

# Rutland Children and Young People Development Plan 2022 - 2023

**Our vision is for all children and young people in Rutland to be happy, safe and successful. They will be supported and empowered to be the best they can be.**

## Monitoring arrangements:

Progress of this development plan will be overseen by the Children's Services Improvement Board and the Directorate Management Team (DMT). These will be informed by service area updates and the plan will be regularly updated as a result. Individual service areas will monitor and progress specific actions for their area, which also feed into wider governance arrangements. Actions will only be signed off by DMT once satisfied that sufficient progress has been made and there is evidence this is sustained.

Our Children's Services Development Plan will support the delivery of our Children and Young People Plan (2022-2025) and we will address and track the actions against the 5 Priority Outcomes below.

Our 5 priorities are:

1. **Transition to adulthood:** To support the effective transition of vulnerable young people into adulthood and independent living, ensuring young people feel equipped with the necessary skills to live safe and successful lives.
2. **Emotional Health and Wellbeing:** To promote emotional resilience and ensure support is in place to recognise and respond early to children and young people; working with our community and specialist services to support local interventions.
3. **Protecting children at risk of harm:** Work with our partners to reduce risk at home and in the community.
4. **Tackling Domestic Abuse:** Work with our community to raise awareness of domestic abuse. To improve the services available locally for victims, including child victims, and their families in order to minimise the impact on family life.
5. **Children who become vulnerable in their education, including children with SEND:** We will work with partners, providers and families to ensure children receive their education entitlement and, work with other agencies to put in place additional support when children need it.

Version	1.1
Date created:	November 2021
Last reviewed:	February 2022

**KEY TO RAG RATING:**

<b>RED</b>	Timescale not being achieved
<b>AMBER</b>	Activity not yet commenced OR activity underway but risk of not achieving
<b>GREEN</b>	Activity underway and timescale being achieved OR Completed

Our Children's Services Development Plan will provide evidence we are making or have made steady progress in improving some of the areas of practice identified as requiring attention through our SEF. This includes robust processes for identifying risk and harm at the front door by effective information sharing with a wide range of agencies, strong management oversight and decision making, and ensuring children are matched according to their needs and achieving early permanency.

The updated Self Evaluation Form (SEF) dated October 2021 has outlined in detail what we know about the quality and impact of our practice across all service areas, identifying some key priority areas.

The development plan below will provide focus to the Service between November 2021 – March 2022 on areas of strength to build on, to ensure good practice becomes embedded. It is expected that the development plan will be monitored, updated and reviewed quarterly.

## CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

Delivery Area	Development Action	Expected Outcome	Lead	Completion Date	RAG	Action we will take	How will we know we have achieved these outcomes?	Progress update
<b>Children in need of help and protection</b>								
<b>Information Sharing</b>	<p>Improve robustness of information gathering in understanding the child's needs early and at the first point of contact.</p> <p>There is evidence that we are continually reviewing risk when new information emerges, this includes convening a multi-agency strategy discussion on CIN cases to determine whether threshold for s.47 escalation has been reached.</p>	<p>Update, implement and embed local practice guidance to include information about mutually agreed expectations with police, health, education and other multi-agency partners around appropriate levels of participation and information sharing.</p> <p>Intelligence and background information on all adults who have access to the child/involved in parenting of the child to be routinely shared.</p>	HoS / Service Manager	March 2022	<b>Green</b>	Further strengthen front door by improving the quality of information sharing including from a wider range of agency liaison to improve quality of early multi-agency decision making; such as probation, adult mental health and IDVA.	<p>Bi-monthly dip sample of the quality of information sharing in Strategy Discussions – at least 90% of cases will be rated 'good' or better and 0% are rated inadequate.</p> <p>Monthly data reports to consistently show:</p> <p>100% of strategy discussions include police and health colleagues, consultation with housing and adult social care.</p> <p>An increase in the % of s47s that result in Initial Child Protection Conference.</p>	<p>Practice reviews and independent audit show a good level of information sharing.</p> <p>Strategy discussions include partners and partnership attendance at meetings is good.</p>
	Review the way assessments and plans are written when written to the child to ensure that the severity of the concerns is not lost in using child friendly terminology.	Assessments and plans are clear and risks clearly articulated. Plans and assessments are also accessible and understandable to all- particularly children and young people.	HoS/Service Manager	September 2022	<b>AMBER</b>	Development work within the service on how to write to children and young people while also articulating the severity of concerns.	<p>Plans and assessments will be read and understood by children and young people.</p> <p>Practice reviews will show assessments and plans are of good quality and have robust analysis.</p>	<p>Plans and assessments are clear- further work is required on how we write to the child and the language used.</p> <p>Work is planned at service development days to look at developing this skill.</p>

<b>Collaboration</b>	<p>Continued collaborative practice with families, ensuring that intervention is child focused and informed by level of risk and history of concerns.</p> <p>Practitioners display professional curiosity and ensure a focus on child welfare over parental self reporting.</p>	<p>Embed practice guidance around analysis of parental capacity for change to prevent 'Start again' approach with each new referral.</p> <p>Define expectation and process for assessments and ensure that all assessments of children include an analysis of risk including the cumulative impact of harm to children, in order to make the most appropriate plans.</p> <p>Chronologies are evident and used as the <b>starting point</b> for assessment process</p>	HoS / Service Manager	September 2022	<b>AMBER</b>	<p>Further training and development for all staff to promote understanding of the cumulative impact on children of neglect.</p> <p>Share learning from messages from research on the impact of child neglect.</p> <p>Assess the needs of pre-verbal children in the context of neglect e.g., through observations</p>	<p>Audit on the quality of routine management oversight of longer-term cases at key trigger points.</p> <p>Chronologies will be used as a tool to identify and highlight patterns of family dysfunction over time.</p> <p>Audit of Child Protection Plans and Child in Need plans to identify how children's views are being shared and considered as part of the plan.</p> <p>Monthly data reports will consistently show:</p> <p>Repeat Child Protection Plans at or below statistical neighbour average</p>	<p>Suggest target date for this moves to <b>September 2022</b>. Further practice development days are taking place to clarify ways of working and ensure that history is always considered.</p> <p>Ingson QA highlights the need for professional curiosity and more reflection in assessment.</p> <p>Back to basics training on writing analysis to take place alongside further group reflective sessions on challenging parental narrative.</p>
	<p>Child protection and Child in Need plans focus on specific outcomes to be achieved with timescales, rather than just describing an 'activity' to be completed.</p>	<p>Child in Need and Child Protection Planning offers a robust plan with clear expected outcomes and all involved on clear on what the expectations are.</p> <p>Meetings will focus on updates to the plan and be outcome focussed.</p>	HoS/Service Manager/ IRO	September 2022	<b>AMBER</b>	<p>Work to be undertaken across the service around planning and recording of plans and actions to be taken.</p> <p>Back to basics approach looking how we can clearly record and progress CIN and CP planning</p>	<p>Practice reviews will highlight clear and robust plans.</p> <p>Progression of casework will be evident in progression of plans and timeliness of interventions.</p> <p>Families will be able to clearly understand and articulate what the expected outcome of intervention is.</p>	<p>Plans are clear however further work is required on ensuring expected outcomes are clearly articulated.</p> <p>It is positive that plans are evident on files and plans for children are progressing but some further development on refining plans is required.</p>
	<p>Participation of children and young people is encouraged at every level and recorded on file. Their engagement with services such as SUSO clearly recorded.</p>	<p>Young people are given opportunity to engage with participation events and these are clearly recorded on their files. When young people decline an opportunity this is revisited at different times to encourage engagement.</p>	IRO/John Herbert	September 2022	<b>AMBER</b>	<p>Work on how participation in recorded and reflected on case files to be completed.</p> <p>IRO's to ensure participation is discussed and recorded at review meetings.</p>	<p>Participation is evidenced on case files via audit and the impact on children and young people.</p> <p>There will be an increase in participation from revisiting the opportunities with children and young people.</p>	<p>There is ongoing work in relation to this and the participation service are already looking at the best way to record activity on a child's file.</p> <p>IRO's will also explicitly record this in their meetings.</p>

<b>Decision-making</b>	Supervision is on file and is of good quality with clear updates on current developments within case work and next steps recorded.	Case progression with clear management oversight leads to outcomes being achieved for children and young people.	Service Manager/ Team Managers	September 2022	<b>AMBER</b>	Further development work with managers on the format of supervision to ensure workers are given the support they need to progress case work and that this is robustly recorded.	Clear management rationale will be evident on file.  Social workers and managers will report a good standard of support and supervision with ability to reflect on practice and achieve positive outcomes.	A new supervision template is being looked at- currently the template used is repetitive and onerous.  We know staff are receiving supervision wse now need to ensure the quality os where is should be- this will take place via supervision observations and practice reviews.
	Regular review of CP cases to determine whether threshold for escalation to pre-proceedings has been met or is being missed.	Develop a contingency section on the case recording system (E.g., PLO minute template) to ensure that parallel planning for children is clearly discussed and recorded.  Produce PLO practice guidance for staff to improve consistency and effectiveness of the process.	HoS/ Service Manager	August 2022	<b>Green</b>	Parallel Planning within pre-proceedings to be outlined at Review Conferences when positive changes are not being achieved through a Child Protection Plan, in a timeframe that is appropriate to the child's age, development and need.	Appropriate management of cases operating within the public law outline (PLO).  Thematic audits to confirm if practice is consistently reviewing appropriateness of implementing the PLO process.	Regional tool kit for effective PLO is being launched in March- this will be used across the service for good practice.  This will be looked at in the service development day in June
	Review of threshold decisions at the front door and those around S47 to ensure that appropriate support is offered at the right time to children and families.	Robust and appropriate application of threshold that leads to fewer re-referrals and ensures that children are offered the service they need at the earliest opportunity.  Child protection planning is used effectively and collaboratively with families and not seen as a draconian intervention.	Service Manager /PSW	December 2022	<b>AMBER</b>	Back to basics training with social workers and managers at the front door in application of threshold.  Develop reflective supervision to encourage professional curiosity in practice.	Fewer repeat contacts and referrals.  Thematic audits show robust application of threshold evidencing professional judgement and interventions at the right level and the right time.	The re-referral rate has fallen however some quality assurance work has raised some issues about the appropriate application of threshold in relation to child protection. Work is being undertaken with the service on threshold application and and considering full history when making threshold decisions.  This will be discussed at the service development day in March and ongoing informal discussions in the office now people are back in more often.

<b>Workforce Development</b>	Better understanding of parental conflict cases through the lens of affluent neglect.  Parrental conflict cases resulting in parental 'emotional neglect', constitutes a large proportion of the main risk indicator in social care assessments.	Develop staff understanding of affluent neglect considering demographics of Rutland and presence of wealthier families, and this type of neglect being more difficult to identify and define.	HoS/ Service Manager/ Team Manager	March 2022	<b>AMBER</b>	Further training and development for all staff to understand affluent neglect as a hidden form of abuse.	Supervision to routinely evidence appropriate challenge and reflection in breaking barriers and myths that neglect only occurs in poorer families.  Child + Family assessments undertaken for children in wealthy families where parental alcohol and substance abuse, domestic abuse and parental mental illness is a risk factor, will consider the emotional neglect and lasting effects on the children in the home.	Training is in place and this is explored via supervision with staff.  History is considered as part of assessments and work is continuing to help staff with reflecting the ijpact of history on current circumstances.
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<b>Children Looked After and Care Leavers</b>								
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<b>Placements and achieving permanence</b>	The monthly Permanence Panel Meeting chaired by the Service Manager has ensured that the proportion of children in care now have a current care plan.  Continuinous improvement is required to ensure consistency in implementing concurrent planning early; considering any possible challenges and difficulties in implementing the care plan.	The IRO Chair will offer high expectations, high support, and high challenge in their QA of interventions and plans and to robustly raise dispute resolutions and follow them through to resolution and record this on child's case file.	HoS/ Service Manager/ IROs	March 2022	<b>Green</b>	Placement stability to have a focus on risks and contingency planning in line with the child's needs.	Children's records will demonstrate the impact of IRO Quality Assurance on children's care planning and interventions.  Children and Young People will report that they feel listened to understand why we are involved and there will be evidence of satisfaction with their plans.	There is good quality oversight on children's records.  Ofsted highlighted that children and young people are in setted placements.
	The development of fostering for adoption (FfA) as a route to early permanency	Where a plan for adoption is one of the outcomes being considered, children social care will involve the family finding and adoption service at an early stage.	HoS / Service Manager	December 2022	<b>Amber</b>	Develop an early permanence pathway.  (Consider Essex County Council model as an example of good practice)	Clear evidence on case file that FfA is considered for all children subject to a plan for adoption, including older children and siblings.  Evidence through management decision / IRO / CP plans that unborn	The service are aware of this we currenty have no cases that are suitable for this.  Pathway and training to be embedded



						children at risk and likely to need permanence are identified early through a robust early identification process.  All work to consider viability of extended family will be explored during pre-proceeding work.		
<b>Care Leavers</b>	Pathway plans to be co-created with young people (including with care leavers) – plans to explicitly record reasons where this has not been possible, and evidence of efforts made to engage the young person.	Consult care leavers about their future and fully involve them in the planning process so that they are able to map out their own life goals and plan how to achieve these.	HoS/ Service Manager / Team Manager	March 2022	<b>AMBER</b>	Pathway planning for care leavers will reflect their growing independence as they take on more responsibility for their lives.  Pathway planning will incorporate an element of life story work for the young person so that they have a record of why they were looked after and their wishes for the future.	Regular audit of pathway plans will demonstrate a higher % of good plans seen.  Care Leaver audit theme for Q4 awaiting feedback to this.  Anecdotal feedback is that pathway planning is improved.	
	'Staying Put' arrangements to be regularly considered as an option for our care leavers with the view of ensuring it provides them with the best possible start to their adult lives.	To provide our Care Leavers with the chance to continue to live with their foster carers when they reach the age of 18; ensure that they benefit from a loving and nurturing family environment for longer, giving them time to prepare for independence.	HoS / Service Manager/ Supervising Social Worker / Team Manager	March 2022	<b>Green</b>	Matching assessments with foster carers to include early planning from the time a long term foster placement is agreed.  RCC staying put provision to be updated and clear information to be shared with all foster carers.	An increase in staying put arrangements as permanency options for care leavers.  Feedback from current foster carers and prospective foster carers that they understand that young people may wish to enter into a staying put arrangement when they reach 18	This is progressing well with more young people in staying put arrangements
	Staying Close/ Staying connected- project to look at support for young people leaving care to remain living in the local	To provide care leavers who have lived in residential care the opportunity to stay within their local area with the right support need to	HoS / Service Manager/ Through	January 2023	<b>AMBER</b>	Care leavers will have the right support to enable them to successful transition to independent living.	RIIA project is being implemented with grant funding.	This project is just beginning and will develop over the next 12 months.

	area. Providing young people with the support they need.	develop skills for strong and stable independence.	Care Team Manager			Fewer incidents of homeless Care leavers.  Care leavers are given the option to remain the local area.	Planning on how to best utilise resources provided is taking place.	
<b>Fostering</b>	Increase children's participation in foster carers' and connected person annual reviews both of children and young people directly, and their social workers (sharing their perception of the carers' ability to meet the child's needs).	Ensure that children's views from CLA reviews feed into foster carer supervision and annual reviews and are acted upon.	HoS / Service Manager / Team Manager	December 2022	<b>AMBER</b>	Improved joint working between Fostering and Adoption team, Throughcare Team and Permanency and Protection Service.	Monitoring children's views in annual reviews for foster carers and connected carers.  Feedback from Fostering Independent panel advisor to Corporate Parenting Board.  Young people will be consistently involved in training, assessing and recruiting foster carers.	Most annual reviews occur at the end of the year- work is ongoing to ensure that children's voices are captured
	Increase resilience within the in-house foster carers to support carers to take on more challenging placements and including developing a short breaks provision.	Foster carers to be offered the skills and knowledge to be the best foster carers they can be.  We will recruit foster carers to match children in RCC care.	HoS / Service Manager / Team Manager/ Supervising Social Worker	December 2022	<b>AMBER</b>	Complete a gap analysis of foster carer training.  Needs analysis to include feedback from young people.	All foster carers will receive training including missing from care, UASC, CSE, children with additional needs as part of the ongoing training portfolio.  All in-house foster carers will have a clear pathway related to career experience.	A robust package of training is in place for foster carers and new carers who are being approved.  Laila has recently signed the foster carers up to the national association of therapeutic parents  Foster carers are also offered training via the training hub.
	Better evidence on case file and understanding of the quality of work being done with carers.	Continue to monitor 6 weekly supervisions with a focus in assessing the quality of work being done with carers through supervisions, annual reviews and unannounced visits.	Service Manager / Team Manager	March 2022	<b>GREEN</b>	8 weekly case supervision by the Team Manager is now in place. This will ensure robust oversight on outcomes from Supervising Social Worker 6-weekly supervisions with carers.	Performance data will show that current completion for 8-weekly supervisions is achieving the target KPI of 90% or above.  Audit and dip sampling of foster carer files and themes from the audit will be fed back and used to improve quality of practice.	Supervision is now on file and foster carers are seen. Further work is being undertaken to ensure supervising social workers are robust in their support to foster carers and their family including the children.



Better scrutiny around value for money and quality of care provided to children and young people in care.	Each child's placement will have identifiable specific and measurable targets to review the quality of service provision.	HoS/ Service Manager / Team Manager	March 2022	<b>GREEN</b>	Monitoring contract arrangements are in place and highlight indications of poor performance early.	CLA reviews and supervision will evidence analysis of quality of care being provided.  Children and young people satisfaction surveys will be undertaken at least annually to understand their views and experiences.	We are regularly reviewing our placement to ensure that they are meeting the needs of our children.  Our children are making progress and the majority report being happy in placement.
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**IRO/CP/LADO**

LADO	Clear recording processes that lead to robust recording of information and ability easily collate and report on service demand.	Better tracking and reporting capabilities.  Clear rationale for LADO decision making present on file.  Professionals are clear of the action taken by LADO and the reason for this.	LADO/HoS	August 2022	<b>AMBER</b>	Liquid Logic LADO module to be used to help with recording and reporting issues identified.  Clear rationale for decisions made on threshold to be added to case files. Letters to be devised covering LADO outcomes that are sent at closure point,  Specific timescales to be given to actions.  Review internal LADO guidance and procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose.	We will have a robust recording system for LADO that allows for easier audit and data reporting.  Agencies will report postove feedback in relation to the clarity and timeliness of LADO intervention.  Peer audit will show good quality LADO intervention.	LADO liquid logic is already in development.  The LADO's have already begun to draft letters and have taken on board the recommendation regarding the clear recording of threshold decisions.
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