

Children's Services Improvement Plan



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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)

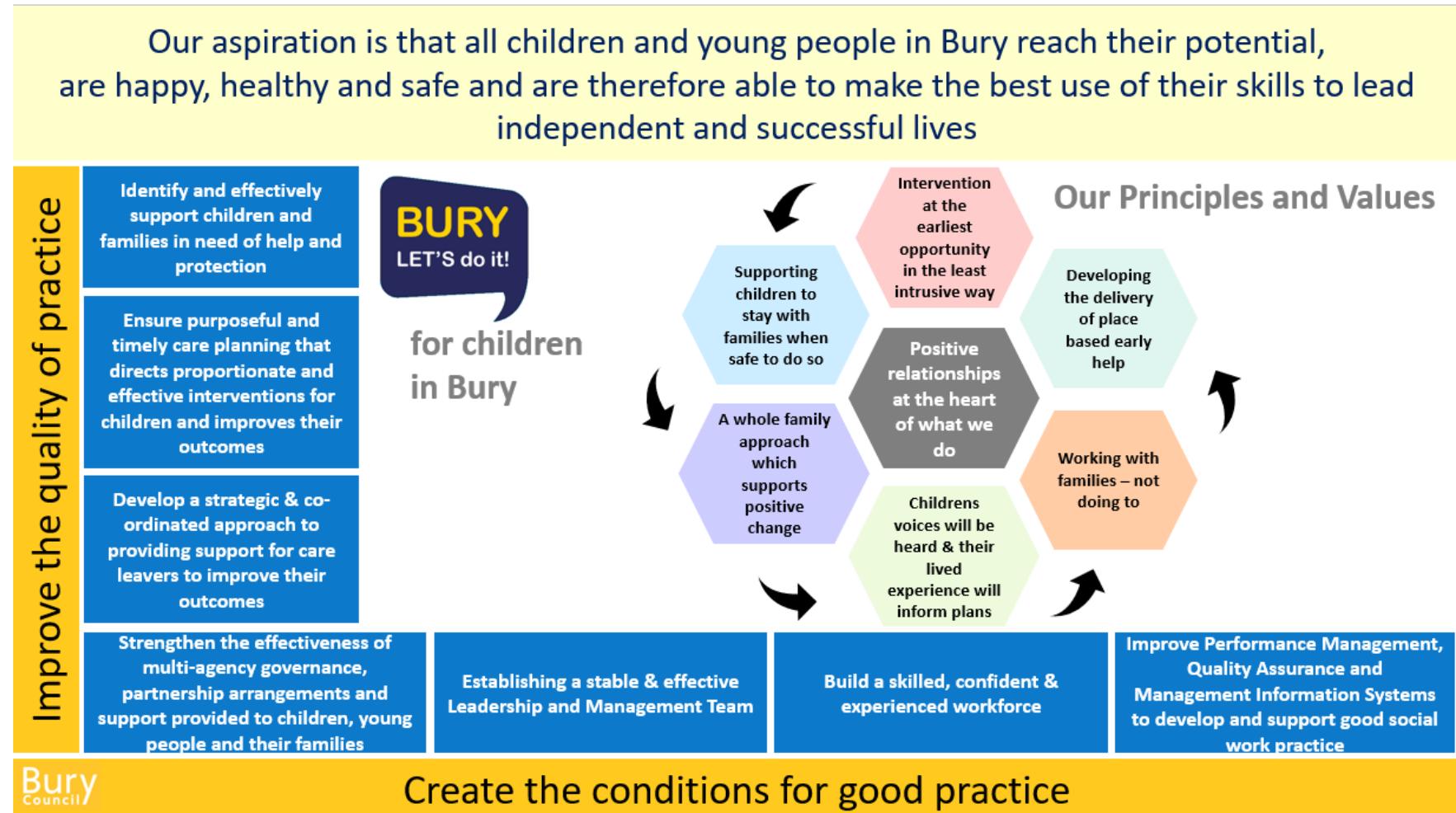
This Improvement Plan sets out our refreshed priorities to ensure we continue with our improvement. However, it sits as part of wider transformation plans as we adapt and respond to the changes ahead including the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill and the Schools White Paper.

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



3. Bury Commitments

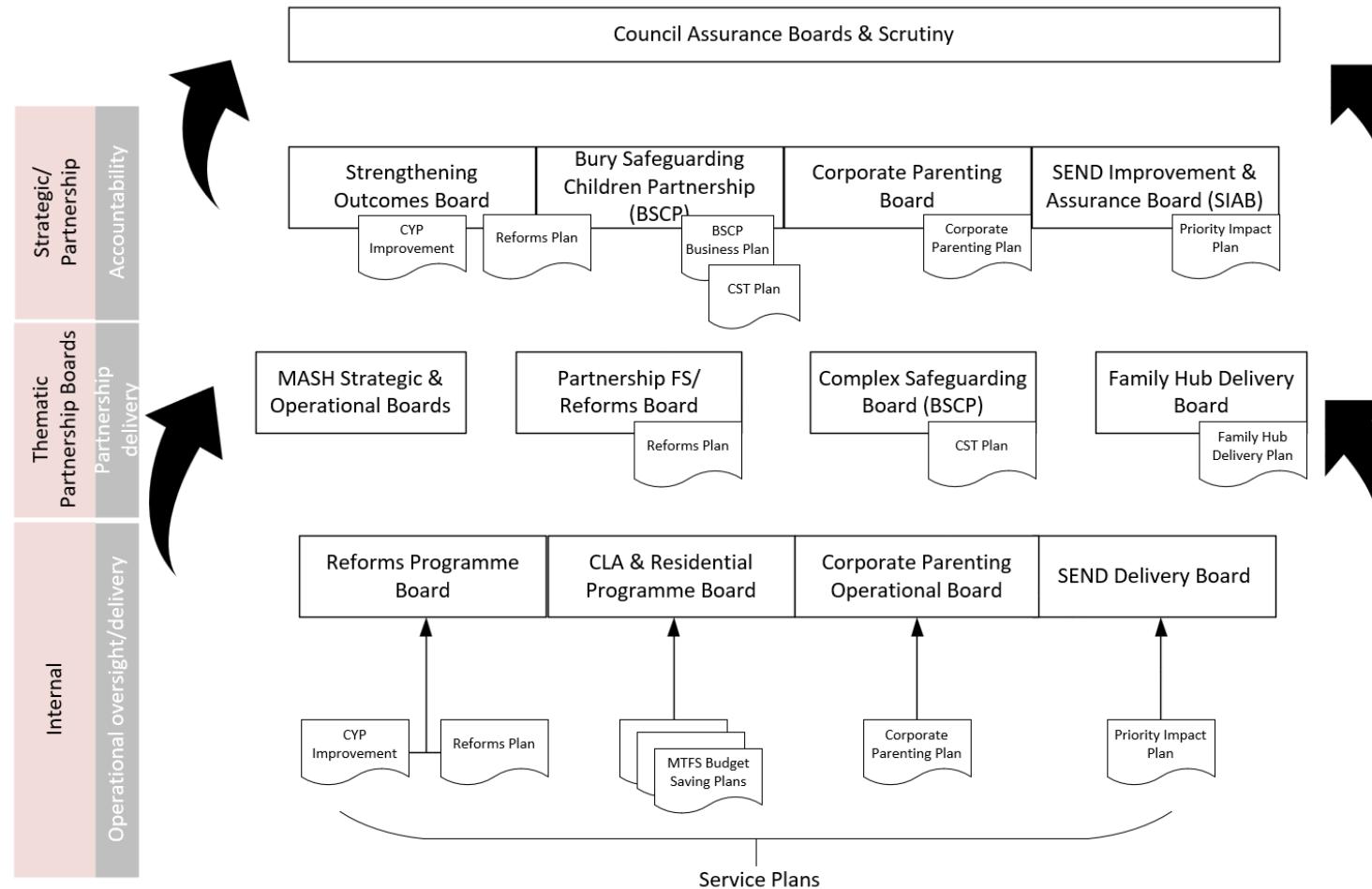
The Bury Commitments represent the cornerstones of good social work practice and have been the foundation for our improvement journey to date. They set out those areas of practice that will have the greatest impact on practice and outcomes for children and families.

Relationships	Impact Chronology	Assessment	Voice	Plan	Driving progress
<p>Practice is about doing with, not doing to</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>Understand our childrens' journey in life</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>Purposeful, analytical & timely</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>Capturing the daily lived experience</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>Co-produced, child friendly, outcome focused</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>Management footprint & reflective supervision</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:

	Action/Impact
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.	Amber
	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	Amber

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	<p>Board established - first meeting held in May, meets weekly with a different team focus each time ensuring that all children are reviewed 4-weekly.</p>	
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	<p>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</p>	

Desired outcome	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Evidence of impact/Progress	Impact RAG
with the 5 pillars of the Education and Inclusion Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive • Safe • Effective and high attaining • Collaborative and connected • Sufficient and sustainable 	<p>expectation in relation to inclusion and safeguarding</p> <p>b) Launch the refreshed Graduated Approach and Communities of Practice to ensure greater collaboration and opportunities for shared learning and build capacity</p> <p>c) Develop Education Systems (e.g. Eyes/Power BI) to remove manual processes and provide real time attendance and exclusions data</p> <p>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</p> <p>e) Ensure robust procedures in place to return CYP to full-time education with a focus on more vulnerable cohorts</p>	<p>Head of SEND</p> <p>Director of Early Years, Education & Skills</p> <p>School Attendance Exclusions Community Education Manager</p> <p>School Attendance Exclusions Community Education</p>	<p>November 2025</p> <p>March 2026</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>February 2026</p>	<p>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</p> <p>Support from GM10 to establish best practice in the region and procure technical expertise to support implementation</p> <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 All front-line practitioners completing appropriate EHE & SAO training as tracked via attendance session registers. Case audits confirm correct application of EHE and SAO protocols in decision-making Improved suitability checks for EHE provision following practitioner involvement</p> <p>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.</p>	

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	<p>a) Bi-Annual targeted awareness raising to promote recognition of Private Fostering and understanding of roles and responsibilities</p> <p>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</p>	<p>BSCP supported by Head of Family Safeguarding</p> <p>Head of Family Safeguarding</p>	<p>January 2026</p> <p>December 2025</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>Training sessions have been delivered – two online multi-agency and two social worker sessions, with a DSL session planned for November.</p>	
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	<p>a) Develop network of Family Hubs which is integrated into the place-based neighbourhood approach and supports delivery of the reforms</p> <p>b) Develop delivery plan for implementation of the social care reforms</p>	<p>Executive Director CYP & Executive Director, Health and Adult Care (and Deputy Place Lead - NHS GM (Bury))</p> <p>Delegated Safeguarding Partners</p>	<p>March 2026</p> <p>December 2025</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Outline delivery plan submitted June 2025; part 2 of the delivery plan must be submitted by 18th December. Project support allocated, plan in place including workshop with partners early November to agree key milestones and sequencing.</p>	

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.	Yellow
	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.	Grey

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		Yellow
	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		Yellow
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	Green

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		<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	Green
	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.	Yellow
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.	Yellow
	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		Yellow

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	Red

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.	Red
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.	Grey
	b) Review impact of transitional safeguarding arrangements to ensure they are effective	Director of CSC & EH, Director of Adult Social Care	September 2026		Grey

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.	Yellow
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.	Yellow

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"> • Council Opportunities & Care Leavers Covenant group meets monthly to explore upcoming opportunities for our young people (family firm approach). • Meet the Manager events take place bi-annually, providing young people with opportunity to meet potential employers. • NEET forums review individual young people in a plan-do-review approach to improve EET. This approach has been refreshed in September. <p>While we have positive examples of success stories, NEET remains high - 57% as of October 2025.</p>	Red

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"> • 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 • 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 • Lot 3 – Ofsted registered Accommodation and Support Service – 9 units for children aged 16 to 18 years. <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	<p>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</p>	

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.	Green
	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.	Green
	c) Consider the Family Safeguarding Strategic Partnership Board in relation to the reforms	Executive Director CYP	December 2025		Grey
	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"> • domestic abuse • sexual abuse • neglect 	Director of CSC & EH	July 2026		Grey

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • voice and influence of children 				
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.	Yellow
	b) Improve recording of supervision through implementation of Magic notes	Director of CSC & EH supported by CYP	October 2025		Yellow

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	<p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>d) Managers to provide their oversight of practice at key panels chaired by HoS/SMs to ensure line of sight into the</p>	<p>Heads of Service</p> <p>Director of CSC & EH supported by Heads of Service</p> <p>Director of CSC & EH supported by Heads of Service</p> <p>Director of CSC & EH supported by Heads of Service</p>	<p>December 2025</p> <p>June 2026</p> <p>March 2026</p> <p>December 2025</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p>New arrangements being development with Senior Management Team for implementation in November 2025.</p> <p></p>	

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescale	Progress	Impact RAG
	quality of management oversight				Yellow
	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		Green

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		Yellow
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		Yellow

Desired Impact	Action	Accountable Officer	Timescales	Progress	Impact RAG
standard, and drives improved outcomes	including the quality of plans and contingency planning				
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 & oversight and a clear voice of children and young people which is heard and influences plans.	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 th 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.	Yellow
	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.	Yellow
	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).	Red
	Note related digital improvement actions elsewhere in plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EHE (action 1.4) • CME (action 1.5) • Educational progress (action 2.4) • LADO (action 7.2) 	See individual actions	See individual actions		