**London Children’s Social Care Practice Leaders Group**

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**Business Plan 2020-21**

**Introduction**

This Business Plan sets out what we will do, how we will do it and how we will know the difference the actions have.

Our priorities are to:

* raise standards across the whole child and family practice system
* promote effective anti-racist practice and work together so that senior and leadership roles in children’s social care reflect the workforce and communities we work with
* work effectively with partners on thematic improvement challenges
* respond effectively to service demand and financial pressures on children’s social care budgets
* apply learning from the Covid-19 emergency to inform resilience and improvement during the Covid-19 recovery period.

The Group will play a key role in implementing the London Innovation and Improvement Board work and, strengthening partnership arrangements with other regional groups and networks.

**Raising standards across the whole child and family practice system**

We will strengthen leadership in children’s social care by

* Succession planning and support for aspiring practice leaders
* Induction and peer support for new practice leaders
* Peer learning around effective practice leadership (exceeding the KSS)
* Sharing individual expertise around driving practice improvement
* Succession planning and support for aspirant DCSs

We will improve the social work workforce capacity by

* Recruitment, retention and development: sufficient able workforce
* Sharing good practice, learning from innovation
* Quality Assurance Improvement – effective arrangements and activities
* Getting the best from inspections – preparation and management
* Principal Social Work Network – oversight and guidance: impact on practice

We will know we have made a difference when there is greater stability in the practice leadership and wider children’s social care workforce and the workforce exceeds the expectations of the Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS) and regulator.

**Work effectively with partners on thematic challenges**

Working with partner agencies we will strengthen the child and family practice system by:

* Strengthening arrangements and practice in relation to child sexual abuse.
* Developing and improving regional arrangements and practice for tackling criminal child exploitation.
* Strengthen arrangements and practice for working with homeless young people aged 16 or 17 years and care leavers who are at risk of becoming homeless.
* Promoting effective practice and decision making for children on the edge of or in the family court process thereby making best use of adoption and other permanence orders for children.

We will strengthen arrangements for children in care and care leavers by:

* Supporting the work of the London Children in Care Council.
* Improving arrangements for identifying and resolving any child or young person’s immigration issues.
* Contributing to developing a regional protocol for preventing the criminalisation of children and young people.
* Contributing to implementing a regional protocol for responding to children and young people who go missing from their children’s home or other setting where they live.
* Applying learning from historical abuse allegations and review findings.

We will know we have made a difference when changes to the child and family practice system lead to fewer children being at risk of significant harm and more children secure timely security, attachment and a sense of permanence with their parents or carers.

**Respond effectively to financial pressures on children’s social care budgets**

We will contribute to the regional work around securing sufficient residential provision for children and young people and strengthening regional commissioning arrangements with placement providers.

We will respond to financial pressures by tracking and quantifying current and new burdens, sharing best practice in efficient use of resources and new funding opportunities and making representations and securing additional resources (including for our care leavers and unaccompanied children). We will know we have made a difference when we have improved placement sufficiency in our region, can better evidence how we effectively use resources and make the case for additional resources.