

North West Regional Innovation & Improvement Plan

July 2022

Vision

A region that works for all children and those who support them

- where innovation and improvement go hand-in-hand;
- where practice, leadership and partnerships are strengths-based;
- where relationships are at the heart of what we do, and how we do it.

A cohesive yet adaptive regional approach to support better outcomes for children and their families will be achieved through our strategic objectives:

- Promoting collaboration across the North West
- Identifying what works so every local authority will benefit from shared practice and learning
- Empowering, engaging and connecting local authorities
- Supporting analysis, insight and evidence-based approaches
- Championing the opinions, feelings and aspirations of children and young people
- Increasing impact through effective use of resource

Strategic priorities for 2022-24

Our priorities and **underlying objectives reflect continuity of purpose to lead recovery** from the pandemic and respond to major policy initiatives to secure positive change; strengthening the **regional position and influence**.

- 1. Children's Social Care** – respond to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care to create the conditions for **purposeful practice which promotes stability and permanence** especially for Looked After Children
 - Ensure more children can live safely with their families
 - Ensure Looked After Children & Care Leavers benefit from relationships which support stability and better outcomes
- 2. Education & Early Years** – co-ordinate a regional response to the Schools White Paper which enables **an inclusive education system which supports all children and young people** to attend and achieve
 - Ensure early help and children's social care services improve educational experiences and outcomes
- 3. Special Educational Needs/Disability** – capitalise on opportunities created by the SEND Review to reset multi-agency support and **improve the experiences of children with SEND**
 - Ensure early help and children's social care services identify and respond to needs of children with SEND
- 4. Workforce** - support a **resilient Children's Services workforce** at all levels
 - Explore innovative approaches to securing a high quality children's workforce
 - Ensure the development of a sustainable pipeline of children's services leaders at all levels
 - Support existing leaders, through effective representation, advocacy and collective influence

Create the conditions for purposeful practice which promotes stability and permanence especially for Looked After Children (1)

Objective: Ensure more children can live safely with their families

Theme	Activity	Deliverables	Impact measures
Strengths-based, relational practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regionally co-ordinate preparedness for implementation of innovative practice models. Extend and embed the use of technology and blended practice within children's social care. Promote and deliver effective mechanisms to ensure children and young peoples' voice and influence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful bid secures improvement funding from DfE for innovation. Implementation plans in place for Systemic SW, Family Safeguarding. Updated Choosing Digital toolkit launched, supported by PSW network. CYP views captured in self-assessments and peer review activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced referrals to social care Improved emotional health and wellbeing (children/parents) Reduced harms from mental ill health, substance use and domestic abuse Reduced number of children who need help through CIN/CP plans.
Protection of vulnerable infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate learning from <i>Born into Care</i> programme to promote practice development. Regionally coordinate the adoption and adaptation of Salford Strengthening Families vulnerable infants/mothers innovation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning event to share practice developed via Born into Care delivered. Strengthening Families implementation plans agreed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved emotional health and wellbeing (mother/parents). Reduced number of newborns becoming Looked After Reduced repeat removals
Effective use of pre-proceedings and PLO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure 'tackling court backlogs' project DfE PLO project establishes legacy resources and systems Nurture PLO Champions network development to sustain and extend practice improvement. Support and challenge local authorities to assess and develop pre-proceedings/PLO practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly pre-proceedings/PLO data collection and analysis established. PLO Toolkit completed and uploaded to dedicated area of nwadcs.org.uk Peer Reviews collaboratively delivered across all LFJB areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced pre-proceedings resulting in care application Improved timeliness of care proceedings Reduced number of children becoming Looked After.
Protection of vulnerable adolescents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop multi-agency response to young people at risk of extra-familial harms. Ensure inter-authority information sharing addresses risk of harm across borders. Promote placement provider engagement in local EFH training and guidance development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Better for Children</i> EFH practice sharing multi-agency webinar delivered. Use of <i>At a Distance Placements</i> and <i>Information Sharing Protocols</i> evaluated Inter-sub regional sharing of complex safeguarding data implemented. Placement providers evidence awareness and training on EFH. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved family engagement Reduced risk of missing episodes, exploitation and criminality Improved placement stability Reduced number/cost of placements Reduced high-cost/secure placements

Create the conditions for purposeful practice which promotes stability and permanence especially for Looked After Children (2)

Objective: Ensure Looked After Children & Care Leavers benefit from relationships which support stability and better outcomes

Theme	Activity	Deliverables	Impact measures
Children at the edge of care or edging towards care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional coordinate adoption and adaptation of innovative practice models at the edge of care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation plans in place for No Wrong Door, FSH, Systemic SW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in children becoming LAC Increase in reunification with family.
Children in care and care leavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote local implementation of Lifelong Links programme through regional collaboration. Identify, develop and promote high quality placement practice that reflects children's needs. Develop and embed collaboration to promote effective inter-authority placement practice. Support LAs and providers in implementation Liberty Protection Safeguards Code of Practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lifelong Links launched and embedded in more local authorities. Referral training sessions held, pre-placement and annual checklists developed and in utilised by LAs. Updated <i>At a Distance Placements</i> and <i>Information Sharing Protocols</i> agreed. Training and targeted support on LPS and capacity assessment delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence CYP benefit from support networks which promote stability. Qualitative evidence that CYP voice positively influences service delivery. Evidence children benefit from safe and supportive inter-LA placements.
High-quality sufficient placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support preparation for regulation of Supported and Independent Living Services (SaILS) sector. Scope and develop digital tools to support efficient due diligence and information sharing. Co-produce quality and outcomes monitoring, including with CYP and parent/carers Coordinate local quality monitoring and develop regional monitoring. Develop regional purchasing systems to reflect market changes since they commenced. Plan for increased provider engagement to build relationships with and incentivise collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restructure of lots on the Residential FPS completed to better meet need. SaILS DPS reviewed and contract amendments support regulation. Review of Fostering FPS documents completed and contracts reissued. Training sessions on SaILS regulation delivered to providers and LAs. Provider portal launched, facilitating effective information sharing. Co-produced monitoring and evaluation tools agreed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable accommodation and support promotes tenancy stability post-18. Measurable increase in quality of providers on regional frameworks. Improved placement stability Qualitative and quantitative evidence of high quality provision improving health, education and other outcomes. Decrease in the proportion of children and young people placed at distance. Improvement in appropriate, quality, offers received for each referral.
Vulnerable migrant children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Regional Strategic Migration Partnership to embed effective system managing and monitoring transfer of UASC. Identify and commission specialist training to develop practice in supporting UASC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expectations of National Transfer Scheme met. Specialist training delivered to LAs. Data visualisation and analysis on UASC/former UASC provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in number of UASC safely supported in the region. Evidence of continuous professional development of SWs supporting UASC

Co-ordinate a regional response to *Opportunity for all and Right support, right place right time* policy developments

Objective: Enable an inclusive education system which supports all children and young people to attend and achieve

Theme	Activity	Deliverables	Impact measures
Early years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop inclusive practice in early years settings Increase parental understanding and confidence in securing Ordinarily Available Provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent expectations of Ordinarily Available Provision agreed. Ordinarily Available Provision parent guide developed and disseminated Early years community of practice, (linked to Family Hubs) established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative evidence of increased parent confidence and understanding of Ordinarily Available Provision Improved early years development and achievement in 2023 (GLD, EYFSP)
School improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collate and analyse assessment and attainment data for all key stages as a basis for improvement Support development of sustainable local plans for a trust-led system across all local areas including Priority EIA/EIAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual assessment/attainment data analysis completed. Improvement strategies shared. Academisation plans shared regionally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted and coordination SI activity supports improve education outcomes. Schools, trusts and dioceses benefit from clear local academization plans.
Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map and establish good practice in sharing and analysis of attendance data at school/LA level. Analyse data and practice in relation to monitoring and assessing suitability of EHE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live attendance data, dashboards and strategies shared to support improvement Elective Home Education Practice & Principles resource developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in EHE requests Reduction in unsuitable EHE Increased attendance
Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map and complete comparative analysis of inclusion strategies and performance reporting. Develop inclusive practice in mainstream provision to grow parental confidence. Support Local Areas to test understanding, and develop consistent use of, graduated response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional expectations for graduated approach agreed. Established regional EHCP Annual Review Quality Assurance framework Approach to establishing parental confidence agreed with NWNNPCF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved attendance of disadvantaged groups (LAC, CIN, SEN) Increased proportion of children with EHCP in mainstream settings Reduced EHC assessment requests. Reduction in SEND tribunal appeals.
Further education and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise Preparation for Adulthood network to map approaches to transition across local areas. Plan and commission regional and targeted support to improve Preparation for Adulthood Develop guidance and parent/carers information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support provider commissioned and delivering tailored regional support. Agreed 'practice and principles' guide for transition to adult services. Defined Preparation for Adulthood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative evidence of improved YP and parental experience of transition. Qualitative and quantitative evidence of stable and successful placements

Capitalise on opportunities created by the SEND & Alternative Provision Review to reset multi-agency support

Objective: Improve the experiences of children with SEND and their families

Theme	Activity	Deliverables	Impact measures
Co-production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope and initiate SEND Young Advocates/ Ambassadors programme in all Integrated Care Board areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Sharing lived experience' training delivered. SEND Young Advocate/Ambassador programme established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative evidence that delivery at all levels (inc. SEND Partnership Boards) is informed by C&YPs views
Multi-agency collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and embed multi-agency advisory and support functions. Map current local approaches and develop effective local SEND partnership boards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local/NW multi-agency collaboration engages DfE, NHSE and other advisers. Newsletter and RIIA mid/end year report disseminated to SEND partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative evidence advisory capacity engagement improves service delivery. Qualitative evidence communication/ reporting supports collaboration.
SEND placement sufficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope sufficiency of early years places, gaps in provision and identify unmet need. Embed and develop collaborative and local sufficiency planning and commissioning. Develop relationships with external providers to grow NW SEND Purchasing System engagement . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early years sufficiency mapping analysis completed. New lots and specifications (inc low incidence, post 16) for NW SEND Purchasing System developed. Increased number of providers on the NW SEND Purchasing System. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased take-up of Free Early Education Entitlements. Improved sufficiency and choice of places across all local areas.
Alternative provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish collective response to <i>Right support, right place, right time</i> recommendations on AP. Map current registered/unregistered AP and local approaches to commissioning and assurance. Develop AP Quality Assurance framework including methods to capture CYP views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative Provision Quality Assurance framework agreed. Case studies capturing young people's feedback completed. Framework for North West AP Register (inc. funding and commissioning principles) established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in exclusions from mainstream provision. Reduction in pupil movements and Children Missing Education Reduction in young people NEET

Regional Innovation and Improvement Alliance

Objective: Support a resilient Children's Services workforce at all levels

Theme	Activity	Deliverables	Impact measures
A high quality children's workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and share good and emerging practice on SW recruitment, retention and development. Explore feasibility of a co-designing alternative resourcing model to use of agency SWs. Secure tailored workforce development support through Research in Practice partnership. Share practice on recruitment and development of schools workforce from Priority EIA/EIAs. Map profile of Designated Social Care Officers and complete comparative analysis. Coordinate SEND workforce development (inc FE/HE offer) to support High Quality EY Teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reimagining CSC workforce insights report delivered and disseminated. CSC Workforce Practice and Principles Document launched. Test and learn phase for SW 'bank' resourcing model delivered. Training in court skills and Liberty Protection Safeguards delivered (RiP). Education Investment Area learning session delivered. SEND 'mini guides' for DSCOs/social workers developed and disseminated. Minimum SEND standards for FE/HE early years programmes developed, HQT training offer developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved practice halts decline in SW recruitment and retention. Reduction in use of agency SWs supports improved stability for CYP. Evidence of improved SW confidence in Family Court/ Court of Protection. Emerging evidence of improved retention in schools in PEIA/EIAs. Evidence of improvement in quality of social care contributions to EHCP. Proportion of Good/Outstanding EY settings maintained/improved Qualitative evidence of improved practitioner confidence and knowledge to support CYP with SEND.
Sustainable pipeline of children's services leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote engagement with Staff College upon programme for aspirants and learning mentors Develop induction and leadership development programme for SEND strategic leads. Support and facilitate LeadHership programme for aspiring women of colour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications to upon Programme successful and mentors identified. Structured induction for SEND Strategic Leads developed and tested. Up to 2 cohorts of 20 women of colour complete LeadHERship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved recruitment and retention in Assistant Director/Director roles. Improved recruitment and retention of SEND Strategic Leads. Graduates/alumni of LeadHERship programme secure promotions.
Representation, advocacy and collective influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage proactively with national and inter-regional representation opportunities. Respond to Government and inspectorate consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NW suitably represented in all ADCS and other national structures. Consultation responses submitted to regulators/government departments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NW representatives demonstrated added value to sector nationally. Consultation responses demonstrate policy shaping impact.

Regional Innovation and Improvement Alliance

Objective: Embed a mature and effective Regional Innovation & Improvement Alliance

Theme	Activity	Deliverables	Impact measures
Self-assessment and peer challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review, refresh and reissue <i>Framework for Self-Assessment</i> by end of July. Conduct Director-led Self Assessment Review (SAR) and Peer Challenge Forum process. Review themes and findings with Ofsted/DfE Regions Group to inform priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA Self-Assessments and desk-based review and feedback by November. Peer Challenge Forums delivered to all LAs December/January. Outcomes and learning shared with NWADCS Wider Leadership in April 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative evidence of accurate LA self-assessments (SAR, inspection). Qualitative evidence that LAs respond to areas for development (PC, Ofsted). LAs demonstrate practice is informed and improved by peer challenge.
Data analysis and insight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed and develop data collection, analysis and visualisation routines based on common national indicator set. Work with ADCS networks and <i>Data to Insight</i> to sustain and improve comparative data analysis. Map SEND data collection including SEN2 compliance and information sharing agreements. Design integrated SEND data dashboards across stakeholder groups. Embed quarterly SEND External Placements data collection and analysis. Investigate benchmarking of External Placements data with other regional commissioning consortia and use of data to inform forecasting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly data visualisation and analysis provided to LAs, NW Sector Led Improvement Board and DfE. Revised RIIA indicator set collated and shared with ADCS and DfE. Minimum standards for integrated SEND data dashboards established. Quarterly reporting on SEND External placements data delivered. External Placements data dashboards and analysis provided to LAs and specific ad hoc reports provided to governance and working groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence LAs have a systematic understanding of effectiveness. Evidence data analysis shapes and informs practice improvement. Reduced reliance on manual data reporting. Evidence that External Placements data is informing local practice and market management. Evidence that LAs are using External Placements dashboards to benchmark and better understand local spend.
Sector led support and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administer programme of small packages of Sector Led Improvement Partner (SLIP) support. Enhance and embed existing collaborative approach to Continuum of Challenge & Support. Establish regional programme of tailored activity, accessing commissioned support as needed. Pool, analyse and share learning from suite of peer challenge and review activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 156 days of SLI support delivered. Targeted peer challenge, audit, diagnostic activity delivered. Business case for development of Improvement Support framework. Peer challenge/reviews delivered by trained reviewers. Learning from SLI report(s) completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that improvement support impacts on quality of practice and impact of leaders. Evidence that response to improvement support delivers reduced costs or cost avoidance.