councillor Ayesha Arif referred to the number of BME young people referred to and working with the Youth Justice Team and asked how the team could assure that staff working with these young people were representative of and sensitive to their needs.

It was confirmed that the workforce was culturally representative of the young people it supported. One of the concerns that was beyond the teams' control was disproportionality at the referral source before they reach youth justice. The workforce are trained and have completed all of the cultural, relevant training in relation to biodiversity and how to support meeting the needs of the child throughout their time with the Youth Justice Team. The supervision framework has been developed to ensure that the young person is talked to in a reflective way, looking at social graces and intersectionality and agree through supervision how to work with the child and their family to ensure that it is meaningful more impactful and respectful.

- Councillor Hayes referred to the significant disparity between the provisions in Bury and in Rochdale, in particular the fact that there was no purpose built centre in Bury for young people to attend to meet professionals and secondly, there's a disparity in terms of the number of professionals in Rochdale when compared to the number in Bury, Bury is depleted in comparison to Rochdale.
- The YP representative also referred to the lack of a facility for young people to go to in Bury, and that this was currently under review and asked for an update on this, including how much would it cost, how long will it take and whether a location had been identified.

Tracey explained that in terms of the disparity between staff, the issue had been raised at the Youth Justice Partnership Board and was explained that it was with regards to partners as opposed to the Justice staff themselves.

The aspiration was to have a walk-in centre that can be accessed without an appointment as part of a family hub. Colleagues within the BGI directorate were currently looking at different options. The cost and timescales were currently unknown due to the question of location still being considered.

Tracey explained that the expertise that we already have in the service was utilised with regards to the place and space, staff were promoted to go and see children at home and to also take them out to different places. Whilst there might not be a location and building currently, the young people were seen at locations they were comfortable with.

- Councillor Boles referred to the numbers of young people that were being supported by the YJB who were in the NEET category and asked why it was felt that a sub group should look at the issue. He also asked whether any consultation work had been done with the young people themselves as to why they were not in education, employment or training?

Tracey explained that the figures refer to 'suitable' education or employment which reflects 25 hours or more which could mean that some young people are in employment, education or training but for less than 25 hours a week which makes the figures misleading. A survey/consultation hasn't been undertaken but it was explained that the team hold regular reviews with the young people to get their views on where they are best suited in relation to activities and education

Jeanette explained that the subgroup decision was reached through discussion across the partnership and to look at working with the young people to look at the current offer and how the partnership were working together and what could be done differently. The relationships between the young people at the youth justice practitioners was very strong due to the small number of young people and the high level of support they received.

### **It was agreed:**

1. That the contents of the report be supported for onward submission to Cabinet.
2. That an update in relation to the dedicated purpose built centre be brought back to a future meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.
3. That a dialogue is opened with young people using the Youth Justice Service who are classified as NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) to gather their input on the barriers preventing them from engaging in employment, education, or training.

## **CYP.83 SEND - RELATING TO OFSTED SELF EVALUATION**

Ben Dunne Director of Education and Skills presented a report which had been produced following Bury's local area SEND services Inspection by the Care Quality Commission and Ofsted. The inspection team identified widespread, systemic failings in services and highlighted the challenge that the service need to do more to improve the outcomes of children and young people with special educational needs.

The inspection identified 6 priority actions which Bury Council and NHS Greater Manchester ICB are jointly responsible for, along with 3 areas for improvement. As a result of the inspection outcome, the local authority has been issued with an



Improvement Notice and will be subject to monitoring visits followed by a re-inspection in approximately 18 months.

As a result of the inspection outcome, the Bury local area has produced a Priority Action Plan, which is locally being referred to as the Priority Impact Plan (PIP).

The PIP has been co-produced with stakeholders, including parents and carers and is the strategic plan for SEND, setting out what needs to be delivered in the next 18-24 months with key milestones and key performance indicators. The plan is published on the Bury SEND Local Offer.

Support for the delivery of the Priority Impact Plan has been supported through additional investment by the council and the ICB – this will support the programme management and governance but also address some of the critical deficits identified in the report. The level of investment secured is approximately £450,000 a year.

Bury Council has also applied for Intervention Support Fund (ISF), which is a targeted grant provided by the Department for Education (DfE) to support local authorities in England that are under formal intervention to bolster resources and further support the implementation of the Priority Impact Plan (PIP). A response to the grant application is currently awaited and further information, should this be granted at the next Scrutiny Committee.

The report set out the following information:

- Governance Arrangements
- Monitoring Arrangements
- SEND Service Launch, embedding 'Deep Dive' activities

The conclusion of the report was that the Local Area SEND Partnership is continuing in its commitment to improving services for children and young people with SEND and their families.

The SIAB has received assurance that we are progressing, in accordance with the commitments set out in the Local Area SEND Priority Impact Plan. There is still a considerable amount of work to be done, and it is essential that we maintain a consistent pace and ensure that we capture the impact for our children, young people and their families and that this is sustained throughout

Those present were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and the following points were raised:

- Councillor Lancaster referred to changes to ADHD/Autism assessments due to start in January that she had been made aware of for through Bury Together in relation to CAHMS assessments for children assessed to have moderate or severe mental health conditions. Concerns had been raised that some children may not meet the assessment criteria and will not get as assessment for ADHD/autism via the NHS.

Jeanette Richards explained that Bury Together are key strategic partners. The issue has been discussed at the SIAB where it was agreed that more detailed

information did need to be presented back to the community. It was recognised that changes bring additional uncertainty and Children's Services will be looking to provide assurance.

- Councillor Haroon referred to feedback from parents in relation to the Local Offer and asked how it had been received.

Jeanette reported that the level of feedback had improved.

Jeanette also explained that funding for Beebot AI technology had been secured to help create a more intuitive local offer that would be more widely available to those with additional needs. The council would be moving to consulting with families that would use it which would support the procurement, designing and building a system.

Ben Dunne explained that the need was to move from a system that was adversarial to one that was supportive in nature and also looking at how the family hubs are used to engage directly with families.

It was also explained that access and communication with families in formats other than digital was a priority and making sure that all information was available across many formats.

- Councillor Boles asked when the improvements would start to be seen.

Jeanette stated that improvements would hopefully start to be seen before the end of the year.

- Councillor Ryder referred to PIP5 relating to transitions and primary schools inputting this information and the fact that the 6into7 system was funded up to September 2026. She asked what would happen after that date.

Ben explained that the system had been well received and would be continued. Ben Explained that funding would be requested from the delegation through the schools' forum.

- Councillor Hayes referred to the intervention support fund and the outcome currently being awaited. He asked when the decision would come through how significant was it?

It was explained the council had made an application to the Department for Education for additional improvement monies through the intervention support fund. It had been a rigorous process. The Council had received the news in September that they had successfully secured £160,000 to support with improvement. The next steps would need to be planned. The funding will be used to improve communication with parents and carers, to pilot a multi-agency triage team and also improve data reporting. It was explained that the DfE would be looking for the demonstrative impact of the funding.

Jeanette also reported that a separate grant of £70,000 had been received and would be used to support on going co-production and consultation with the

changemaker group of young people who have lived experience of SEND. The group are coming forward with innovative ideas around how to improve SEND services.

Ben reported that the Education and Inclusion Strategy had been launched the previous week and was very well attended by headteachers and change of the changemakers who spoke to the headteachers directly and asked how they would support a younger version of him over the next ten years.

- Councillor Boles asked if there was confidence that the way the Local Offer was defined was the same across all departments and schools?

It was explained that there was still work to be done but the strategies around sharing information in all formats, the development of a video that will be widely circulated and the networks that are being developed with schools and senior leaders would help get the information to as many people and organisations as possible.

It was also explained that all of the SENCOs had been brought together at an event at the end of September and 95% of schools were represented

#### **It was agreed:**

1. That the update be noted
2. That Jeanette and Ben be thanked for their update

### **CYP.84 SOCIAL CARE REFORM UPDATE**

The Executive Director of Children and Young People presented a report giving an overview of the Social Care Reforms and the approach to implementation in Bury.

Following publication of the independent review of children social care in May 2022, the government outlined a commitment to deliver transformational whole-system reform as set out in their 'Stable Homes, built on love' Strategy.

The social care reforms have four overarching outcomes:

- Children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need.
- Children and young people are supported by their family network.
- Children and young people are safe in and outside of their homes.
- Children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes.

The Policy Framework was set out within the report:

- May 2022 – publication of Josh Macalister's Independent Review of Children's Social Care
- February 2023 – publication of the Stable Homes, Built on Love Strategy, the Government's implementation strategy for improving social care.
- December 2023 – publication of four key publications, outlining the changes, actions and plans to support delivery of the strategy:
  - National kinship strategy 'Championing Kinship Care'
  - Children's Social Care National Framework

- Refreshed multi-agency statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
  - Digital and data strategy
- November 2024 - Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive policy paper published, which the Children's Wellbeing & Schools Bill will put aspects of the reforms into law.
- December 2024 – Children's Wellbeing & Schools Bill introduced into Parliament.
- March 2025 – Families First Partnership Programme Guide published setting out delivery expectations for safeguarding partners in England to support national rollout from April 2025.

It was explained that the Family First Partnership guidance was shared in April 2025 and set out the expectations to transform the whole system of help, support, and protection, requiring safeguarding partners to bring together targeted early help, child in need and multi-agency child protection into a seamless system, including services and workforces such as family support workers, social workers, and other highly-skilled, experienced, alternatively qualified practitioners. The intention is that children, young people and their families can receive the right level of support at the right time to meet their needs.

The three key delivery strands to the FFPP are:

- Family Help
- Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPTs)
- Family Group Decision Making (FGDM)

Nationally, £523 million has been provided for the FFP Programme in 2025-26 and this will continue in each year of the Spending Review period (£523m each year from 2026-27 – 2028-29). This money will fund additional children's social care prevention services, and commitments in the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill to improve help and protection for children.

Bury has been allocated £900,000 for each of the next 3 years with an additional transformation grant of £127,000 to support transformation activity across the partnership. Spending of the grant is monitored through quarterly returns to DfE/MHCLG.

The DfE have outlined their expectation that 2025-26 is the year of transformation as local areas invest time and resource into local design in the first stage of the programme. In June, Bury submitted phase 1 delivery plans to the DfE setting out leads from the safeguarding partners and first stage plans for co-design and readiness planning. Phase 2 of the delivery plan must be submitted by 19th December 2025.

There have been two immersive partnership workshops, supported by our DfE Delivery Partner Mutual Ventures, to socialise the reforms and established a shared vision for local implementation. A planning workshop with the delegated safeguarding partners – Social Care, Health, Police & Education – has taken place to agree our approach to implementation. This has considered Bury's profile of need, geographical areas and strengths in the current system which are enablers to support pilot and implementation of the reforms.

Significant progress has already been made in relation to Family Group Decision Making which will be the first implementation strand in Bury. This will include the scaling up of the current team to provide Family Group Decision Making and Family Network Meetings earlier on in a family's journey through the system (Spring 2026).

The MACPT will be piloted followed by a Family Help team, allowing the opportunity to learn from each pilot before moving to full implementation.

The aim to pilot these from Spring 2026 as we work over coming weeks and months with partners to understand the pathways for children and families and consider how the pilots will be resourced and delivered. There are significant changes in this space, which will require a reconfiguration and restructure of services across the partnership (including children's social care) due to changes in how certain functions must be delivered and the changes in roles.

Once the learning from both pilots is fully understood more detailed plans can be developed for full implementation throughout 2026 and 2027.

Significant IT system changes are required to support the reforms, with DfE guidance to the system providers expected in November 2025. It is currently unclear what elements of the system will be required to be configured by the provider, versus what we will have to design and configure locally. System access will also need to be extended to partners to enable access to assessments and plans which will require development with dedicated resource.

Any redesign of service or delivery must involve staff, children and families (this is a national requirement) and other stakeholders to ensure the revised system reflects the views and needs of our borough. We have already begun to discuss the reforms with staff via engagement sessions and Extended Manager Meetings, and this will continue.

Councillor Southworth confirmed that this was long awaited and would be a big and a welcomed change.

- Councillor Boles referred to the Family First Partnership Programme and explained that he couldn't see any KPI's or measures of impact and asked if it was known when these would be available.

Jeanette explained that the information included in the papers was the first step. The measures of impact would likely be details of numbers, fewer children in with child protection plans, fewer children becoming looked after or if they are within kinship care.

It was explained that ideally there would be a shorter period of engagement as delivery is more impactful and a reduction of repeat demand.

Jeanette explained that an outcome framework would be created to monitor and this will be included in the plan.

- Councillor Boles asked that a briefing note showing how success would be measured is provided at the next meeting.

- Councillor Haroon referred to potential barriers to success and asked how these would be overcome.

Jeanette explained that there would be a sequence of potential challenges in relation to implementation of change, high volumes of demand across the system and also the funding envelope which was £900,000 for 3 years and that may not be enough. It would be tough work but the workforce would be fully supported and joint working across the board will also support the challenges.

- Councillor Berry asked if this was a welcomed change and if there would be any negative impact?

Jeanette reported that many aspects were welcomed, keeping families together, addressing parental issues and worries, kinship arrangements. There were worries around supporting practitioners and the need to make sure that they have the skills set and that management is appropriate. It was explained that this is why the pilot approach to monitor impact and bring learning into the process would be valuable. It would be a significant change over 3 years so will be incremental.

- Councillor Lancaster asked how staffing and recruitment was looking now.

It was explained that there was still some work to do with regards to SEND. Early Help and Social Care was in a much better place than it had been with regards to Managers and Senior leaders, the use of agency staff had reduced which was positive for both the workforce and the families.

**It was agreed:**

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That a briefing note showing how success will be measured in relation to the implementation of the reforms is brought to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Panel.

**CYP.85 CHILDRENS SERVICES COMPLAINTS REPORT**

The Elections Manager presented a report setting out the Children's Social Care Complaints for years 22/23, 23/24 & 24/25

The Annual Complaints Reports have been produced in accordance with 24(D) & 26 of the Children Act 1989 Representation Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 and statutory guidance for the Department for Education, Getting the best from complaints to update Members in respect of complaints to Children's Social Care Services.

The reports look at the period March 2022 – March 2023 and March 2023 – March 2024 and will allow Members to see the extent and complexity of Children's Social Care Service's span of activity and to receive information relating to the quality of the services delivered.

- Councillor Hayes referred to repeat and vexatious complaints and asked how many there were.

It was explained that the figure changed year on year. Repeat complaints do take up a lot of time and impacts on the IG team and the Children's Services Team particularly in relation to FOIs and SARs as people use different channels to submit them including the Council, Councillors and MPs.

All complaints are logged as individual complaints and if a complainant then adds more issues to the complaint this could then be classed as a new complaint and would start at stage 1 in order to investigate. A complainant could have several complaints open at once being dealt with at different stages of the process.

- Councillor Boles asked what learning was taken from complaints and whether this would improve outcomes.

It was explained that the responsible manager would be required to identify any learning that can be taken from the complaints and share this with their teams.

Headlines from the complaints team are shared back across Children's Services, across Education and across Social Care. Information is also translated back into workforce development planning and the relevant teams and also sits alongside the wider improvement plan.

There are key areas linked to complaints which are learning points including expectations and communication and what skills can be utilised to communicate better with customers.

- The YP representative asked if there was a strategy in place to reduce complaints.

It was explained that complaints provide important feedback and learning. The relevant teams will take the opportunity to have a face to face conversation at the first point that the complaint is made to be able to review the situation.

- Councillor Berry referred to the silent protest that had been held nationally to raise awareness for children with SEND and the fact that this could be seen as a complaint. He asked if a response would be sent in relation to this.

Jeannette reported that a response was being prepared in relation to the protest and this would be sent through the Communications Team.

**It was agreed:**

That the contents of the report be noted

**CYP.86 URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business raised at the meeting.

**COUNCILLOR C BOLES**

**Chair**

**(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.50 pm)**



# SCRUTINY REPORT

**MEETING:** CYP Scrutiny Committee

**DATE:** 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**SUBJECT:** Family Hubs and Better Start

**REPORT FROM:** Ben Dunne

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Collette Radcliffe

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

A Family Hub is a system-wide model of providing high-quality, joined- up, whole-family support services. Family Hubs deliver these services to families from conception, through a child's early years until they reach the age of 19 (or 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities). Family Hub model provides a universal 'front door' to families, offering a 'one-stop shop' of family support services across their social care, education, mental health and physical health needs, with a comprehensive Start for Life offer for parents and babies at its core. This is the universal offer for all families in the first 1001 days which brings together critical services for every new family.

## 2.0 ISSUES

### 2.1 Funding

Family Hub funding to be received by Bury from April 2026 totals **£2,161,100** across the 3 years.

Strand	% <sup>1</sup>	2026-27 Allocation <sup>2</sup>	2027-28 Allocation	2028-29 Allocation
Best Start Family Hubs delivery grant - programme	47%	£385,900	£315,600	£324,000
Best Start Family Hubs delivery grant - capital	11%	£77,200	£78,700	£80,200
Parenting support	17%	£122,700	£124,300	£129,700
Home learning environment support	24%	£170,300	£172,400	£180,000
Total		£756,100	£691,000	£714,000

- Bury was not in receipt of the Family Hubs monies released to Local Authorities approximately 3 years ago.
- Bury has been awarded £137K to bridge this deficit as we did not receive T1 or T2 family hub monies. This is set aside from the financials listed in the table above.
- From April 2026 Bury LA will be awarded funding across 4 strands. Strands 3 and 4 are primarily for 3 and 4 years old's and recognises the symbiotic link between early years

educational establishments and the Home Learning Environment. This funding totals £2,161,100 across the 3 years.

- Programme Guidance is expected to be received in December; we are also awaiting Annex M which will set out the EB programmes that can be used.
- Those Local Authorities that received existing Family Hub funding are now going to receive an additional strand of investment named Best Start in Life Family Hubs and Healthy Babies 0-5 years. This isn't a strand we are receiving, GMCA are challenging this on behalf of Local Authorities who are not going to receive this strand due to the inequalities this will create compounding those already created previously.
- All Local Authorities have been set an ambitious 3 year target to improve the Good Level of Development which is the measure for School Readiness and a statutory assessment completed at the end of reception.

Our targets are set to be achieved by 2028 they are:

- 74% of children achieving GLD this is an increase of 9 percentage points.
- 57.7% of children in receipt of FSM achieving GLD, this is an increase of 6.2 percentage points.

Family Hub activity is pivotal to supporting the achievement of these ambitious targets through the services delivered by supporting children and families pre-birth to the age of 5 years and giving them the Best Start in Life. This can only be achieved by services, partners and voluntary organisations working closely together.

### **2.2 Estates and Delivery Space**

The following spaces are used for the delivery of multi-agency services:

- Radcliffe Hub/Coronation Road Children's Centre
- Bury West and North Children's Centre
- East Bury Family Hub
- Chesham Fold Family Hub, Hoyle Nursery School Forest garden
- Whitefield Children's Centre
- Prestwich Hub, Prestwich Library, The Wow centre, Spark Life in Stella House and St Mary's Park
- Additionally, we offer drop-in sessions and visit pre - existing organisations for families with children 0-5 years within Church Halls, The FED, ADAB, Bury Active Women's Centre.
- Weekly sessions are also delivered within our Parks across the borough

Childrens Centres, Family Hubs and other venues are used for delivery purposes, however the Local Authority buildings are aging and small in size which means there are always difficulties in delivering the full spectrum of Family Hub activity.

### **2.3 Future plans**

- Radcliffe Hub development– time scales July 2026 this will offer a delivery space, clinical and office space for staff to work. The Bridge Street building – We are exploring use of this building to become our designated Family Hub – This building is currently being used by the Vinci contractors as a base and will not become available until July 2026. Our current building on Coronation Road – We would like to keep this building as

a spoke from the main hub to allow us to reach out into the local community around the building and further develop the relationships and work we have already commenced.

- Chesham Fold Family Hub – time scale early 2026 – Unique opportunity to deliver services within one of the most deprived areas in Bury. (awaiting roof repairs from Housing) Chesham fold community centre, we conducted a visit to the site earlier this week, work now needs to be undertaken to assess the feasibility of using this building as it is in a poor state of repair.
- Whitefield working as a campus model across Whitefield Family Hub and the Ark Live Well Centre – time scales for the Ark work should commence shortly, opening to deliver services in the new year.
- Prestwich Hub – The building will be Community Asset transferred to the Jewel Foundation with an MOU in place which describes service delivery and expectation of using the space jointly going forward.
- Bury West and North Hub – This building has been refurbished and is our Early Years centre, supporting families from Bury West and the North of the borough. Consideration needs to be given as to if an additional space in the north (Ramsbottom) would support this large geographical location which would then allow for a hub and spoke model.
- Bury East Family Hub – This building was remodelled in 2024 and is serving as Bury's first Family Hub, however due to the geographical size and landscape of Bury East it has been discussed that the Family Hub should be relocated to the New Kershaw centre (due to the deprivation levels North of Rochdale Road) once this becomes vacant in 2027. Redevelopment of the site will be required to ensure the building is fit for purpose going forward. The East Bury building can then be lease out or disposed of. To note the roof of the East building needs to be replaced as outlined in a recent roof survey, the costings of this stands at £250K.

### **2.4 Plans for Spend:**

- Strengthening parents to be the most enduring and consistent educator in their child's life. Substantial additional capacity will be needed across both strands including extending existing temporary contracts of our Early Years Workers who currently deliver 70% of the Family Hub expectations.
- Universal - Evidenced Based Home-Learning Programme to be delivered across neighbourhoods utilising Early Years Educational Establishments and Home-Learning Environments. This would require 2 additional staff members to allow capacity and support delivery.
- Specialist – Increase Portage capacity and accessibility to families to meet the specific needs of Bury's most vulnerable children and their families.

This will require additional thought and planning as the guidance becomes clearer through the multi-agency Family Hub Delivery Board.

**Group Work** – Bury have purchased the Liquid logic group work module which will enable us to record sessions attendance and family hub activity, this will link directly to EHM and LCS enabling joined up working and sharing of information across internal services. Staff have all now accessed the training sessions to use the system. The system is now ready and live. staff are now concentrating on registering families and creating sessions within the system, which is a huge task. From January we will begin the formal process of

attaching the registered families to the sessions they have attended. From April 2026 We will be able to look back over Q4 Jan-March and report on attendances and registrations at all sites and sessions enabling us to monitor and track attendance at our Family Hub sessions and services going forward. So far, we have registered 295 families this continues to grow weekly.

### **Attendance:**

We are currently completing a manual count of attendance at Childrens Centre and Family Hub sessions for our 0-5 offer.

Last year from April 2024 April 2025 **26,427** children and families attended of Childrens Centre and Family Hub activities.

**Q1: April- June 2025 - 8,292 children and families**

**Q2 July -September 2025 – 7309 children and their families**

**Total for this year so far: 15,301 families and children**

We do not currently record attendance at midwifery or HV appointments, however this will be captured on group work going forward.

**Chesham Fold** - The contractors have now handed the building back to us and we have commenced work to internally prepare the building for use. This includes moving all furniture and equipment from our storage space. Unfortunately, during the building handover the contractors brought to our attention that the roof over the single story extension and garage do not have any felt on them as this has perished meaning that the slate tiles are resting on the rafters causing the roofs to leak. We are currently in discussion with housing as part of the responsibility lies with them to rectify these issues. The garage roof is our responsibility, and quotes are being sourced, however the roof is shared with the property next door which we are not responsible for, and the work will probably require a full new roof to make it safe and secure. Whilst the roofs are replaced we may have to close the site for a short period of time as the work will require scaffolding.

Further to this we have just had our Fire Risk assessment complete by an external company as required by Law prior to opening. This has identified a number of issues that need to be addressed before we can open, including replacing some of the internal doors as they are not compliant with fire regulations. We are awaiting the full report so we can address the issues raised.

Bury staff Wi-Fi has now been installed in the building, which means staff can work from the building whilst deliveries, work and contractors visit the site.

The CCTV, Fire alarm and burglar alarm are now all working order.

The Family Hub sign has now been installed.

We will be increasing community presence in the lead up to opening, liaising with the community and gathering feedback.

We have now completed 4 separate consultation events in the local community, the last was delivered over two days with representation from the Early Years team, Early help team, educational psychologist, youth justice and a member of staff from the youth team. We have also given families the opportunity to completed virtual feedback via a google form in total we have consulted with 52 local families.

### **Feedback shows the need for the following:**

- Baby sessions
- Speech and language support
- Safe space for children of all ages
- 0-5 sessions
- Morning sessions for babies
- Afternoons for all other ages
- Youth club
- School holiday sessions
- Arts craft, dancing, boxing
- SEND sessions
- Advice and support and school children
- Careers advice
- Parent classes
- Esol
- Support for dads
- Mental health
- Healthy eating
- Transition support
- Safety in the community
- Messy play sessions

The building has a new email address assigned to it [cheshamfold.fh@bury.gov.uk](mailto:cheshamfold.fh@bury.gov.uk) which is now being shared with partners. The telephone number is 0161 253 7300 (this will be live shortly)

A family hub opening day will take place once it is safe to open and we would welcome partnership involvement in this e.g. a community day.

### **Building usage - Already agreed:**

- Monthly Citizens Advice drop session
- Revenues and benefits weekly drop in session
- Monthly Speech and language drop-in session – by SALT
- Weekly community walm space (cold food) delivered by Housing whilst the Community centre is closed
- Healthy Start Vitamin distribution
- Clothing donation rail
- Essential parent iPad
- Weekly 0-5 core offer sessions including, 0-5 stay and play, Little Cruisers, baby stay and play, 5 week course of baby sensations
- Little Talker 5 week course to support SLC for children aged 18 months to 3 years
- Building Blocks to Words 5 week course to support SLC for children aged 0-18 months
- We will also continue to deliver a weekly forest stay and play session at Hoyle Nursery
- Support and information on childcare costs and finding childcare places
- Volunteering opportunities
- Weekly parent/carers drop in session

Currently the borough are in discussion with Youth, Midwifery and Adult learning about use of space.

### **Timetable:**

A specific timetable of delivery has been drafted in anticipation of opening and will be available shortly.

## **2.5 Governance**

**The Family Hub Delivery Board** – The board has met 7 times with the next meeting taking place in January 2026. There is good attendance from board members with 14 members attending regularly. The board monitors an action plan, and a risk register to enable continuous improvements. It was discussed at the last board that there should be an operational group established that will report progress and issues directly to the board. This group will be chaired by Collette. The board representation needs to include IT and Data and performance teams.

We also have the Starting Well and Early Help Partnership Board (SWEHP) jointly chaired by the director of Public Health Jon Hobday and The Early Years Service manager Collette Radcliffe. Discussions are underway to merge The Family Hub Delivery Board and the SWEHP Board, this board would then become the strategic governance and align our Family Hub, public health and Early Years and Family help priorities. This board would meet bimonthly and be chaired by Ben Dunne, the Director of Early Years, Education and Skills and the vice chair would be Jon Hobday, the Director of Public Health.

The newly developed GLD subgroup will report directly into this board. This multi-agency group is chaired by Collette Radcliffe and is currently meeting every two weeks. The group has developed a 5-year strategic action plan, and a member of the public health team is helping to project manage this piece of work.

This work will also be governed by the DfE with our first progress meeting taking place at some point in January 2026.

It was also agreed that each Childrens Centre and Family Hub will each have a partnership Group that includes parental representation. This group will design and increase the offer and make decisions about service delivery. A decision needs to be made about who will chair and organise the meetings going forward.

Discussions and consultations with parents' carers and service users are ongoing in each neighborhood as we deliver sessions and services. The voice of the community and service users are helping to shape the delivery model and are being shared with our parent's forum.

**Parents forum-** We have delivered 3 parents forums this year with attendance from parents and carers across the borough the average attendance is 7.

From these session parents and carers have influenced how we promote and deliver our services.

They have asked us to (you said we did):

- Create individual timetable for each centre in a paper format
- A session for dads and male carers
- Asked for school readiness sessions to continue in the summer
- To establish a pram push session

- Advised on social media posts
- Whitefield outdoor garden

### **Social Media-**

4.9k Followers on Facebook which continues to grow daily.

394 followers on Instagram

### **Beebot –**

The contract between ourselves and Beebot has now been finalised, we are now moving to the platform development phase. We are now in the process of establishing 3 working groups to develop the first 3 strands of content, of which one is Family Hubs. Membership in this working group will come from the Early Years team, Family Hub staff also from our Family Hub delivery Board.

### **Timetable -**

#### **Padlet-**

<https://padlet.com/BuryEarlyYears/bury-universal-universal-plus-family-offer-0-5-years-ea7fsqI0nk8ynfjb>

We have had 20k visits to the padlet since commencing use, to promote and share our sessions and services for children and their families aged 0-5

### **Parenting**

Below are the Universal and universal plus parenting programmes for families with children aged 0-5 now being delivered through our Childrens Centre's and Family Hubs by our Early Years Development team.

#### **Universal:**

- **Communication Stay and Play** – a weekly session (coming soon) 12months -3 years parents who want to support their child communication
- **Little Adventures**- A weekly drop-in session for children aged 18 months – 5 years. Supports children's physical development.
- **Ready, Steady, grow** – A weekly session for children aged 0-5 years- supporting physical development through play.

#### **Universal plus:**

- **Building blocks to words** – A 5-week course for babies 0-18 months to support babies' communication skills
- **Little Talkers** – A 5-week course – for children aged 18 months- 3 years for children with a mild communication delay
- **Tiny Treasures**- A 5-week course – for children aged 1-2 years, aimed to support parents who want to understand how they can support their child's development and learning through play.

**During Quarter two 826 children and parents attended our Early Years development sessions and course.**

We are now delivering the following targeted parenting programmes:

- Riding the Rapids
- Tripple P parenting programme
- Tripple P Early Years and Primary
- Tripple P teen

- Stronger relationships and healthy parenting
- Solihul parenting programme
- Who's in Charge

Information on courses delivered and attendance has been included in Family Helps portfolio report.

**Session delivery-** The EY universal core offer in Prestwich is now being fully delivered this is being delivered from multiple different venues including the FED, Spark life (Stella House), WOW centre, Park, Library and Prestwich hub.

This means we are now fully meeting the 70% delivery requirement for Early Years – Activities for Children aged 0-5 years.

**Session development-** We are listening to family's needs and adjusting and growing our delivery based on the feedback we receive for example families asked for a session for Dad's and male carers we delivered on this ask by establishing Weekend warriors, this session has gone from strength to strength, is well attended and recently feature in a comms report. The session has also been shortlisted for a 'Let's Do it award'. Our plans are to deliver a further monthly session building on the success of what we are already delivering in the south of the borough.

**Essential parent-** The essential parent app has now been launched, as part of the launch each children's centre has been provided within an iPad and stand to be placed in their reception areas which will enable families to access information and guidance available on the app these are now ready to be installed. There has been some issues with the IT but hopefully these are being addressed.

**Wi-Fi connectivity-** ICT have now rolled out the new Wi-Fi connectivity at Bury West and North and also to Radcliffe CC which has enabled the Midwives to access their digital records and remain on site and extend their clinics (this is the first outreach outside of 3 and 6 KP). Our plans are for the Wi-Fi to be extended to East and Whitefield. IT are currently liaising with the staff at East.

**Birth Registrars** – It is proposed that the registrars will work from Prestwich 1 day per week.

**Digital platform Beebot-** Development of the digital platform has continued with sign off from SLT to move to full concept. Family Hubs is one of the three key areas for initial development with a working group being established to mobilise this, partners from the Family Hub delivery board have been asked to support and attend the working group. We continue visit local community venues and groups to offer support and guidance in the community on numerous topics including ICON, take up of funding entitlements and weaning etc, staff will also refer to specialist services when needed in the hope that this will reduce the demand for statutory services.

We currently visit the following venues:

- FED
- Bury Active Women's Bury
- ADAB
- Heaton Park Methodist
- Bolton Road Methodist
- Mosses centre



- We have also supported the care leavers by delivering a stay and play session for the last 12 months.

We also support families (linking into the poverty agenda) with:

- Healthy Start Vitamin distribution
- Clothing donation rail
- Oral hygiene
- Food parcels
- Breastfeeding
- Story sacks
- Support with Childcare – finding a place, costs and funding
- Speech and language support, -WellComm screenings
- Weekly parent/carer drop in session
- Volunteering opportunities
- School and college placements

### 3.0 CONCLUSION

The Family Hub programme in Bury is progressing at pace, with clear evidence of growing community engagement, strengthened multi-agency collaboration, and a developing infrastructure that will enable more coherent, high-quality support for families from pre-birth to age five and beyond. While challenges remain—notably around estates, capacity, and meeting ambitious GLD targets—the work to date demonstrates strong foundations, responsive service design shaped by local need, and a clear governance framework to drive continued improvement. Continued investment, partnership commitment and robust oversight will be essential to ensuring the Family Hub model delivers its full potential in improving outcomes and reducing inequalities for children and families across the borough.

---

---

**List of Background Papers:- n/a**

**Contact Details:**

*Ben Dunne (Director of Early Years, Education and Skills)*  
*b.dunne@bury.gov.uk*

Executive Director sign off Date:\_\_\_\_\_

JET Meeting Date:\_\_\_\_\_

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Family Hub update 12.12.25**

### **Description**

A Family Hub is a system-wide model of providing high-quality, joined- up, whole-family support services. Family Hubs deliver these services to families from conception, through a child's early years until they reach the age of 19 (or 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities). Family Hub model provides a universal 'front door' to families, offering a 'one-stop shop' of family support services across their social care, education, mental health and physical health needs, with a comprehensive Start for Life offer for parents and babies at its core. This is the universal offer for all families in the first 1001 days which brings together critical services for every new family.

### **Funding**

Family Hub funding to be received by Bury from April 2026 totals **£2,161,100** across the 3 years.

<b>Strand</b>	<b>%<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>2026-27 Allocation <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>2027-28 Allocation</b>	<b>2028-29 Allocation</b>
Best Start Family Hubs delivery grant - programme	47%	£385,900	£315,600	£324,000
Best Start Family Hubs delivery grant - capital	11%	£77,200	£78,700	£80,200
Parenting support	17%	£122,700	£124,300	£129,700
Home learning environment support	24%	£170,300	£172,400	£180,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>£756,100</b>	<b>£691,000</b>	<b>£714,000</b>

- Bury was not in receipt of the Family Hubs monies released to Local Authorities approximately 3 years ago.
- Bury has been awarded £137K to bridge this deficit as we did not receive T1 or T2 family hub monies. This is set aside from the financials listed in the table above.
- From April 2026 Bury LA will be awarded funding across 4 strands. Strands 3 and 4 are primarily for 3 and 4 years old's and recognises the symbiotic link between early years educational establishments and the Home Learning Environment. This funding totals £2,161,100 across the 3 years.
- Programme Guidance is expected to be received in December; we are also awaiting Annex M which will set out the EB programmes that can be used.
- Those Local Authorities that received existing Family Hub funding are now going to receive an additional strand of investment named Best Start in Life Family Hubs and Healthy Babies 0-5 years. This isn't a strand we are receiving, GMCA are challenging this on behalf of Local Authorities who are not going to receive this strand due to the inequalities this will create compounding those already created previously.
- All Local Authorities have been set an ambitious 3 year target to improve the Good Level of Development which is the measure for School Readiness and a statutory assessment completed at the end of reception.

Our targets are set to be achieved by 2028 they are:

- 74% of children achieving GLD this is an increase of 9 percentage points.
- 57.7% of children in receipt of FSM achieving GLD, this is an increase of 6.2 percentage points.

Family Hub activity is pivotal to supporting the achievement of these ambitious targets through the services delivered by supporting children and families pre-birth to the age of 5 years and giving them the Best Start in Life. This can only be achieved by services, partners and voluntary organisations working closely together.

### **Estates and delivery space**

We continue to use the following spaces.

- Radcliffe Hub/Coronation Road Children's Centre
- Bury West and North Children's Centre
- East Bury Family Hub
- Chesham Fold Family Hub, Hoyle Nursery School Forest garden
- Whitefield Children's Centre
- Prestwich Hub, Prestwich Library, The Wow centre, Spark Life in Stella House and St Mary's Park
- Additionally, we offer drop-in sessions and visit pre - existing organisations for families with children 0-5 years within Church Halls, The FED, ADAB, Bury Active Women's Centre.
- Weekly sessions are also delivered within our Parks across the borough

We use Childrens centres, Family hubs and other venues to deliver from however the Local Authority buildings are aging and small in size which means we struggle to deliver the full spectrum of Family Hub activity.

### **Future plans:**

- Radcliffe Hub development– time scales July 2026 this will offer a delivery space, clinical and office space for staff to work. The Bridge Street building – We are exploring use of this building to become our designated Family Hub – This building is currently being used by the Vinci contractors as a base and will not become available until July 2026. Our current building on Coronation Road – We would like to keep this building as a spoke from the main hub to allow us to reach out into the local community around the building and further develop the relationships and work we have already commenced.
- Chesham Fold Family Hub – time scale early 2026 – Unique opportunity to deliver services within one of the most deprived areas in Bury. (awaiting roof repairs from Housing) Chesham fold community centre, we conducted a visit to the site earlier this week, work now needs to be undertaken to assess the feasibility of using this building as it is in a poor state of repair.
- Whitefield working as a campus model across Whitefield Family Hub and the Ark Live Well Centre – time scales for the Ark work should commence shortly, opening to deliver services in the new year.

- Prestwich Hub – The building will be Community Asset transferred to the Jewel Foundation with an MOU in place which describes service delivery and expectation of using the space jointly going forward.
- Bury West and North Hub – This building has been refurbished and is our Early Years centre, supporting families from Bury West and the North of the borough. Consideration needs to be given as to if an additional space in the north (Ramsbottom) would support this large geographical location which would then allow for a hub and spoke model.
- Bury East Family Hub – This building was remodelled in 2024 and is serving as Bury's first Family Hub, however due to the geographical size and landscape of Bury East it has been discussed that the Family Hub should be relocated to the New Kershaw centre (due to the deprivation levels North of Rochdale Road) once this becomes vacant in 2027. Redevelopment of the site will be required to ensure the building is fit for purpose going forward. The East Bury building can then be lease out or disposed of. To note the roof of the East building needs to be replaced as outlined in a recent roof survey, the costings of this stands at £250K.

### **Plans for Spend:**

- Strengthening parents to be the most enduring and consistent educator in their child's life. Substantial additional capacity will be needed across both strands including extending existing temporary contracts of our Early Years Workers who currently delivery 70% of the Family Hub expectations.
- Universal - Evidenced Based Home-Learning Programme to be delivered across neighbourhoods utilising Early Years Educational Establishments and Home-Learning Environments. This would require 2 additional staff members to allow capacity and support delivery.
- Specialist – Increase Portage capacity and accessibility to families to meet the specific needs of Bury's most vulnerable children and their families.

This will require additional thought and planning as the guidance becomes clearer through the multi-agency Family Hub Delivery Board.

**Group Work** – Bury have purchased the Liquid logic group work module which will enable us to record sessions attendance and family hub activity, this will link directly to EHM and LCS enabling joined up working and sharing of information across internal services. Staff have all now accessed the training sessions to use the system. The system is now ready and live. staff are now concentrating on registering families and creating sessions within the system, which is a huge task. From January we will begin the formal process of attaching the registered families to the sessions they have attended. From April 2026 We will be able to look back over Q4 Jan-March and report on attendances and registrations at all sites and sessions enabling us to monitor and track attendance at our Family Hub sessions and services going forward. So far, we have registered 295 families this continues to grow weekly.

## **Attendance:**

We are currently completing a manual count of attendance at Childrens Centre and Family Hub sessions for our 0-5 offer.

Last year from April 2024 April 2025 **26,427** children and families attended of Childrens Centre and Family Hub activities.

**Q1: April- June 2025 - 8,292 children and families**

**Q2 July -September 2025 – 7309 children and their families**

**Total for this year so far: 15,301 families and children**

We do not currently record attendance at midwifery or HV appointments, however this will be captured on group work going forward.

**Chesham Fold** - The contractors have now handed the building back to us and we have commenced work to internally prepare the building for use. This includes moving all furniture and equipment from our storage space. Unfortunately, during the building handover the contractors brought to our attention that the roof over the single story extension and garage do not have any felt on them as this has perished meaning that the slate tiles are resting on the rafters causing the roofs to leak. We are currently in discussion with housing as part of the responsibility lies with them to rectify these issues. The garage roof is our responsibility, and quotes are being sourced, however the roof is shared with the property next door which we are not responsible for, and the work will probably require a full new roof to make it safe and secure. Whilst the roofs are replaced we may have to close the site for a short period of time as the work will require scaffolding.

Further to this we have just had our Fire Risk assessment complete by an external company as required by Law prior to opening. This has identified a number of issues that need to be addressed before we can open, including replacing some of the internal doors as they are not compliant with fire regulations. We are awaiting the full report so we can address the issues raised.

Bury staff Wi-Fi has now been installed in the building, which means staff can work from the building whilst deliveries, work and contractors visit the site.

The CCTV, Fire alarm and burglar alarm are now all working order.

The Family Hub sign has now been installed.

We will be increasing community presence in the lead up to opening, liaising with the community and gathering feedback.

We have now completed 4 separate consultation events in the local community, the last was delivered over two days with representation from the Early Years team, Early help team, educational psychologist, youth justice and a member of staff from the youth team.

We have also given families the opportunity to completed virtual feedback via a google form in total we have consulted with 52 local families.

Feedback shows the need for the following:

- Baby sessions
- Speech and language support
- Safe space for children of all ages
- 0-5 sessions
- Morning sessions for babies
- Afternoons for all other ages
- Youth club
- School holiday sessions
- Arts craft, dancing, boxing
- SEND sessions
- Advice and support and school children
- Careers advice
- Parent classes
- Esol
- Support for dads
- Mental health
- Healthy eating
- Transition support
- Safety in the community
- Messy play sessions

The building has a new email address assigned to it [cheshamfold.fh@bury.gov.uk](mailto:cheshamfold.fh@bury.gov.uk) which is now being shared with partners. The telephone number is 0161 253 7300 (this will be live shortly)

A family hub opening day will take place once it is safe to open and we would welcome partnership involvement in this e.g. a community day.

## **Building usage:**

### **Already agreed.**

- Monthly Citizens Advice drop session
- Revenues and benefits weekly drop in session
- Monthly Speech and language drop-in session – by SALT
- Weekly community walm space (cold food) delivered by Housing whilst the Community centre is closed
- Healthy Start Vitamin distribution
- Clothing donation rail
- Essential parent iPad
- Weekly 0-5 core offer sessions including, 0-5 stay and play, Little Cruisers, baby stay and play, 5 week course of baby sensations
- Little Talker 5 week course to support SLC for children aged 18 months to 3 years
- Building Blocks to Words 5 week course to support SLC for children aged 0-18 months
- We will also continue to deliver a weekly forest stay and play session at Hoyle Nursery
- Support and information on childcare costs and finding childcare places
- Volunteering opportunities
- Weekly parent/carer drop in session

We are in discussions with Youth, Midwifery and Adult learning about use of space.

### **Timetable:**

A specific timetable of delivery has been drafted in anticipation of opening and will be available shortly.

## **Governance**

**The family Hub delivery board** – we have now met 7 times with the next meeting taking place in January. We have good attendance from board members with 14 members attending regularly. The board monitors an action plan, and a risk register to enable continuous improvements. It was discussed at the last board that there should be an operational group established that will report progress and issues directly to the board. This group will be chaired by Collette. The board representation needs to include IT and Data and performance teams.

We also have the Starting Well and Early Help Partnership Board (SWEHP) jointly chaired by the director of Public Health Jon Hobday and The Early Years Service manager Collette Radcliffe. Discussions are underway to merge The Family Hub Delivery Board and the



SWEHP Board, this board would then become the strategic governance and align our Family Hub, public health and Early Years and Family help priorities. This board would meet bimonthly and be chaired by Ben Dunne, the Director of Early Years, Education and Skills and the vice chair would be Jon Hobday, the Director of Public Health.

The newly developed GLD subgroup will report directly into this board. This multi-agency group is chaired by Collette Radcliffe and is currently meeting every two weeks. The group has developed a 5-year strategic action plan, and a member of the public health team is helping to project manage this piece of work.

This work will also be governed by the DfE with our first progress meeting taking place at some point in January 2026.

It was also agreed that each Childrens Centre and Family Hub will each have a partnership Group that includes parental representation. This group will design and increase the offer and make decisions about service delivery. A decision needs to be made about who will chair and organise the meetings going forward.

Discussions and consultations with parents' carers and service users are ongoing in each neighborhood as we deliver sessions and services. The voice of the community and service users are helping to shape the delivery model and are being shared with our parent's forum.

**Parents forum-** We have delivered 3 parents forums this year with attendance from parents and carers across the borough the average attendance is 7.

From these session parents and carers have influenced how we promote and deliver our services.

They have asked us to (you said we did):

- Create individual timetable for each centre in a paper format
- A session for dads and male carers
- Asked for school readiness sessions to continue in the summer
- To establish a pram push session
- Advised on social media posts
- Whitefield outdoor garden

## **Social Media-**

4.9k Followers on Facebook which continues to grow daily.

394 followers on Instagram

## **Beebot –**

The contract between ourselves and Beebot has now been finalised, we are now moving to the platform development phase. We are now in the process of establishing 3 working groups to develop the first 3 strands of content, of which one is Family Hubs. Membership in this working group will come from the Early Years team, Family Hub staff also from our Family Hub delivery Board.

## **Timetable -**

### **Padlet-**

<https://padlet.com/BuryEarlyYears/bury-universal-universal-plus-family-offer-0-5-years-ea7fsqI0nk8ynfjb>

We have had 20k visits to the padlet since commencing use, to promote and share our sessions and services for children and their families aged 0-5

## **Parenting**

Below are the Universal and universal plus parenting programmes for families with children aged 0-5 now being delivered through our Childrens Centre's and Family Hubs by our Early Years Development team.

### **Universal:**

- **Communication Stay and Play** – a weekly session (coming soon) 12months -3 years parents who want to support their child communication
- **Little Adventures**- A weekly drop-in session for children aged 18 months – 5 years. Supports children's physical development.
- **Ready, Steady, grow** – A weekly session for children aged 0-5 years- supporting physical development through play.

### **Universal plus:**

- **Building blocks to words** – A 5-week course for babies 0-18 months to support babies' communication skills
- **Little Talkers** – A 5-week course – for children aged 18 months- 3 years for children with a mild communication delay

- **Tiny Treasures-** A 5-week course – for children aged 1-2 years, aimed to support parents who want to understand how they can support their child's development and learning through play.

**During Quarter two 826 children and parents attended our Early Years development sessions and course.**

We are now delivering the following targeted parenting programmes:

- Riding the Rapids
- Tripple P parenting programme
- Tripple P Early Years and Primary
- Tripple P teen
- Stronger relationships and healthy parenting
- Solihul parenting programme
- Who's in Charge

Information on courses delivered and attendance has been included in Family Helps portfolio report.

**Session delivery-** The EY universal core offer in Prestwich is now being fully delivered this is being delivered from multiple different venues including the FED, Spark life (Stella House), WOW centre, Park, Library and Prestwich hub.

This means we are now fully meeting the 70% delivery requirement for Early Years – Activities for Children aged 0-5 years.

**Session development-** We are listening to family's needs and adjusting and growing our delivery based on the feedback we receive for example families asked for a session for Dad's and male carers we delivered on this ask by establishing Weekend warriors, this session has gone from strength to strength, is well attended and recently feature in a comms report. The session has also been shortlisted for a 'Let's Do it award'. Our plans are to deliver a further monthly session building on the success of what we are already delivering in the south of the borough.

**Essential parent-** The essential parent app has now been launched, as part of the launch each children's centre has been provided within an iPad and stand to be placed in their reception areas which will enable families to access information and guidance available on the app these are now ready to be installed. There has been some issues with the IT but hopefully these are being addressed.

**Wi-Fi connectivity-** ICT have now rolled out the new Wi-Fi connectivity at Bury West and North and also to Radcliffe CC which has enabled the Midwives to access their digital records and remain on site and extend their clinics (this is the first outreach outside of 3 and 6 KP). Our plans are for the Wi-Fi to be extended to East and Whitefield. IT are currently liaising with the staff at East.

**Birth Registrars** – It is proposed that the registrars will work from Prestwich 1 day per week.

**Digital platform Beebot-** Development of the digital platform has continued with sign off from SLT to move to full concept. Family Hubs is one of the three key areas for initial development with a working group being established to mobilise this, partners from the Family Hub delivery board have been asked to support and attend the working group.

We continue visit local community venues and groups to offer support and guidance in the community on numerous topics including ICON, take up of funding entitlements and weaning etc, staff will also refer to specialist services when needed in the hope that this will reduce the demand for statutory services.

We currently visit the following venues:

- FED
- Bury Active Women's Bury
- ADAB
- Heaton Park Methodist
- Bolton Road Methodist
- Mosses centre
- We have also supported the care leavers by delivering a stay and play session for the last 12 months.

We also support families (linking into the poverty agenda) with:

- Healthy Start Vitamin distribution
- Clothing donation rail
- Oral hygiene
- Food parcels
- Breastfeeding
- Story sacks
- Support with Childcare – finding a place, costs and funding
- Speech and language support, -WellComm screenings
- Weekly parent/carer drop in session
- Volunteering opportunities

- School and college placements

This page is intentionally left blank

**SCRUTINY REPORT**

**MEETING:** Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

**DATE:** 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**SUBJECT:** CYP ILACS Improvement Plan

**REPORT FROM:** Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Jeanette Richards, Executive Director for Children's Services

---

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Improvement Plan that was developed following the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) carried out by Ofsted between 2<sup>nd</sup> June and 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025, as reported to Scrutiny Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025.
- 1.2 Following the inspection, we submitted our Local Authority action plan to Ofsted on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2025.  
On the 5<sup>th</sup> of December, the department received a letter from the NW Regional Director, Ofsted, stating that "It is helpful to see the actions planned to address the identified areas for improvement and the clearly identified governance arrangements for monitoring progress"

**2.0 ISSUES**

- 2.1 The Improvement Plan has retained the same priority areas as the previous plan, on the basis that the priority areas were co-produced with young people but also that Ofsted noted "a comprehensive and coherent improvement plan that is driving the necessary changes, and this is embraced by a whole council vision and by partner agencies. This incremental approach to delivering change across a number of services, supported by significant investment, has improved services for children".
- 2.2 The action plan addresses all areas for improvement identified during Ofsted's inspection, both the formal recommendations and comments within the inspection report as well as the feedback we received from inspectors during their time on-site. The plan also extends beyond the Ofsted findings, recognising the key enablers to transformation and also the need to implement national reforms including the Families First Partnership Programme (FFPP) and the Best Start Family Hubs agenda.
- 2.3 We will continue to use performance and quality assurance to measure the impact of our transformation and improvement activity.
- 2.4 The plan will be overseen by our new Strengthening Outcomes Board, which replaces our Improvement Board. Governance arrangements have been reviewed and new Terms of Reference agreed.

**3.0 CONCLUSION**

Members are asked to note the Improvement Plan.

**List of Background Papers:-**

Bury ILACS Improvement Plan (attached)

**Contact Details:-**

Beth Speak  
Children's Improvement Manager  
b.speak@bury.gov.uk  
0161 253 5115

Executive Director sign off Date:\_\_\_\_\_

JET Meeting Date:\_\_\_\_\_



# Children's Services Improvement Plan



## Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Vision .....	5
3. Bury Commitments .....	6
4. Transformation Oversight and Accountability .....	7
5. Action Plan .....	8
Priority 1: Identify and effective support children and families in need of help and protection .....	8
Priority 2: Ensure purposeful and timely care planning that directs proportionate and effective interventions for children and improves their outcomes .....	14
Priority 3: Ensure a strategic and co-ordinated approach to providing support for care leavers to improve their outcomes .....	18
Priority 4: Ensure effective multi-agency governance, partnership arrangements and support for children, young people and their families .....	22
Priority 5: Ensure a stable and effective leadership and management team that enables good social work practice to flourish ....	23
Priority 6: Ensure a skilled, confident & experienced workforce .....	25
Priority 7: Ensure effective Performance Management, Quality Assurance and Management Information Systems that support good social work practice .....	27

## 1. Introduction

In Bury, it is our aspiration that **all children and young people reach their potential, are happy, healthy and safe and are therefore able to make the best use of their skills to lead independent and successful lives.**

To achieve this, we want to ensure that our services for children are delivering high quality support and intervention, ensuring that we provide the right help, at the right time to keep families together wherever possible. We remain committed to our ongoing journey of improvement, following our Improvement Plan (2022-2025) progress was recognised by Ofsted in our 2025 ILACS inspection: *“far more children are receiving services that are making a positive difference to their lives and helping to ensure that they are safe and well cared for than was found at the time of the last inspection. Leaders have taken an incremental and persistent approach to improvement by establishing effective multi-agency partnerships. Improved services and better outcomes for children are now a priority for the council, and significant investment has strengthened workforce capacity to meet need and has ensured that appropriately focused services are available to support children and families.”*

Those inspection outcomes were:

- The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families - Good
- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection - Requires improvement to be good
- The experiences and progress of children in care - Requires improvement to be good
- The experiences and progress of care leavers - Requires improvement to be good
- Overall effectiveness - Requires improvement to be good

Five recommendations were made:

1. The quality of plans and contingency planning for children, including timescales for action. (Outcome 3, National Framework)
2. The effectiveness of supervision and management oversight in addressing drift or delay for children. (Enabler 2, National Framework)
3. The impact and effectiveness of child protection conference chairs' and IROs' escalations. (Enabler 3, National Framework)
4. The quality of effectiveness of direct work with children, including life-story work, to gather children's views and understanding of why they are in care. (Principle 2, National Framework)
5. The consistency of decisions by the local authority designated officer (LADO) and the extent to which those decisions are evidenced. (Outcome 3, National Framework)

This Improvement Plan sets out our refreshed priorities to ensure we continue with our improvement. However, it sits as part of wider transformation plans as we adapt and respond to the changes ahead including the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill and the Schools White Paper.

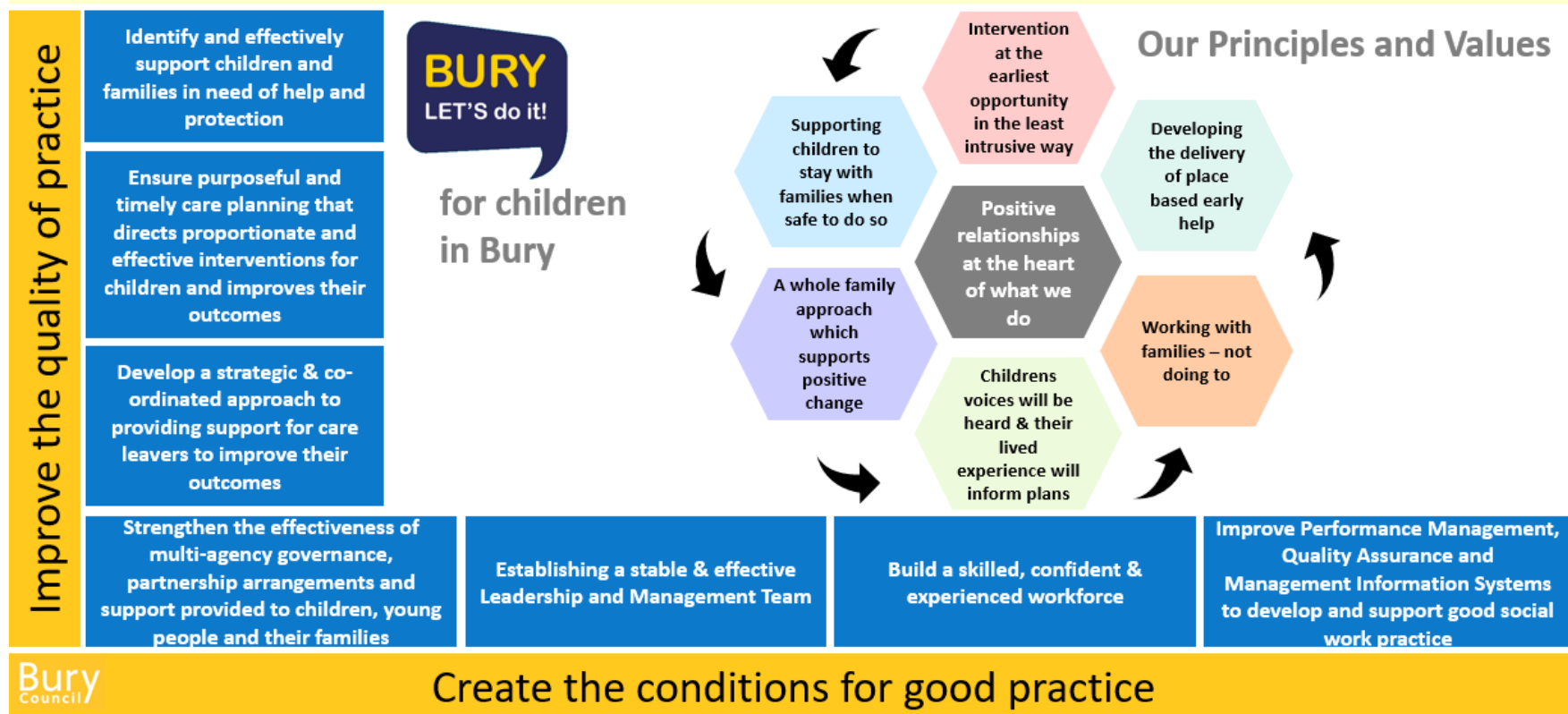
We remain committed to working in partnership with the Council and residents of Bury to improve the services across the whole partnership to make things better for our children and young people in line with the Borough's [Let's Do It! strategy - Bury Council](#).

Bury has entered a new phase in its improvement of children's services. The overall message from our recent inspection was clear – we have made progress on our journey, and we are making a positive difference in the lives of children and families, but we are not yet doing it as consistently as we would wish.

The focus of our next phase needs to be on delivering a consistently good service to children and families. We recognise that establishing a more permanent workforce is critical to this aim and we are making positive strides, with agency staff now down to 18%. Robust and regular managerial oversight and coaching of staff is the second pillar of consistency and we have taken steps over the past year to deliver against this challenge: increasing managerial capacity, decreasing managerial spans of control and recruiting more permanent managers. With these preconditions, we believe that a further step-change in the quality of practice will be achieved over the next 18 months, with stronger practice embedding more widely and becoming typical of Bury's services for children and families.

## 2. Vision

Our aspiration is that all children and young people in Bury reach their potential, are happy, healthy and safe and are therefore able to make the best use of their skills to lead independent and successful lives



### 3. Bury Commitments

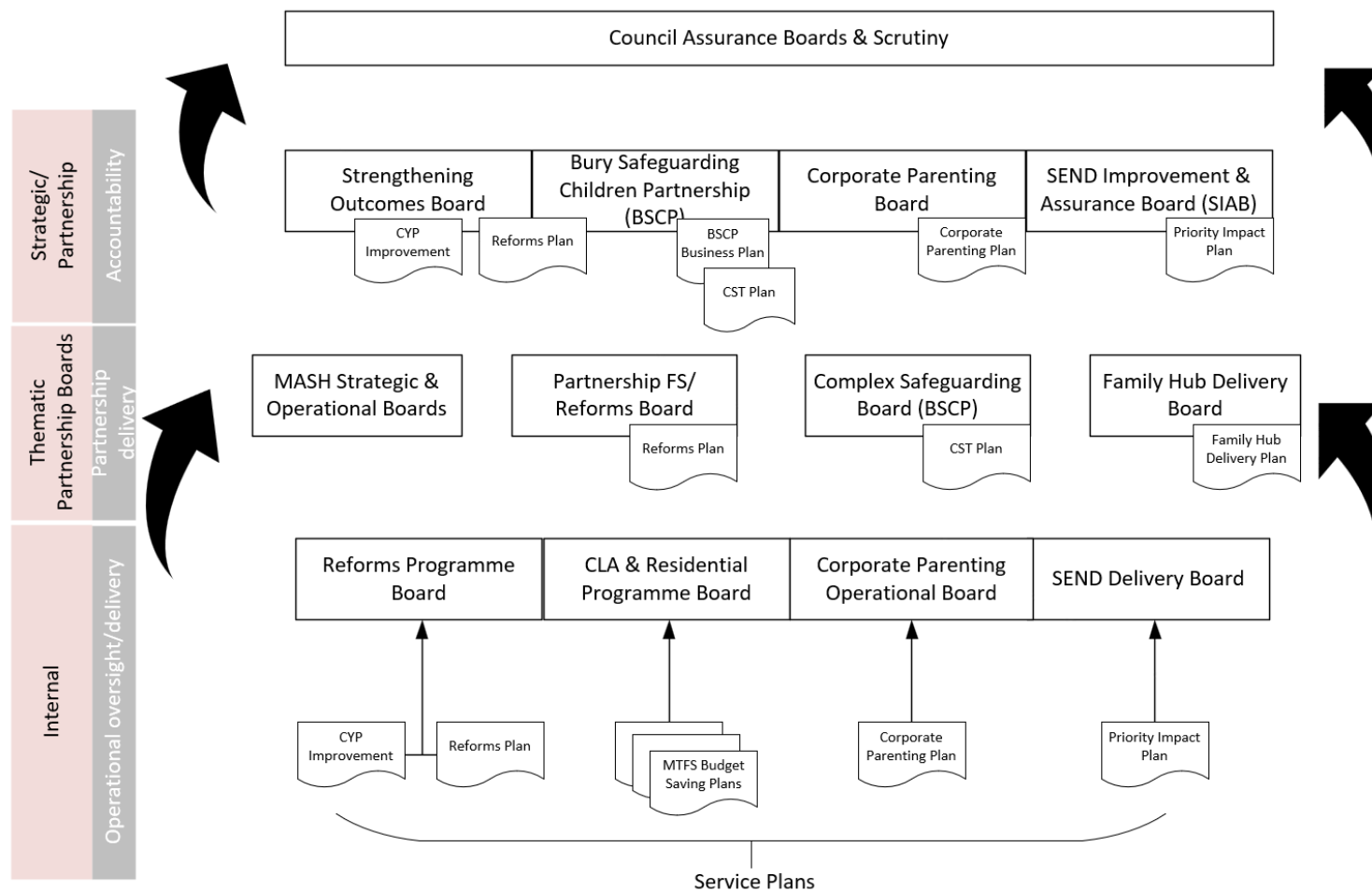
The Bury Commitments represent the cornerstones of good social work practice and have been the foundation for our improvement journey to date. They set out those areas of practice that will have the greatest impact on practice and outcomes for children and families.

Relationships	Impact Chronology	Assessment	Voice	Plan	Driving progress
<p><b>Practice is about doing with, not doing to</b></p> <p>We are committed to unconditional positive regard and respect for families. We will develop trusted relationships with our children, young people and their families to support change. Families are the experts of their own lives and we need to empower them through our practice, using a strengths based approach.</p>	<p><b>Understand our childrens' journey in life</b></p> <p>All children and young people will have an updated impact chronology. This will consider the impact of key events on childrens' lived experience and development, and will help us better understand their journey and events that may have shaped lived experiences.</p>	<p><b>Purposeful, analytical &amp; timely</b></p> <p>Every child and family will have a transparent, research informed assessment. This will be proportionate, triangulated and analytical. It will inform the most appropriate support needed and build on the strengths of the family, enabling children and young people to reach their full potential.</p>	<p><b>Capturing the daily lived experience</b></p> <p>We will complete at least one piece of direct work as part of every assessment and plan, and to inform every review. The voice of our children is essential to understand lived experience and what they would like to happen. All our recording will be informed by the child's voice and views.</p>	<p><b>Co-produced, child friendly, outcome focused</b></p> <p>All of our children and young people will have an up-to-date, well understood plan that supports positive change. This plan will be jointly owned by the family and the multi-agency group. Plans will be regularly reviewed in line with our practice standards and will show the progress that families are making.</p>	<p><b>Management footprint &amp; reflective supervision</b></p> <p>Every practitioner will receive effective, timely and reflective supervision. The focus will be on the progress and impact of the intervention and planning, as well as the growth of the practitioner. Supervision will demonstrate our rationale for decisions made with families.</p>

**Permanence from day one for every child and young person**

## 4. Transformation Oversight and Accountability

The following illustration shows the links between the key transformation and improvement plans and our governance arrangements, including key strategic Boards and existing Council assurance mechanisms. This is not a traditional structure chart showing flows of formal accountability between groups, but to visualise the eco-system that sits around the plans.





## 5. Action Plan

The RAG rating will always take into account the impact of the activity:

	<b>Action/Impact</b>
Blue	Action completed/achieves consistently improved outcomes
Green	Action not yet completed, but on track to be completed within timescales/mostly consistently delivering improved outcomes
Amber	Action progressing, some issues but realistic plans in place to recover/Some positive impact but variable – not consistently good
Red	Action not on track, risk to implementation/No impact or very limited impact
Grey	Action not started yet, no risk to implementation anticipated/Too early to measure impact

## IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF PRACTICE

Priority 1: Identify and effective support children and families in need of help and protection

Desired outcome	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Evidence of impact/Progress	Impact RAG
1.1 MASSH partners consistently share information that enables us to have a full understanding of family history that supports effective decision making for children and avoids	a) Development sessions with MASSH Managers and partners to consider family history and the experiences of children consistently when making decisions	MASSH Strategic Partnership Board	November 2025	Bury Commitments assessment training is ongoing, all MASSH managers have attended. Consideration of family history is a core component of this training. Further development session with managers will take place to review impact and progress.	
	b) Ensure MASSH Strategic & Operational Boards drive forward effective partnership working within the MASSH	MASSH Strategic Partnership Board	July 2025	Both Strategic and Operational Boards are in place and meet on a bi-monthly basis. There are current challenges around the presence of Police	



Desired outcome	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Evidence of impact/Progress	Impact RAG
the need for repeat contacts	that improves our response to children and families			& Health partners in the MASSH and availability for real-time in-person discussions.	
	c) Quarterly thematic audit to review impact and to be considered as part of multi-agency audit cycle	MASSH Strategic Partnership Board	July 2025	Quarterly audits are well embedded and consider the quality of assessments and family history.	
1.2 Appropriate identification of the different forms of neglect and improved recognition of the impact of cumulative harm upon CYP supports timely and effective planning for children	a) Partners are consistently considering the neglect strategy when sharing concerns about neglect via contacts which ensures they are clearly setting out their worries in relation to the impact of neglect	BSCP & MASSH Strategic Partnership Board	January 2026		
	b) Embed use of Graded Care Profile 2 to support understanding about the root cause of neglect, consideration of cumulative harm and parental capacity to change	BSCP supported by PSW	January 2026	We are seeing increased use of GCP2 generally however we need to embed use of the tool at different stages of children's journey, for example child protection conferences, step up from early help (and step down) - we need a robust reporting mechanism to enable us to monitor this.	
	c) Deliver neglect training as a core part of induction for social workers and other relevant practitioners	PSW	November 2025	Neglect training programme is in place and a core part of the GCP2 training, and a mandatory part of our social work induction and training programme. Additional training programmes are being put in place to ensure practitioners have timely access to training.  67% of staff have completed their training with plans in place to ensure the remaining staff are fully trained.	

Desired outcome	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Evidence of impact/Progress	Impact RAG
1.3 Effective work within Pre-Proceedings ensures timely interventions with families that are focused on a dynamic understanding of the child's lived experience and reduces escalation of concerns	a) Ensure robust management oversight identifies children who needs to be supported within pre-proceedings in a timely way	Head of Family Safeguarding	October 2025	<p>Challenge to care meetings were introduced in October which take place in advance of any discussion at Legal Gateway.</p> <p>Mid-point meetings are now taking place more consistently, reviewing progress and providing challenge in respect of ongoing pre-proceedings. A final meeting continues to take place to review impact of pre-proceedings and consider the next steps including ensuring timely presentation at Legal Gateway where needed.</p> <p>We have introduced a Service Manager review point at 8.5 months and 14 months for children subject to child protection plans, to consider whether we are working effectively at CP or consideration of pre-proceedings is required.</p>	
	b) Embed PLO Impact Board to monitor the lived experience of those children in proceedings and pre-proceedings, to ensure that interventions are impactful, and timely decisions are made with active consideration of the child's lived experience	Head of Family Safeguarding	March 2026	Board established - first meeting held in May, meets weekly with a different team focus each time ensuring that all children are reviewed 4-weekly.	
1.4 All children are supported to access their educational entitlement in line	a) Launch Education & Inclusion Strategy to ensure a shared understanding and vision with schools and clarity of	Director of Early Years, Education & Skills	November 2025	Launch event November 2025. Delivery Plan in place with an Education Board that will include stakeholders across health, social care and the school sector in place by March 2026	

Desired outcome	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Evidence of impact/Progress	Impact RAG
<p>with the 5 pillars of the Education and Inclusion Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive</li> <li>• Safe</li> <li>• Effective and high attaining</li> <li>• Collaborative and connected</li> <li>• Sufficient and sustainable</li> </ul>	expectation in relation to inclusion and safeguarding				
	b) Launch the refreshed Graduated Approach and Communities of Practice to ensure greater collaboration and opportunities for shared learning and build capacity	Head of SEND	November 2025	Launch took place September 2025, established the 5 neighbourhoods. Autumn Term network and COPs are now in place with a toolkit and integrated support offer in place to support successful implementation. Parent groups and drop-in dates have been agreed	
	c) Develop Education Systems (e.g. Eyes/Power BI) to remove manual processes and provide real time attendance and exclusions data	Director of Early Years, Education & Skills	March 2026	Support from GM10 to establish best practice in the region and procure technical expertise to support implementation	
	d) Strengthen EHE assurance protocol and reporting to ensure we have oversight of the quality of EHE children receive and their outcomes, linked to issue of SAOs if appropriate through Children Not In School (CNIS) panel	School Attendance Exclusions Community Education Manager	December 2025	<p>All children recorded known to be EHE. Annual reviews in place to assess quality of provision and mitigate safeguarding risks. Staff within the attendance and inclusion team have received recent training on risks including isolation, neglect, and safeguarding on unregistered settings</p> <p>All front-line practitioners completing appropriate EHE &amp; SAO training as tracked via attendance session registers.</p> <p>Case audits confirm correct application of EHE and SAO protocols in decision-making</p> <p>Improved suitability checks for EHE provision following practitioner involvement</p>	
	e) Ensure robust procedures in place to return CYP to full-time education with a focus on more vulnerable cohorts	School Attendance Exclusions Community Education	February 2026	CME panels in place with education, social care, SEND, and health professionals to agree reintegration plans for high-risk cohorts including CiC, complex SEND needs, CYP excluded or complex medical needs.	

Desired outcome	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Evidence of impact/Progress	Impact RAG
		Manager & Virtual School Head		Developing a broader range of KPIs including % of CME cases reintegrated within agreed timeframe, attendance rates post-reintegration, numbers of reduction in repeat CME cases. Mechanisms now in place to conduct quarterly audits of CME processes and report outcomes to senior leadership and safeguarding board.	
	f) Strengthen the support for children in care through enhanced Virtual School engagement	Virtual School Head	July 2026	<p>Establishing joint planning and review processes between social care and education teams, this includes contact with HOS in SC each term in a timely manner to help with planning and joint reviewing processes via PEP completion and quality.</p> <p>More robust completion of the funding section on the PF4 to better plan for CIC placements that support stronger educational outcomes.</p> <p>Senior leaders in VS attend CSC panels to ensure scrutiny around education and placements of children.</p> <p>Ensure providers and schools have access to Virtual School expertise and resources with a full CPD offer for providers and schools.</p> <p>Currently deliver a foster care CPD offer and VS staff regularly attend Teaching Tuesday's to support training of social workers.</p> <p>Monthly Attainment and Progress meetings in place with senior leaders having oversight of enhanced tracker.</p> <p>In recognition of Year 6 and Year 11 needing enhanced support, additional funding provided to each setting to help with external examinations and transition support.</p>	

Desired outcome	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Evidence of impact/Progress	Impact RAG
1.5 Wider community and professionals recognise Private Fostering arrangements which results in children who live in Private Fostering arrangements feeling safe and well supported	a) Bi-Annual targeted awareness raising to promote recognition of Private Fostering and understanding of roles and responsibilities	BSCP supported by Head of Family Safeguarding	January 2026	Discussed at Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership in October 2025 and a plan has been agreed and will be progressed in relation to wider raising awareness activity. BSCP website includes information about Private Fostering.	
	b) Provide a timely, effective and compliant response for children living in Private Fostering arrangements (evident through dip sampling/audit) ensuring that their needs are being met	Head of Family Safeguarding	December 2025	In August the Head of Service refreshed our PF audit tool and reviewed the two children who were living in private fostering arrangements at that point in time (now 3).  Training sessions have been delivered – two online multi-agency and two social worker sessions, with a DSL session planned for November.	
1.6 Children's social care reforms transform services to children and families in Bury, ensuring they receive the right help and support at the right time within their own communities and avoid escalation of concerns	a) Develop network of Family Hubs which is integrated into the place-based neighbourhood approach and supports delivery of the reforms	Executive Director CYP & Executive Director, Health and Adult Care (and Deputy Place Lead - NHS GM (Bury))	March 2026	Family Hubs development is central to our plans to implement the reforms. In addition to Redvales (East) Family Hub, we will be opening our Chesham hub in November and development of our first Live Well Centre (ARK) is underway, with plans to open in Spring 2026.	
	b) Develop delivery plan for implementation of the social care reforms	Delegated Safeguarding Partners	December 2025	Outline delivery plan submitted June 2025; part 2 of the delivery plan must be submitted by 18 <sup>th</sup> December. Project support allocated, plan in place including workshop with partners early November to agree key milestones and sequencing.	

Desired outcome	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Evidence of impact/Progress	Impact RAG
	c) Appoint a lead officer to support the development of and implementation of the social care reforms	Director of CSC & EH	November 2025	Details have been drafted for the proposed role funded from the reforms funding; pending approval to recruit to role.	
	d) Restructure services in line with reforms	Delegated Safeguarding Partners	December 2026	As the development of the reforms plan progresses we will need to consider how the structure of services will need to change to deliver quality services.	

Priority 2: Ensure purposeful and timely care planning that directs proportionate and effective interventions for children and improves their outcomes

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
2.1 Young people benefit from robust, consistent and holistic care planning that promotes stronger and timely outcomes	a) Ensure partner agencies are actively involved in developing/contributing to plans for our care experienced young people to promote optimal outcomes for our young people	Corporate Parenting Board supported by Head of Corporate Parenting & Head of Safeguarding Unit	October 2025		
	b) Care planning has a clear and consistent focus on education outcomes and future employment and training opportunities, aligned to the PEP	Head of Corporate Parenting	March 2026		
2.2 Children in our care, including asylum	a) Hold a practitioner learning event that supports	Corporate Parenting	January 2026	In June 2025 we consulted with a group of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children to	

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
seeking children, have their emotional health and wellbeing needs met. Their history of likely trauma and the potential impact of this is understood by their PA and is captured in care planning.	practitioners to reflect on practice relating to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, ensuring there is appropriate advice and guidance for both practitioners and children	Board supported by Head of Corporate Parenting		understand how we can improve their experiences in Bury. In response, we are co-producing a leaflet addressing the areas they have identified including social opportunities, education, transport. There is a weekly UASC group at the Hub which provides opportunity for discussion and sharing of worries, and access to services.  We are recruiting to two emotional help practitioners and a psychologist within the service, these roles will provide support to care experienced young people up until the age of 25.	
	b) Develop in-house emotional health and wellbeing service for cared for and care experienced children and young people	Head of Corporate Parenting supported by Corporate Parenting Board	January 2026	Recruitment in ongoing and it is hoped we will have this service in place by January 2026. There is a significant amount of interest in these roles.	
2.3 Children are supported in a timely and age-appropriate way to understand their life story, family relationships and what led to them coming into our care	a) Commission training in relation to direct work skills and techniques, to be delivered to practitioners, managers, IROs and CP chairs	PSW	January 2026	We have engaged Research in Practice to develop a training programme that focuses on direct work techniques and life story work.	
	b) Develop practice standards on expectations of what good direct work looks like, supported by a range of suitable tools and exemplars of good practice	PSW	November 2025		

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
	c) Commission and implement a digital solution to improve the recording of direct work and life story work	CYP Improvement Manager	March 2026	Options appraisal underway and decision will be taken in November.	
2.4 Children in Care (CiC) make improved academic progress (in line with National CLA data or better) and their school attendance improves to be consistently above 90%	a) Introduce real-time attendance monitoring for CiC via Power BI dashboards to improve overall attendance, with a particular focus on secondary school-aged children, to at least 90% in the Statutory School Age (SSA) cohort and reduce rates of persistent and severe absence	Virtual School Head Teacher supported by Head of Performance & Delivery	July 2026	We intend to recruit an Attendance & Inclusion adviser to provide additional capacity to focus on effective tracking of identified cohorts. We will embed fortnightly tracking meetings across education, health and social care, to show progress toward the 90% attendance target, especially for secondary-aged CiC.	
	b) Strengthen oversight of the educational progress of our looked after children through the Education Strategic Oversight Group	Director of Early Years, Education & Skills	September 2026	New group has been formed and will be chaired by the Director of EY, Education & Skills and including members of the extended leadership team. Will meet monthly, first meeting held in October 2025.	
	c) Reduce the number and rates of suspension within the statutory school aged cohort to be in line with the national level for children in care through attendance and support at reintegration meetings and preventative training - Trauma informed practitioner diploma, whole school and training for senior	Virtual School Head Teacher	July 2026		



Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
	leaders, identification of and SEND				
	d) Strengthen quality of PEPs to deliver improved outcomes for children	Virtual School Head Teacher	March 2026	Virtual School currently target transitions and issues – need to consider our approach to more focused involvement	
	e) Strengthen the Quality Assurance process to ensure that targets on Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are SMART and enable progress to be made through new moderation arrangements shared with Designated Teachers and Social workers through training	Virtual School Headteacher	July 2026	We will seek to extend inclusion of partners to the existing QA processes, starting with social care and extended beyond to the wider partnership eg schools.	
2.5 Children in our care and care experienced young people have a wider range of home options available to them, that support them to maintain critical connections to their family and community	a) Increase the number of fostering households within Bury for Bury children	Director of CSC & EH	July 2026		
	b) Develop our commissioning relationships with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) particularly those who deliver fostering services in Bury	Director of CSC & EH	July 2026		
	c) Establish two Children's Homes in Bury, to include short break provision, to strengthen care planning and sufficiency	Director of CSC & EH	October 2026	Council have agreed funding.	
	d) Develop supporting lodgings offer to ensure there is the required range of homes to	Director of CSC & EH	January 2026	Application submitted November 2024 but multiple delays in registration, linked to backlogs within Ofsted due to new legislation and DBS	

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
	meet the needs of our children and young people			requirements. Providers are in place but we cannot use them for young people under the age of 18 without the Ofsted registration. Escalated within Ofsted.	
2.6 Transitional safeguarding arrangements ensure that there is seamless protection for young people as they move into adulthood	a) Work with Adult Social Care & partners to implement the GM approach to transitional safeguarding	Director of CSC & EH, Director of Adult Social Care	April 2026	Paper setting out the context for Transitional Safeguarding in Greater Manchester has been drafted and is being considered.	
	b) Review impact of transitional safeguarding arrangements to ensure they are effective	Director of CSC & EH, Director of Adult Social Care	September 2026		

### Priority 3: Ensure a strategic and co-ordinated approach to providing support for care leavers to improve their outcomes

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
3.1 Young people benefit from robust, consistent and holistic pathway planning that promotes stronger and timely outcomes.	a) Ensure partner agencies are actively involved in developing/contributing to pathway plans for our care experienced young people to promote optimal outcomes for our young people	Corporate Parenting Board supported by Head of Corporate Parenting & Head of Safeguarding Unit	April 2026	Training scheduled with PAs for October to improve quality of pathway plans ensuring that they are actively seeking the input from relevant professionals as part of the pathway planning process.	
3.2 There is a good understanding of young people's health	a) Ensure that CYP are in receipt of their health histories at 18 years of age and that Health	Associate Director for Nursing,	March 2026	In touch case proforma completed by PAs following each visit has been amended to ensure there is a focused discussion around health.	

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
histories which enables professionals to ensure the right support is in place, and it is considered within pathway planning	needs are addressed within effective planning, recognising care leavers right to decide who their information is shared with.	Quality and Safeguarding Corporate Parenting Board supported by Head of Corporate Parenting		Need to dip sample use of the new form to understand impact.	
3.3 Young people have appropriate access to health services that meet their needs	a) Review and raise awareness of pathways to access specialist mental health services for our care leavers	Corporate Parenting Board	March 2026	Psychologist and emotional health practitioners are being recruited to who will be able to advise PAs in relation to support available, and understand the pathways available. Expect to go out to recruitment in October, expecting to have practitioners in post early in the New Year.	
3.4 Risks to care experienced young people are understood and plans to safeguard and protect them are in place to reflect changing needs	a) Ensure that each care leaver has an updated safety plan that reflects their current needs to ensure risks are fully understood and addressed	Head of Corporate Parenting	November 2025	The Safety Plan used within the looked after service is now being used within leaving care where there are increased risks – this includes consideration of frequency of visits.	
	b) Protocol to be agreed between CASS, Next Chapter and Complex Safeguarding Teams to ensure that the needs of care experienced young people at risk of exploitation and missing are met	Head of Corporate Parenting	November 2025	Discussions underway, any child who requires a response from the Complex Safeguarding Team are receiving support. Protocol being drafted.	
3.5 Children and young people are well supported to access education,	a) Personal Advisers to understand themes and blockers to securing opportunities	Head of Corporate Parenting	July 2025	Our Care Leavers task & finish group meets monthly to consider any general issues in relation to NEET, understanding system blockers and work out a way forward. This includes Skills team, Virtual School and care leavers.	

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
employment and training opportunities					
	b) Implementation of the EET/NEET Plan on a Page (POP) to support young people who have turned 18 up to the end of Year 13	Virtual School Headteacher	December 2025		
	c) Virtual School Post 16 EET Lead to support EET through direct work with, and support to, our young people	Virtual School Headteacher			
	d) Ensure robust tracking and oversight of our care experienced young people who are not currently engaged in EET	Head of Skills supported by Head of Corporate Parenting	September 2026		
	e) Working with colleges and employers to ensure a range of opportunities for our young people and ensuring a pathway into the world of work	Head of Skills	September 2025 – July 2026	<p>Refreshed systems in place to focus on improving NEET:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Opportunities &amp; Care Leavers Covenant group meets monthly to explore upcoming opportunities for our young people (family firm approach).</li> <li>• Meet the Manager events take place bi-annually, providing young people with opportunity to meet potential employers.</li> <li>• NEET forums review individual young people in a plan-do-review approach to improve EET. This approach has been refreshed in September.</li> </ul> <p>While we have positive examples of success stories, NEET remains high - 57% as of October 2025.</p>	

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
3.6 Care experienced young people feel safe and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs	a) Develop options for Bury to deliver supported accommodation services in-house	Head of Strategy, Assurance & Reform	April 2026	<p>Council is currently in the process of tendering for Young People's Accommodation and Support Services in 3 lots:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lot 1 – 40 self-contained units of accommodation in blocks with shared communal space for 18 to 25 year olds, with 6 to 9 follow on outreach support</li> <li>• Lot 2 – 20 units of Ofsted registered mixed accommodation, with 6 to 9 months follow-on outreach support for young families aged 16 to 25 years old</li> <li>• Lot 3 – Ofsted registered Accommodation and Support Service – 9 units for children aged 16 to 18 years.</li> </ul> <p>Contract is currently expected to commence in Spring 2026.</p>	
	b) Develop further housing options for care leavers	Head of Strategy, Assurance & Reform	Ongoing up to 2030	As part of the council's approval of housing developments, we are ringfencing a small number of properties in suitable developments for care experienced young adults – a total of 50 units by the end of 2030, across 10 separate developments spread around the borough; and 30 units by the end of 2028	

## CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR GOOD PRACTICE

Priority 4: Ensure effective multi-agency governance, partnership arrangements and support for children, young people and their families

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
4.1 Effective governance arrangements support the delivery of transformation programmes of children's services, resulting in improved outcomes for children	a) Develop Strengthening Outcomes Board to ensure a multi-agency approach to improving outcomes for children and young people	Exec Director CYP	October 2025	A new Strengthening Outcomes Board was established in August with the first meeting taking place in October. The Board replaces the Improvement Board and will ensure a partnership approach to support the refreshed Improvement Plan. Terms of Reference have been agreed.	
	b) Review Corporate Parenting Board governance (including sub-group arrangements) to support delivery of Improvement Plan	Executive Director CYP	October 2025	Arrangements were reviewed over Summer and a new approach has been agreed: the CPB Operational Board will oversee delivery of the Corporate Parenting Plan, replacing the three task & finish groups which previously existed. Operational Board will meet monthly and will report to the CPB Board. The Corporate Parenting Action Plan has been refreshed to align with this Improvement Plan.	
	c) Consider the Family Safeguarding Strategic Partnership Board in relation to the reforms	Executive Director CYP	December 2025		
	d) Ensure effective links with Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) around shared priorities: understanding and improving the impact of our collective response to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>domestic abuse</li> <li>sexual abuse</li> <li>neglect</li> </ul>	Director of CSC & EH	July 2026		

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>voice and influence of children</li> </ul>				
4.2 Effective governance arrangements in place to ensure we deliver on the agreed outcomes of the Education and Inclusion Strategy	a) Establish Education Board to monitor delivery on pillars set out in the strategy	Director of Early Years, Education & Skills	March 2026	Key stakeholders to include: lead cabinet member Education, Director of Early Years, Education and Skills, Virtual School Head, School Assurance Officer, SEND Service Lead, Early Years Lead, Health lead, School leaders cross phase and cross sector, Trust CEO, Skills Lead, Police, Parent/Carer reps and Student voice	
	b) Establish Education Sub-Group of the Bury Children Safeguarding Partnership Board	Director of Early Years, Education & Skills	December 2025	Key stakeholders to include: Director of Education (Chair), Education sector representatives (to include school senior leaders and designated safeguarding leads), virtual school head, SEND lead, Early Years lead, Family Hub lead,	

#### Priority 5: Ensure a stable and effective leadership and management team that enables good social work practice to flourish

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescale	Progress	Impact RAG
5.1 Team Managers are delivering regular, reflective, good quality supervision which is driving improved outcomes	a) Heads of Service and Service Managers to routinely observe supervisions to ensure management oversight is consistently ensuring progress against the plan	Director of CSC & EH supported by Heads of Service	January 2026	Heads of Service will undertake monthly observations of their Service Managers, who will do the same of their Team Managers, with a clear focus on the impact of managers on practice. Director of CSC & EH will routinely observe Heads of Service to ensure observations of managers at all levels.	
	b) Improve recording of supervision through implementation of Magic notes	Director of CSC & EH supported by CYP	October 2025		

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescale	Progress	Impact RAG
		Improvement Manager			
5.2 Managers at all levels are driving progress for children and can evidence their impact in the quality of practice and support offered to children and families	a) Heads of Service to ensure a detailed, granular understanding of skills and experience of their management team and how individual managers can be supported to drive the quality of practice	Heads of Service	December 2025		
	b) Implement a Learning & Development Plan that drives a high challenge, high support culture and holds the line on quality of practice, reduces variability and lifts the quality of practice in their areas of responsibility	Director of CSC & EH supported by Heads of Service	June 2026		
	c) Closing the loop between observation of inconsistent practice and training to be strengthened, so that where inconsistent practice is seen this will require additional learning and development opportunities being delivered to individual managers	Director of CSC & EH supported by Heads of Service	March 2026	New arrangements being development with Senior Management Team for implementation in November 2025.	
	d) Managers to provide their oversight of practice at key panels chaired by HoS/SMs to ensure line of sight into the	Director of CSC & EH supported by Heads of Service	December 2025		



Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescale	Progress	Impact RAG
	quality of management oversight				
	e) Develop the existing weekly performance architecture around Team Managers to ensure reports provided have a stronger focus on the quality of practice, in addition to key performance indicators.  Weekly performance meetings chaired by the Head of Service	Heads of Service	October 2025		

#### Priority 6: Ensure a skilled, confident & experienced workforce

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
6.1 Children and young people can build trusting relationships with practitioners who work collaboratively and with openness and honesty	a) Increase the proportion of permanent staff within the workforce (aim for 10% true vacancy rate)	Director of CSC & EH	July 2026		
6.2 Quality of practice with children and families is consistently of a high	a) Review our delivery approach to the Bury Commitments and the impact this is having on the quality of practice,	PSW supported by Heads of Service	December 2025		

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
<p>standard, and drives improved outcomes</p> <p>This will ensure trusting relationships between children/young people and practitioners, impact chronologies consistently in place which inform timely and holistic assessments, outcomes focused plans, impactful management supervision &amp; oversight and a clear voice of children and young people which is heard and influences plans.</p>	including the quality of plans and contingency planning				
	b) Review practice guidance – including planning - to ensure guidance reflects our learning from audit and external scrutiny and is explicit in relation to key areas of practice.	Director of CSC & EH	December 2025		
	c) Closing the loop between observation of inconsistent practice and training to be strengthened, so that where inconsistent practice is seen this will require additional learning and development opportunities being delivered to individual practitioners	Director of CSC & EH supported by Heads of Service	March 2026	New arrangements being development with Senior Management Team for implementation in November 2025.	
6.3 Bury practitioners and managers have a clear induction pathway to support them in delivering high quality services for children and families	a) Implement a Social Work Academy approach around our learning & development	PSW	April 2026		
	b) Increase our scrutiny of compliance with training as set out within the mandatory Training by Role Matrix	Director of CSC & EH supported by Heads of Service	December 2025		
	c) All new to Bury practitioners will have their work sampled after their first month in Bury, so we can ensure a consistent strengths-based approach to all of our work	Director of CSC & EH supported by Heads of Service	January 2026		

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
6.4 Evidence-based approaches to practice are strengthened through use of motivational interviewing	a) Ensure all practitioners and managers are trained in motivational interviewing, as a cornerstone of our Family Safeguarding model	PSW & WFD team	February 2026		
	b) Dedicated training for Managers and Heads of Service to ensure that they are modelling motivational interviewing in every conversation and every meeting	Director of CSC & EH supported by Heads of Service	December 2025	Training being delivered to all managers in a dedicated EMM session on 6 <sup>th</sup> November.	
	c) Seek evidence of impact of motivational interviewing key principles through QA and feedback from our children and families	PSW	January to June 2026	Audit toolkit amended to better capture evidence of MI within the children's records.	

**Priority 7: Ensure effective Performance Management, Quality Assurance and Management Information Systems that support good social work practice**

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
7.1 IROs & CP Chairs are driving improved outcomes for children through timely care and child protection planning	a) Review the impact of the CP/IRO escalation protocol through weekly reporting mechanisms linked to escalations, timescales & practice themes	PSW supported by Heads of Service	December 2025	Protocol in place.	
	b) Complete self-evaluation for IROs and CP Chairs to support understand of future development plans	Director of CSC & EH	November 2025	Self-evaluation activity commenced October 2025 with IROs and CP Chairs.	

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
	c) Deliver learning, development and mentoring to IROs to strengthen their understanding of their roles and responsibilities in line with the IRO handbook	Director of CSC & EH supported by SLIP	October 2025 to March 2026	Warrington are providing support under SLIP arrangements to further develop the service through a programme of development and mentoring. Plan has been drafted and will be implemented/delivered December through to March 2026.	
	d) Deliver learning, development and mentoring to CP Chairs following observations of practice	Director of CSC & EH supported by SLIP	October 2025 to March 2026	Warrington are providing support under SLIP arrangements to further develop the service through a programme of development and mentoring. Plan has been drafted and will be implemented/delivered December through to March 2026.	
	e) Review performance management arrangements to support continuous development and improvement eg mid-point reviews, timeliness of minute distribution	PSW	November 2025	Discussions and plans to strengthen existing relationships and now in place.	
7.2 Management of allegations are consistently managed by the LADO, working to agreed processes to ensure consistency in approach and supporting effective decision making	a) Strengthen quality assurance mechanisms in relation to practice and performance of the LADO, including observations and quarterly reports	Director CSC & EH	March 2026	A review of the mechanisms is underway and additional observations and reporting are being developed, and arrangements will be in place in November. This will be part of the wider department QA Framework.	
	b) Implement the new LADO workspace in LCS to ensure clear rationale is evident	DDaT Business Partner supported by CYP Improvement Manager	December 2025	The workspace was purchased in Summer 2025 however there have been delays in implementation due to capacity both in-house and with the supplier. Additional in-house LCS development resource commissioned November 2025 and this will be a priority within the LCS Development Plan.	

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
7.3 MI Systems support social workers in delivering high quality interventions	a) Implement MagicNotes and explore other innovative opportunities to ensure managers (including IROs & CP Chairs) have the right tools for the job, enabling the conditions for effective management	Heads of Service supported by PSW & WFD	Magic Notes – November 2025 to March 2026 (ongoing)	MagicNotes procurement completed in October and implementation plan moving at pace, with delivery of the additional templates expected in November. There will be an ongoing programme of development to ensure all templates are in place across all areas.	
	b) Ensure LCS supports good quality practice through delivery of the CYP LCS Development Plan	DDaT Business Partner supported by CYP Improvement Manager	September 2025 to March 2026	Our LCS Development Plan has been refreshed in line with current development priorities however progress has been slower than anticipated due to challenges around resourcing. Additional capacity has now been secured.	
	c) Migrate performance reporting to Power BI to ensure that managers can drill down into service and team data on a self-serve basis.	Head of Performance & Delivery supported by Head of Strategy, Assurance & Reform	January 2026	While there has been some development in recent months, progress has been impeded due to a lack of dedicated capacity to drive this forward. By the end of the year we are hoping to have the basics in place to replace substantial chunks of the current reporting system. Further development work will be required to have this fully meeting the needs of the service (hopefully March 2026).	
	Note related digital improvement actions elsewhere in plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EHE (action 1.4)</li> <li>CME (action 1.5)</li> <li>Educational progress (action 2.4)</li> <li>LADO (action 7.2)</li> </ul>	See individual actions	See individual actions		

This page is intentionally left blank

## SCRUTINY REPORT

**MEETING:** CYP Scrutiny

**DATE:** 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**SUBJECT:** Education and Inclusion Strategy

**REPORT FROM:** Ben Dunne (Director of Early Years, Education and Skills)

**CONTACT OFFICER:** n/a

---

### 1.0 BACKGROUND

Bury Council's Inclusion Strategy builds on the borough's wider *LET'S Do It! 2030* vision, which places inclusion at the centre of its ambitions for community wellbeing, equality and improved life chances. The strategy was developed following an independent review of equalities practice and extensive consultation with staff groups, community organisations and service users, resulting in a shared approach to promoting equality, diversity and human rights across all services. It aims to ensure that every child and young person, regardless of background, identity or circumstance has the opportunity to reach their potential, are happy, healthy and safe and able to make the best use of their skills to lead independent and successful lives.

### 2.0 ISSUES

The Education and Inclusion Strategy highlights several key challenges that continue to influence progress. Persistent disparities in outcomes among different communities—including socio-economic disadvantage, racial inequality and barriers faced by care leavers, carers, and children and young people with more complex needs, require sustained, targeted action. The council also faces operational challenges around how services engage with the public, ensuring consistency across departments, and embedding inclusive practice in organisational culture. Additionally, achieving a more diverse workforce and improving data-driven decision making remain central priorities, particularly as the authority works to meet both statutory requirements and the expectations set out in its borough-wide inclusion commitments.

### 3.0 CONCLUSION

Overall, the Education and Inclusion Strategy represents a significant step toward ensuring that all children and young people benefit from the borough's future prosperity and improved academic outcomes with a clear framework for addressing inequality and improving access to education, services and opportunities. Progress will depend on strong leadership, effective partnership working and continued community involvement to ensure that inclusive practice translates into measurable improvement. The strategy's focus on shared accountability, strengthened engagement and equitable service delivery provides a robust foundation for future action, but ongoing scrutiny, resourcing and transparency will be crucial for turning ambition into impact

**List of Background Papers:-**

**Education and Inclusion Strategy**

**Contact Details:-**

*Ben Dunne (Director of Early Years, Education and Skills*

Executive Director sign off Date:\_\_\_\_\_

JET Meeting Date:\_\_\_\_\_



BURY COUNCIL 2025

# BURY EDUCATION AND INCLUSION STRATEGY



# **BURY EDUCATION AND INCLUSION STRATEGY**



# EDUCATION & INCLUSION STRATEGY

## CONTENTS

<b>FOREWORD</b>	<b>04</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>06</b>
<b>NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>COMMITMENT 1</b> EVERY CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON WILL ENJOY A SENSE OF BELONGING	<b>18</b>
<b>COMMITMENT 2</b> EVERY CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON WILL FEEL SAFE	<b>23</b>
<b>COMMITMENT 3</b> EVERY CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON WILL HAVE ACCESS TO AN EXCELLENT EDUCATION	<b>28</b>
<b>COMMITMENT 4</b> EVERY CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON WILL THRIVE IN A SYSTEM CONNECTED TO THEIR LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD	<b>33</b>
<b>COMMITMENT 5</b> EVERY CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON WILL THRIVE IN A SYSTEM WITH SUFFICIENT HIGH-QUALITY PLACES	<b>39</b>
<b>GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY</b>	<b>44</b>



# FOREWORD

Our aspiration for all Bury's children and young people is that they reach their potential, are happy, healthy and safe and able to make the best use of their skills to lead independent and successful lives. Education is a crucial component part of achieving this aim.

Children and young people have told us what matters to them and the Education and Inclusion Strategy sets out with purpose to deliver on these, namely:

**“We want to feel included, at home, in school and in the community”**

**“We want to feel safe whilst in, and travelling to and from school”**

**“We want to do well academically”**

**“We want to feel cared about”**

**“We want opportunities to further ourselves in education and do this independently”**

**“We want to have our say and feel heard”**

## FOREWORD

Children are our collective future and their education is of the highest importance. Education is a foundation for personal growth, economic opportunity, and social progress, equipping children with knowledge, skills, and critical thinking abilities, leading to improved job prospects, better health outcomes, and increased community engagement.

Bury Council and its partners are committed to ensuring that every child and young person in our borough can thrive, learn, and succeed—regardless of their background, needs, or circumstances. Our Education and Inclusion Strategy sets out a clear, ambitious vision for the future of education in Bury, underpinned by the principles of equity, partnership, and high aspiration for all. At its heart is a dedication to inclusive practice, early intervention, and collaborative working with school and education setting leaders, children, parents and carers, communities and wider services.

The strategy outlines a collective commitment to our children and young people to deliver on the things that they say matter most.

Together we will ensure they feel included, safe and receive an excellent education in a collaborative and sufficient system.



**Councillor Lucy Smith**

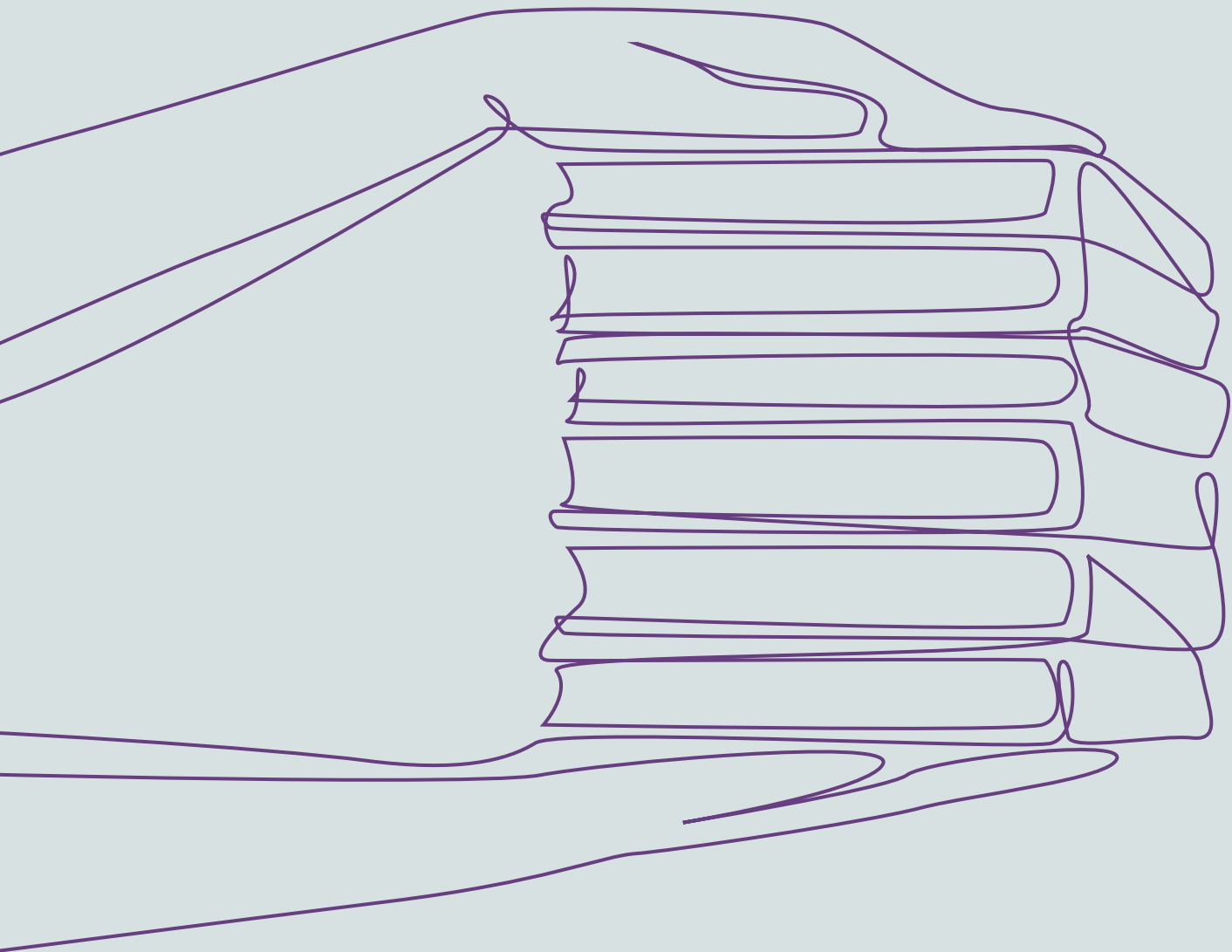
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member  
for Children and Young People.



**Jeanette Richards**

Executive Director of  
Children's Services.

# 01. INTRODUCTION



# INTRODUCTION

The Education and Inclusion Strategy was developed in response to key challenges affecting the educational outcomes of children in the borough, including disparities in school readiness, mental health, attainment, inclusion practice, and post-16 progression. A thorough analysis of local data, inspection reports, community feedback and pupil voice highlighted the need and opportunity to forge closer collaborative partnerships across a wide range of stakeholders, and this forms the foundation of the strategy.

The strategy was co-produced through a series of consultations, workshops, and collaborative planning sessions. A wide number of stakeholders contributed their insights, priorities, and expertise, ensuring that the strategy reflects shared goals and a collective commitment to driving sustainable improvement in education for all children and young people in Bury.

## **The Role of the Local Authority**

Over the past two decades, the role of local authorities in education has undergone a profound transformation, moving from being the dominant partner in local education to being one important part of a complex system of shared responsibility. While the

role of the council has changed, it still carries unique elements: providing a strong link to place, democratic accountability; and a clear voice for the value of education and high aspiration for all local children.

The development of this strategy, crafted in collaboration with local stakeholders, articulates a clear shared vision and responsibility for the education of Bury children and young people. Every component part of the local system, individual schools, multi-academy trusts, dioceses and the local authority must work together to serve local children and families and we must never lose sight of this fundamental purpose.

Changes over the past 18 months in the structure and focus of the local authority's education function and significant changes in the educational landscape moving forward, signal the council's willingness to develop services that enable it to discharge the role that it is best placed to fulfil, mandated to perform and held to account by the Department for Education.







# INTRODUCTION

Three Key Strands:

- Maintaining an overview of the effectiveness of the local education system and ensuring its sufficiency and viability - developing and co-ordinating the complex local education system to achieve the best possible outcomes for local children and young people.
- Supporting and protecting vulnerable children and families, ensuring their access to education, improving their life-chances and ensuring their experience of education is positive and enabling.
- Acting as an advocate - having high expectations of the education provided to local children and young people and holding schools and providers to account when necessary.

The local authority will remain a key component in the broader educational ecosystem, helping to ensure its smooth operation while offering a borough-wide perspective that supports strategic planning and identifies both local and systemic challenges.

Crucially, it will continue to champion the needs of children and families who may be at risk of marginalisation - upholding their right to a good quality education and empowering them to thrive and fulfil their potential.

## 02. **NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT**



# NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

## The National Context

The Education and Inclusion Strategy operates within a complex national context shaped by government policies, legislation, and educational priorities.

At a national level, the Department for Education (DfE) sets the overarching framework for education, focusing on improving academic outcomes, promoting inclusion, and addressing disparities across schools. This strategy aims to adapt to the emerging view of the Government and future changes across education from the following legislation, policies and papers:

- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill (Expected 2025–2026)
- SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan (Launched 2023, ongoing to 2026)
- Ofsted Inspection Framework Consultation (Implementation September 2025)
- Curriculum and Assessment review (Ongoing, developments expected 2025-2027)
- AI and Digital Strategy for Education (Initial steps in 2023, rollout expected 2025–2028)
- Greater Manchester's Attendance Action Alliance initiatives (Established in 2021, ongoing)
- The Best start for life: a vision for the 1001 critical days (2021)
- Reform of post-16 education (Advanced British Standard) (Consultation in 2023, phased introduction between 2025–2033)

# NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

## The National Context

The Education and Inclusion Strategy operates within a dynamic regional context shaped by the collective challenges faced by and the opportunities arising in Greater Manchester.

The regional strategy is informed by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), which sets priorities for education, skills, and employment, emphasising social mobility, lifelong learning, and closing attainment gaps, focusing on improving post-16 education pathways, apprenticeship opportunities, and reducing the number of young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET).

Collaborative working across the ten authorities is vital, with schools, academies, and local partners working together through initiatives like the Greater Manchester Education and Skills Network and the GM Attendance Action Alliance. Our strategy will align with these regional initiatives while being responsive to the specific needs and aspirations of Bury communities.

# NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

## The Local Context

Bury is a local authority of distinct areas with different communities, the White British population percentage overall makes up 82% of the population, with Asian Pakistani heritage residents making up 8% of the population at the 2021 Census. School figures show continued growth in Pakistani population (11% of the total) and shrinkage in the White/UK percentage (75%). Asian Pakistani children are concentrated in Bury town, particularly in the East.

Bury is also notable for having the largest Jewish per capita population outside of London, with nearly 6% of the whole population identifying as Jewish in the 2021 census. The Jewish population is concentrated in the south of the borough, particularly in Sedgley, but also Prestwich and parts of Whitefield.

In terms of deprivation, Bury has very deprived areas in parts of Radcliffe and Bury East and localised pockets elsewhere in the borough. By contrast, there are areas of considerable relative advantage in the more rural north of the borough, though there are still also isolated areas of deprivation as well.

In recent years, Bury's education system has improved, with inspections showing steady progress in the quality of education. Bury's population is diverse but socially similar in its characteristics to England overall, making national comparisons useful.









# NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

## Local Strategic Connectivity

The education and inclusion strategy links closely with the aims and priorities of existing strategies in the borough. The overarching Bury Let's Do It Strategy places education at its heart with its aim that all children have the best start in life and thrive in education and develop skills.

This strategy also seeks to build on the notion of empowered local communities working through a neighbourhood model, where educational settings and expertise are at the heart of decision making at a local level. Neighbourhood working is at the core of Let's Do It and Public Service Reform. Local services work best for a community where front-line staff from different agencies know each other, have a shared understanding of strengths and challenges in communities, and work together. Schools and educational settings are core services for communities and need to be central to neighbourhood working.

Education plays a central role in children and families lives. The improvement planning for Bury's services, across social care, family help and SEND provides an overall framework for this strategy and vital links and continuities in approach.

The overall vision set out in Bury's Children and Young People's Plan, is that all children

and young people in Bury reach their potential, are happy, healthy, and safe; and able to make the best use of their skills to lead independent and successful lives.

The SEND Priority Impact Plan, developed with partners and local parents and agreed with the DfE in 2024, shares a vision rooted in inclusion, high expectations, and the removal of barriers to learning. Looking beyond childhood, the recently published All-Age Work and Skills Strategy together with this strategy forms a continuum seeking to support Bury children and young people from early education through to employment and lifelong learning.

The education strategy lays the foundation by ensuring that children and young people gain the knowledge, skills, and qualifications they need, while the work and skills strategy builds on this foundation - focusing on employability, adult learning, vocational pathways, and economic inclusion.



# OUR COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT

We agree on five commitments that our system will work collaboratively to achieve.



**1. INCLUSIVE:**

Every child and young person, no matter their age, identity, circumstance or ability, will have a sense of belonging, feel respected and valued for who they are.



**2. SAFE:**

Every child and young person will feel safe throughout their educational journey, giving them the best possible chance of reaching their potential.



**3. EFFECTIVE & HIGH ATTAINING:**

Every child and young person will have access to excellent educational settings, exceptional teachers and the support they need to achieve the best possible outcomes in learning and make the best possible start to adult life.



**4. COLLABORATIVE & CONNECTED:**

Every child and young person will benefit from a system where educational settings work collaboratively and are deeply connected to their local neighbourhood.



**5. SUFFICIENT and SUSTAINABLE:**

Every child and young person will thrive in a system with enough high-quality places in local schools and settings to meet demand, while ensuring long-term financial viability and resilience.





# 03. COMMITMENT 01 INCLUSIVE





# COMMITMENT 01

## INCLUSIVE

Every child and young person, no matter their age, identity, circumstance or ability, will have a sense of belonging, feel respected and valued for who they are.

### All Settings

- Building a collective zero-tolerance culture towards all forms of discrimination, ensuring every learner feels respected, safe, and included.
- Focussing on a revised and agreed local area approach to ordinarily available inclusive provision, ensuring all children have access to high-quality education and opportunities to succeed.
- Working together on early identification and intervention with universal, targeted and specialist support to identify and support needs as early as possible.
- Establishing a dedicated Stakeholder Group to explore and enhance the educational experiences of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children, recognising their unique vulnerabilities and needs.
- Strengthening partnership and engagement with Bury's parent carer forum, other parent groups and children and young people's forums (both inside individual schools/settings and borough-wide), to further understand the lived experience of all children to support inclusive education.
- Ensuring a high-quality workforce training and development offer through focused training events and using expertise from across the sector.
- Developing management information and tracking systems to ensure that all children have access to appropriate education opportunities, coordinating, seamless data flows across all relevant local partners to ensure that all children are visible and included.
- Utilising the role of the Virtual School in supporting the progress and achievement of all children in school with a social worker.

# COMMITMENT 01

## INCLUSIVE

### Early Years

- Ensuring high quality Early Years provision by Implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework within Bury's nurseries, childminders, group provision, out of school clubs and holiday clubs.
- Publicising and encouraging uptake of the enhanced pre-school offer.
- Developing even more Multi-agency Early Years Pathways in key areas of child development and making them available to all children.
- Delivering Multilingualism and English as an Additional Language (EAL) projects to support educators & families.

### Schools

- Building culturally responsive curriculum content that reflects and celebrates diversity, promoting representation and inclusivity.
- Supporting inclusive mainstream provision through the Graduated Approach and Local Authority Inclusion and Outreach offer to schools.
- Ensuring enhanced specialist support through continual professional development and support to our Resourced Provisions and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provisions.
- Supporting schools to adopt a trauma-informed approach, where staff understand how early experiences can affect behaviour and learning, and respond with empathy, consistency, and support.
- Closing the attainment gap by offering targeted interventions and support in schools to support disadvantaged pupils.
- Reducing suspensions and exclusion through locally developed guidelines for schools and responsive, timely specialist support to schools.







# COMMITMENT 01

## INCLUSIVE

### Alternative Provision & EOTAS

- Ensuring flexible and appropriate Alternative Provision and Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) by embedding and further developing alternative education pathways and broadening the Local Authority Alternative Provision directory.

### Post 16

- Providing inclusive learning opportunities in post-16 education, ensuring accessibility for all young people, including those with SEND.
- Developing additional targeted provision to meet the needs of groups of children at risk of disengagement from post-16 pathways.

### What does success look like?

- Overall attendance is better than the national average.
- Attendance of vulnerable groups of children (those with additional needs, including those with a social worker) is better than for their national peers.
- Fewer children miss fewer days of education through suspension and exclusion, especially in secondary schools.
- Fewer children are educated outside of maintained schools.
- Actively engaging with and listening to the voices of children and young people and implementing meaningful actions in response.
- Children and young people report feeling safe in our schools as identified in student voice surveys.
- All staff in Bury's education settings are trained in safeguarding and inclusive practices to better safeguard our children and young people and ensure they enjoy a sense of belonging.

# 04. COMMITMENT 02 SAFE



## COMMITMENT 02

### SAFE

Every child and young person will feel safe throughout their educational journey, giving them the best possible chance of reaching their potential.

#### PRIORITY ACTIONS

##### All Settings

- Further strengthening our multi-agency partnerships through the Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership where the Local Authority, social services, police, health professionals and particularly schools work collaboratively.
- Harnessing an early intervention and prevention approach providing targeted interventions to prevent concerns from escalating.
- Supporting safe learning environments by working with settings to ensure they are physically, psychologically and emotionally safe, free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination.
- Providing and brokering staff training and support to foster a culture of vigilance and responsibility.
- Ensuring safe transitions through enhanced arrangements and supporting our most vulnerable children and families.
- Working together on a Safe Travel approach to ensure all learners feel safe and can get to and from education settings confidently.
- Ensuring children missing in education is a priority, working together on early identification, support and prevention.





## COMMITMENT 02 SAFE

### Early Years

- Ensuring children are kept safe by following the safeguarding requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.
- Supporting Digital Safety by enabling young children and their families to use digital devices safely.

### Schools

- Empowering Children and Young People by promoting pupil voice and providing them with the knowledge and confidence to stay safe and seek help when needed.
- Improving online safety and digital resilience by equipping pupils, parents, and educators with the knowledge to navigate online risks safely.
- Working together to prioritise school attendance, ensuring all children attend well.
- Ensuring robust policies and reporting mechanisms are effective and meet expectations.

### Alternative Provision and Education Other Than at School (EOTAS)

- Harnessing greater support and oversight of children electively home educated.
- Providing assurance and ensuring due diligence through a directory of providers who are registered with the Local Authority.
- Agreeing Alternative Provision standards with a clear emphasis on safeguarding.
- Extending the training offer to all local providers.

## COMMITMENT 02

### SAFE

#### Post 16

- Working collaboratively to support children who are (and children at risk of becoming) Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET).
- Fully Including colleges and post-16 providers in local safeguarding partnership arrangements – recognising that safeguarding risks may change in nature but still exist for young adults.

#### What does success look like?

- Children and young people overwhelmingly report feeling safe, as measured by annual well-being and safety surveys
- A consistent year-on-year reduction in reported bullying, discrimination and hate-based incidents.
- Reduced rates of fixed-term suspensions and permanent exclusions that reflect a strong early intervention culture in all settings.
- Embedded well-being support programmes across all settings.
- Children and young people are confident and clear in the processes open to them for reporting concerns.
- All staff across all settings receive training and are proficient in delivering a robust safeguarding, trauma-informed practice and inclusive behaviour culture for all children and young people.



# 05.

## **COMMITMENT 03**

### **EFFECTIVE AND HIGH ATTAINING**



## COMMITMENT 03

### EFFECTIVE & HIGH ATTAINING

Every child and young person will have access to excellent educational settings, exceptional teachers and the support they need to achieve the best possible outcomes in learning and make the best possible start to adult life

#### PRIORITY ACTIONS

##### All Settings

- Demanding high standards of teaching and learning by working with teacher training providers and hubs to secure high-quality, evidence-based training.
- Working together on the recruitment, training and retention of high-quality educators and leaders.
- Building strong leadership and governance by supporting school leaders, Governors, MAT Trustees and Early Years proprietors through high quality advice, guidance and training - both in house and brokered from the wider education system, both within and outside of Bury.
- Ensuring curriculum excellence through showcasing the best practice that exists within our system and using expertise from all partners to support curriculum development.
- Using data and evidence to inform and challenge each other; drive collaborative decision-making and tailor interventions to improve outcomes for children.
- Strengthen assurance and accountability, ensuring that all partners are supported, held to account and achieve positive outcomes.

## COMMITMENT 03 EFFECTIVE & HIGH ATTAINING

### Early Years

- Offering differentiated support to all providers, responding to data, sector intelligence and 'on the ground' need.
- Ensuring school readiness through all settings, Family Hubs, Children's Centres working together and with families to understand child development and supportive transitions.
- Developing a greater Place-based offer through our Family Hubs and Children's Centres to better meet families' needs with universal and targeted help.
- Supporting schools through the Ordinary Available Inclusive Provision (OAIP) to deliver stronger mainstream inclusion through a graduated, communities of practice approach that helps schools feel confident in identifying needs early and acting quickly.

### Schools

- Ensuring effective school improvement support from excellence within the Bury system through universal, targeted and intensive packages.
- Creating focused working parties tackling Bury specific priorities gleaned from local intelligence and national assessments.
- Building collaborative networks of practice to share ideas, innovations and collectively problem solve.
- Providing strategic leadership support, advice and guidance to all Governors, Local Governors and MAT Trustees so that they are well-equipped to provide support and challenge for school leaders.



# COMMITMENT 03

## EFFECTIVE & HIGH ATTAINING

### Alternative Provision and Education Other Than at School (EOTAS)

- Focussing on outcomes achieved by children in AP and EOTAS provision ensuring that programmes are regularly reviewed and outcomes driven.
- Ensuring a wide range of subjects, skills, experiences and qualifications are available through the providers on the Alternative Provision Directory.

### Post 16

- Sharing the knowledge and skills of our post-16 providers to better support the school system and develop expertise.
- Collaboratively expanding the Higher Education and Adult Skills offer aligned with industry needs.

### What does success look like?

- Achievement for Bury children is overall above the national average at all Key Stages where an assessment can be made:
  - Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Progress - Good Level of Development
  - Key Stage 2 - Reading, Writing and Maths
  - Key Stage 4 – GCSE, Level 1 and Level 2 courses
  - Key Stage 5 - A levels, Level 2 and Level 3 courses at the age of 19
  - Progression to Higher Education
- Closing the gap between the achievement of children from groups that are performing less well than their national peers.
- Performance at higher levels of attainment is at least in line with the national average across all Key Stages.



# 06.

## COMMITMENT 04

### COLLABORATIVE & CONNECTED



## COMMITMENT 04

### COLLABORATIVE & CONNECTED

Every child and young person will benefit from a system where educational settings work collaboratively and are deeply connected to their local neighbourhood.

#### **PRIORITY ACTIONS**

##### **All Settings**

- Aligning our educational settings with multi-agency partners in our neighbourhoods, fostering strong relationships with health, social care, and community services to provide whole family support for children and families.
- Connecting with community and volunteering organisations by encouraging settings to work with local organisations, charities, and volunteers to enrich learning experiences.
- Maximising funding and resources by working collaboratively to secure external funding, share facilities, and optimise the use of educational resources.
- Increasing Local Authority and education provider collaboration through effective communication and joint working between the Local Authority, schools, and other educational providers.
- Creating Continuous Professional Development (CPD) networks to best support educators and leaders through collaborative training, research projects, and knowledge exchange.
- Increasing pupil and parental voice and collaboration through school council networks and parent networks.
- Developing data sharing opportunities between settings to ensure a person's needs on their educational journey are consistently met.

## COMMITMENT 04 COLLABORATIVE & CONNECTED

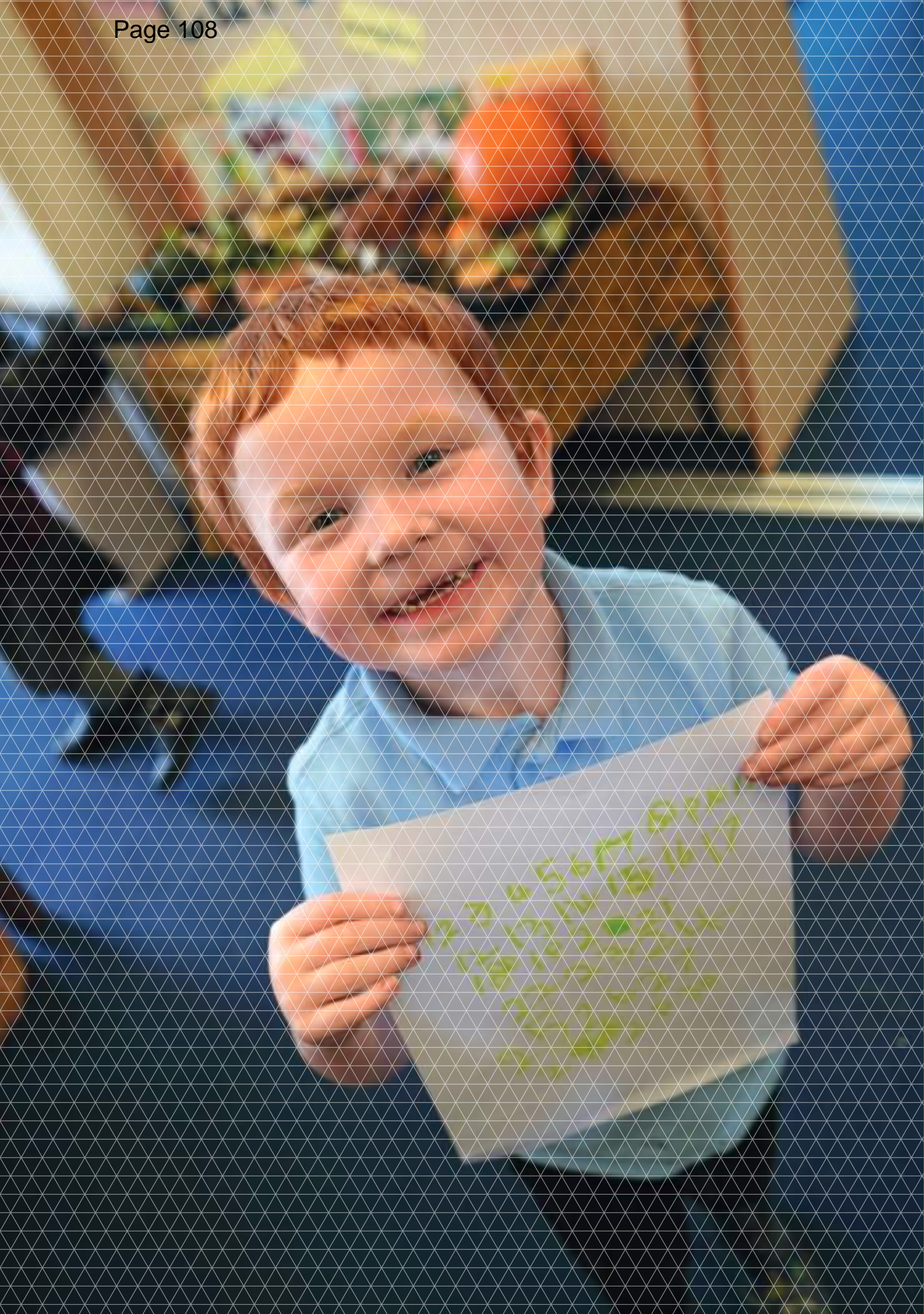
### Early Years

- Connecting families with young children to services important to them through our Family Hub and Children's Centres.
- Supporting collaboration in Early Years transition, better enabling children to move from one provider to the next and into schools.
- Strengthening links between Early Years EY settings and schools.

### Schools

- Ensuring schools, their staff and their buildings and facilities are integral to neighbourhood working and a cornerstone of Public Service Reform.
- Strengthening partnerships between schools by creating a system of collaboration between maintained schools, academies, and Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) to share best practices and resources.
- Connecting with external support such as The Research School, The North West Maths Hub and The English Hub to share knowledge and skills.
- Building senior leader and governor networks to foster local relationships.
- Creating specialist forums for staff with specific responsibilities to share expertise and learn together.





## COMMITMENT 04 COLLABORATIVE & CONNECTED

### Alternative Provision and Education Other Than at School (EOTAS)

- Connecting all stakeholders through a multi-agency strategy group to work to refine Bury's strategy for the use of AP and EOTAS and support the development of the provision our children and young people need.
- Collaborating through Provider Forums to ensure providers work in partnership with the Local Authority in developing provision to meet young people's needs.

### Post 16

- Creating pathways for progression, working with colleges, universities, and apprenticeship providers.
- Developing partnerships with businesses to enhance careers education, work experience, and skills development.
- Strengthening Careers Education, Information and Guidance by working collaboratively with local and national organisations.
- Making the most of the support from the Greater Manchester Careers Community of Practice in Bury settings.
- Supporting Lifelong Learning by offering work experience, college placements and volunteering opportunities to Key Stage 4 students, apprentices, care-leavers and adult volunteers.



## COMMITMENT 04 COLLABORATIVE & CONNECTED

### What does success look like?

- Local communities view educational settings as a vital hub for their neighbourhood.
- School and college facilities are used by the local community as a resource to promote greater support and cohesion.
- Increased parent and carer involvement in school activities with a focus on periods of transition for children and young people.
- All children and young people enjoy a smooth transition between educational stages with reduced anxiety and strong post-transition engagement.
- Strong collaborative practice between educational settings and health services, social care and the police to better identify and support vulnerable children and their families.
- Bury's business sector play an active role in supporting school and college based skills development programmes preparing children and young people for post-16 pathways and the world of work.
- In-year fair access panels play a vital role in swiftly securing school placements for vulnerable children.
- Reduction in Year 7 children becoming CME (Children Missing Education) and EHE (Electively Home Educated) through effective Year 6 to Year 7 transition support.

# 07.

## **COMMITMENT 05**

### **SUFFICIENT & SUSTAINABLE**



## COMMITMENT 05 SUFFICIENT & SUSTAINABLE

Every child and young person will thrive in a system with enough high-quality places in local schools and settings to meet demand, while ensuring long-term financial viability and resilience.

### PRIORITY ACTIONS

#### All Settings

- Consistently recognising and valuing the integral role of schools and other settings in local communities, working creatively and collaboratively to ensure their sustainability through systems overseeing long-term financial viability and preventing unnecessary closures or mergers.
- Using data and forecasting to analyse birth rates, Early Years data, housing developments, and migration patterns to anticipate and respond to change.
- Maximising Funding Opportunities from government, developer contributions, and strategic partnerships to support the sustainability of settings.
- Working collaboratively on environmental sustainability and embedding environmental responsibility into daily practice.



## COMMITMENT 05 SUFFICIENT & SUSTAINABLE

### Early Years

- Understanding Early Years needs through the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, ensuring we have enough places available across a range of different types of provision.
- Supporting the take up of Funding Entitlements and Tax-Free Childcare by working with families through settings, the family hubs and children's centres.
- Growing Sustainable Businesses by sharing guidance and advice through the GMCA Growth Hub Business Support.

### Schools

- Ensuring enough school places through a Pupil Place Planning Strategy to meet current and future demand, considering population growth, residential development and local demographic changes.
- Planning collaboratively with Stakeholders including schools, Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs), Manchester and Salford Diocesan Boards and local communities to develop an agreed approach.
- Ensuring sustainable local schools for communities by innovating together to mitigate falling rolls and deficit budgets, including maintaining our proportion of faith school places across the borough.
- Delivering new school development and expansion linked to our sufficiency plans.
- Increasing SEND Provision through Resourced Provisions, SEND Units and Special Schools, in line with a refreshed SEND Sufficiency Strategy.
- Ensuring transport, travel and accessibility through safe, accessible, and sustainable travel options for all pupils, supported by Transport for Greater Manchester.





## COMMITMENT 05 SUFFICIENT & SUSTAINABLE

### Alternative Provision and Education Other Than at School (EOTAS)

- Creating an Alternative Provision Approach, securing sufficient places to meet the full range of needs.
- Increasing targeted support programmes to support young people in mainstream schools and reduce demand for longer term Alternative Provision placements.

### Post 16

- Effective, co-ordinated strategic planning with post-16 providers and other stakeholders to ensure sufficient and high-quality places are available to meet current and future demand, including for high attaining young people.

### What does success look like?

- Every child and young person secures a place at a school or educational setting within their local area.
- Drastically reduce the need for travel or out-of-area placements due to lack of capacity.
- Sufficient and sustainable high-quality specialist places are available locally to reduce expensive, external or distance independent provision.
- High parent/carer satisfaction as evidenced by regular surveys.
- All educational settings attract and retain high-quality staff as evidenced by a reduction in staff turnover and strong recruitment to specialist posts.

## 08. GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY



# GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY

The increased autonomy of schools, operating within multi-academy trusts, requires a new approach to strategic governance which will be reflected in a newly created Bury Education and Inclusion Board.

The Bury Education and Inclusion Board will foster a culture of collective responsibility and accountability across all local partners for the education and outcomes achieved by all Bury children and young people.

The governance of the Education and Inclusion Strategy will be driven by a collaborative and transparent framework that ensures effective decision-making, accountability, and alignment with local needs and priorities.

Key stakeholders, including elected members, senior education leaders, school governors, and multi-agency partners, will play an integral role in guiding and overseeing the strategy's implementation.

The Bury Education and Inclusion Board will support all settings, schools and trusts to make a positive contribution to their own local community and across Bury, whilst also enabling the local authority to hold the school system to account in line with its statutory responsibilities.

The Bury Education and Inclusion Board will fulfil this function by providing effective governance to a school system where accountability sits across multiple stakeholders.

The Bury Education and Inclusion Board and the accompanying Delivery Plan will provide information to, and receive information from other boards across the Bury system.

The strategy will also interact with the following leadership boards that deliver on the Let's Do It! ambitions:

- Bury Children's Improvement Board
- The Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership Board
- The Public Service Reform Board
- Corporate Parenting Board
- Starting Well and Early Help Board
- Family Hubs Delivery Board
- Team Bury
- Bury SEND Partnership Board









# BURY EDUCATION AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

