

***“Children and families are at the heart of everything we do, ensuring all children can thrive and reach their full potential”***

Staff Briefings  
4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019

# Gateshead Local Area Context

- A total population of around 202,419, living in 90,500 households
- **Socio-economic inequalities exist** – 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation shows 15 areas which fall within the 10% most deprived areas in England, equating to almost 23,600 people or 12% of the total population
- **39,780 children and young people** live in Gateshead, 19.7% of the total population in the area
- **Poverty is high but decreasing** with latest figures indicating 19.8% under 16s and 19.4% under 20s live in poverty, a decrease from 24.8% under 16 or 24.1% under 20 in 2010
- **4,532 Children and Young People** or are from **Workless families** and the number of lone parent households with dependent children is 6,929
- Children entitled to free school meals in primary schools is 17.4% (the national average is 14.1%) and in secondary schools is 15.4% (the national average is 12.9%)
- Pupils in schools identifying as having a **minority ethnic background** is increasing at 10.91%
- Children with **English as an additional language** in primary schools is 7.3% (nationally 20.8%) and in secondary schools is 5.4% (nationally 16.1%)
- **Around 1604 children (CIN)** are open to Children Social Care (end Dec 18), which is CIN rate per 10,000 of 403, lower than both our statistical neighbours and North East neighbour average.
- **Around 299 Children** are subject to a Child Protection Plan (end Dec 18), which is a rate per 10,000 of 75.1, higher than north east and statistical neighbours.
- **Around 404 children** are Looked After (end Dec 18), which is a rate per 10,000 of 101 again higher than north east and statistical neighbours.

# Developing our CWL Strategic Priorities

## Making a Gateshead a place where everyone can thrive and reach their full potential

### Put people and families at the heart of everything we do

1. Ensure people and families have access to relevant information, advice and guidance, in order to access appropriate and timely support.
2. Keep all children and adults living safely in their own homes as long as possible and positively and proactively manage risk, with least restrictive interventions.
3. Ensure that choice and control are embedded across all services and functions.
4. Strengthen the voice of the child.
5. Deliver services locally as the preferred option
6. Ensure the CWL accommodation strategy provides a wide range of suitable properties to promote independence and reduce costs.

### Tackle inequality so people have a fair chance

1. Promote educational inclusion and reduce the numbers of pupils being permanently excluded from school.
2. Take a whole system approach to planning and delivering services based on need that aim to reduce inequalities and improve healthy life years
3. Reduce the number of children looked after by the council and subject to child protection plans.
4. Return OOB children to Gateshead and place no children more than 20 miles from home.
5. Maintain a single-minded focus on prevention and wellbeing to increase healthy life expectancy and quality of life of Gateshead residents.

### Support our communities to support themselves and each other

1. Take an asset based, holistic approach to meeting the needs of vulnerable children and adults.
2. Take a system wide place-based approach to meeting the needs of children and adults.
3. Work with all partners and communities to minimise social isolation and promote volunteering.
4. Re-enable residents so that individuals' independence is maximised and reduce the numbers of people accessing residential care.

### Invest in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth across the borough

1. Recruit and train the best foster carers to care for LAC in Gateshead.
2. Recruit and retain a stable, motivated and highly skilled workforce.
3. Stimulate the market and commission smartly to enable CWL to secure effective and best value for money services.
4. Improve accountability and responsibility for managing budgets ensuring expenditure is controlled within the resources available and deliver agreed budget savings.

### Work together and fight for a better future for Gateshead

1. Work with partners and communities to ensure that Safeguarding is everybody's business and ensure that allegations of abuse are appropriately responded to.
2. Work efficiently with all partners to prevent problems emerging and intervene early to ensure problems do not escalate to the point where more targeted services are necessary.
3. Work closely with partners to streamline the delivery of support to people; reducing duplication and ensuring a customer focused approach.



# Vision for children and families in Gateshead

*“Children and families are at the heart of everything we do, ensuring all children can thrive and reach their full potential”*

- ▶ Our self-assessment describes our approach to achieving this and how successful we are in doing so.
- ▶ Gateshead is on a continuous improvement journey which is predicated on our desire to reflect the values and culture of a service focused on delivering high quality frontline practice with a skilled and stable workforce, embedding well-managed, mutual support and effective challenge.
- ▶ Senior leaders and Council Members share this ambition and seek to provide services that improve and enhance the lives of children, young people and families.

# Progress from last annual conversation – Oct 17

- ▶ **Strategic Director appointed September 2017** – stable senior leadership team.
- ▶ **Early Help Service now well embedded** – caseload capacity increased – single integrated Early Help Structure.
- ▶ **Edge of care service strengthened** – Complex CiN developed and Rapid Response Teams.
- ▶ **Domestic Abuse services have been reviewed** – new service put in place.
- ▶ **Performance management strengthened** – ensures comparator data included and commentary provided.
- ▶ **Performance clinics ensure detailed scrutiny** – now informs robust self challenge and targets quality assurance work.
- ▶ **Appropriateness and timeliness of all children subject to S20 ongoing reviews** – resulting in a reduction to 16.7% of total LAC, down from 22.3% at the same time last year
- ▶ **Increased SGOs** – now high compared to other LAs. 18 granted current financial year, i.e. approx. 22.5%
- ▶ **Ofsted focussed visit–Care Leavers** – March 2017
- ▶ **The Jewish Community** – actively engaged in the safeguarding agenda. LSCB representation and safeguarding training with LA

# Headline Data

(12 months end Dec 18)

- ▶ **1 631 CAF assessments completed with over 1,600 children and young people receiving an early help intervention**
- ▶ **1 723 referrals received by Children Social Care, with a re-referral rate of 19.4% (lower than England average, inline with SN and higher than North East**
- ▶ **Rate Per 10,000 – 75.1 children subject to CP (299) and 101 LAC (404) (higher than England and SN averages) – recently reduced further**
- ▶ **CiN assessment timescales good 86.7% (higher than latest SN and England average) only 13% resulting in NFA**
- ▶ **96% of ICPCs within 15 working days of strategy discussion and 100% child protection reviews held in timescale (better than latest SN and England average). 85.5% of ICPCs result in a CP plan.**
- ▶ **3.2% of CP plans ended after 2 years or more (lower than England and SN average, but high compared to the North East)**
- ▶ **24.6% of CP plans are second or subsequent (now higher than England, SN and North East average)**
- ▶ **1 84 children admitted to care, 15% had previously been in care, only 4% in the previous 12 months**

# Headline Data

(12 months end Dec 18)

- ▶ 5.9% of LAC experienced 3 or more placements, 80.6% in same placement for 2 or more years (both compare favourably to other areas) 14.7% ceasing LAC adopted and 22.5% SGO
- ▶ Care leavers – 59% in EET and 98% in suitable accommodation

## Additional reflected in our SEF

- ▶ 60 families and 110 children and young people supported by the Complex CiN team – Early impact fewer LAC aged 11+ admitted this year compared to last
- ▶ 85 schools participate in the Operation Encompass model for sharing information on domestic abuse with 1036 notifications made
- ▶ 43% increase in LADO enquiries (total 340) – seen as positive impact of increased awareness of the process with partners
- ▶ 43 children and young people accessed independent advocacy – need to develop more
- ▶ Social Worker vacancy rate 3.9% (down from 15.8% last year) and sickness 4.4% (down from 5% last year)

# Key service strengths

**1 – Children in Gateshead are safe** – receive timely and effective help and protection, (see data workbook, key timescales measures).

**2 – Early help everyone's business**, CAF assessment process well embedded across the partnership.

**4 – Placement stability – core strength** – cornerstone of emotional wellbeing, supporting best outcomes for LAC.

**3 – We know our children and young people well**, showing tenacious focus, effective advocacy and engagement to support the voice of the child.

*'I would sometimes ring her 5 times a day and she would always get back to me as soon as she could. She made those years of being looked after as good as she could have. She always voiced my opinion and treat me as an individual'*

*'My social worker has helped me through so much recently and takes all my thoughts into consideration. She tries her best all of the time and has been like a rock to me. She is lovely and the best social worker I could ask for. We have grew a very strong bond and I know she wants what's best for me. She also keeps me updated'*

# Key service strengths (2)

**5 – Developed innovative edge of care, focus on older young people.** Wrap around intensive support for families in crisis, working in community– evenings and weekends in response to family need. Positive, measurable impact.

**6 – Stable workforce** strong strategic planning to retain experienced social workers. Dynamic partnership developed with 'Frontline' to 'grow our own' – ensuring high quality social work practice of newly qualified social workers. Strong focus on investing in workforce – recruiting and retaining high calibre, confident and skilled social workers and managers – result significant reductions in vacancy rates and use of agency staff

*"Everything is better. Your worker has changed my life. My daughter wishes she had asked for help sooner."*

*"You have helped me get my life back on track when before you were involved I felt like a failure. I just could not see the light at the end of the tunnel but I can now"*

**7 – Building social workers' skills and knowledge–** systemic and relational practice culture. Employee feedback highlights high job satisfaction and demonstrates social workers feel they are supported to make a positive difference to lives of vulnerable children.

# Key service strengths (3)

**8 – Managers supported in practice leadership focus on ‘leading from the middle’.** Quality of Social Work practice lead is proactive in developing and leading delivery of a Quality of Practice Improvement Plan for the service focussing on skills development for the frontline workforce.

**9 – Evidence of good partnership working, core strength, with honest and open challenge between agencies.** Elected members and senior council leaders, Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) all reviewing the provision of children’s social services

**10 – Strong Senior Leadership and Lead Member for Children scrutiny, engagement, oversight and challenge through regular performance clinics, case discussions and portfolio meetings**

**EET and Suitable Accommodation –** work closely with partners to ensure care leavers’ EET opportunities and access to suitable accommodation. Positive feedback Focussed Visit Ofsted March 18. Performance remains strong 96% in suitable accommodation and 57% in EET (currently 13 care leavers are at university)

# Priority areas for development

**1 – Further strengthen Child in Need service delivery offer**

**4 – Increase % of LAC placed with carers in the local area by increasing placement choice and provision through developing capacity of residential and fostering provision locally.**

**2 – Improve quality and consistency of children's plans – as a mature learning organisation we partner other local authorities as part of our improvement journey to assess and develop practice. Strengthen the voice of children and young people to improve and impact on the focus of plans.**

**5 – Strengthen permanence planning through Early Permanence Group (EPG) reviewing admissions into care, long term matches, and all children with exit order plans. Regional Adoption Agency–established December 2018.**

**6 – Strengthen performance management further develop data and performance tools to provide accurate, real time information to support management oversight of frontline practice, enable robust self-challenge and target quality assurance work.**

**3 – Improve impact of feedback from children and young people–capture and evidence voice of the child to improve the quality of all elements of frontline social work.**

**7 – Improve quality of frontline supervision predicated on well-embedded and understood expectations and practices in accordance with revised core practice standards.**

**8 – Improve the progress of children at Key Stage 4**



# Feedback from Ofsted Annual Conversation – Dec 2018



## Feedback from Oftsed Annual Conversation – Dec 2018

- ▶ Our self-evaluation describes very well the vision for children and families
- ▶ We are an outward looking service seeking to learn from best practice, sector led improvement and local partners to improve outcomes
- ▶ Were assured that performance data reflects timely responses to key safeguarding activity
- ▶ Recognised we have more to do to continue to improve the consistency of children's plans

## Feedback from Oftsed Annual Conversation – Dec 2018

- ▶ Need to develop the involvement of children and young people in quality assurance processes
- ▶ Recognised that we are adapting services to challenging demands on statutory services
- ▶ Placement stability for LAC seen as a key strength
- ▶ Timeliness of Care Proceedings performance is good, but need to ensure we monitor performance for pre-proceedings

## Feedback from Ofsted Annual Conversation – Dec 2018

- ▶ Progress noted in reduction permanent exclusions, but there remains more to do
- ▶ Ofsted noted progress measure 16 year pupils suggests room for further improve in attainment
- ▶ Recognised stability of workforce and the strong political support for recruiting and retaining experienced social workers and managers
- ▶ We have a strong focus on building social workers skills and knowledge and supporting your front-line mangers

## Feedback from Ofsted Annual Conversation – Dec 2018

- ▶ Letter concludes – last inspection of Gateshead's Children's Services the outcome was good
- ▶ **Currently, there are no identifiable risks**
- ▶ Next contact will be Short Inspection during 2019



# External Feedback



# Practice Standards Launch



Care Wellbeing and Learning  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES SERVICE**  
&  
**EARLY HELP SERVICE**

## **PRACTICE STANDARDS**

For qualified social work staff, early help workers & staff working directly with children young people and their families

Document control and record of amendments

Version	Reason for amendment	Amended by/date
V5	DRAFT	August 2018 (SLP)
V6	Approved – FINAL	October 2018

# Practice Standards Launch

- ▶ Delivering consistency of practice
- ▶ Clear guidance
- ▶ Reference tool



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**3.8** Where home conditions are an issue, I have checked the kitchen cupboards, fridge, toilet, bathroom and all bedrooms as needed.

**16.43** I have made it clear how actions are expected to bring about improved outcomes

**16.44** I have ensured that the plan focuses on the full range of issues and has a clear action on establishing the views of children and young people on the content of the plan.

**16.45** I have ensured that the plan is holistic in approach

**16.46** I have ensured that the TAF meeting minutes and CAF Support Plan are shared with the family and relevant agencies 15 working days from the TAF date

# Practice Standards Launch

- ▶ All online procedures are available through an icon on your desk top



Gateshead Council

Enter keywords

Home / Health and social care / Children's social care / Information for practitioners / Procedures and practice guidance

## Procedures and practice guidance

Information for practitioners

- ▶ Out of authority placement
- ▶ Making a referral
- ▶ Disclosure and barring
- ▶ Procedures and practice guidance

### Care, Wellbeing and Learning

In this section you will find links to procedures and practice guidance (both single-agency and multi-agency).

### Children's Services

Children's Services Procedures Manual - single agency  
Safeguarding Procedures and Practice Guidance - multi-agency (LSCB)

### Adult's Services

Safeguarding Adults policy, procedures and practice guidance - multi-agency (SAB)

### Safeguarding Boards

Safeguarding Boards are statutory bodies made up of organisations that work together to safeguard children and adults from abuse and neglect.

Visit Safeguarding In Gateshead for more information including:

Gateshead Council

## Gateshead Children's Services Procedure Manual Contents

November 2018

**Quick Links:**  
This contents list is sub divided into the following sections, each Section contains relevant Chapters/Procedures: (Click on the title to jump to the Section you require):

1. All Children
2. Case Management and Recording
3. Prevention and Family Support
4. Children in Particular Circumstances
5. Looked After Children
6. Fostering, Adoption and Special Guardianship
7. Appendices

### 1. All Children

#### 1.1 Policy Values and Principles

- 1.1.1 Children's Services Policies, Values and Principles
- 1.1.2 Confidentiality Policy
- 1.1.3 Consultation Policy
- 1.1.4 Family and Friends and Connected Persons Care Policy

See also:

- Information for Family and Friends Carers.
- FRQ Initial Family and Friends Care - this resource outlines what a viability assessment for family and friend carers should look like, what social workers should consider and how to undertake international assessments.

#### 1.1.5 Lone Working Policy

#### 1.1.6 Children's Consultation and Participation



# Your views – Staff Engagement



# Staff Engagement

- Our improvement journey does not start and end with our SEF
- We continually need to think of ways to improve what we do, for the children and families we work with
- We want to develop our SEF further by hearing from you
- Tell us what you think works well, and any ideas you have for improvement
- Post-it notes around room – please leave your name so we can contact you about your ideas
- [Use the link, to tell us what you think](#)





*Thank you for  
everything you do for  
the children and  
families of  
Gateshead, everyday.*

