



Reimagine

the possibilities

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN
2024 TO 2025

Introduction

This plan sets out how Children and Young People's Services, working with partner organisations, intends to continue to make a positive difference to the outcomes and experiences of children and young people in Suffolk and their families.

A plan such as this cannot possibly describe all the myriad activities we are delivering, but rather the key priorities that we think will have the biggest impact over the next year. We will all need to support these to be successful.

There are a number of key national and Suffolk specific issues and developments that have, and will, influence our plans:

- The financial environment for Local Authorities nationally, including Suffolk, is extremely challenging. Budgets for SEND Services and Corporate Parenting have been supported by the Council in the face of escalating cost pressures. Our plans need to stay within these budget and be resilient to new cost pressures.
- Stable Homes, Built on Love (February 2023) is the previous government's implementation strategy for transforming the experiences and outcomes of children and families who need support from children's social care. The key tenets of this look like they will be retained by the new government; to increase multi-disciplinary family help, establish 'expert child protection practitioners', unlock the potential of family networks, establish Regional Care Co-operatives and strengthen the professional development offer for social workers.
- The SEND and alternative provision improvement plan (March 2023), sets out intentions for a SEND system with nationally consistent standards, partnership-driven local inclusion plans and improved processes and frameworks. This is in the context of a national SEND system that is under intense pressure and where there are calls for more fundamental change. Alongside this we fully recognise that we are on an improvement journey with much more for us to do to consistently support children and young people with SEND, and their families.
- We will need to demonstrate that we have made the improvements needed following the ILACS inspection (June 2024).

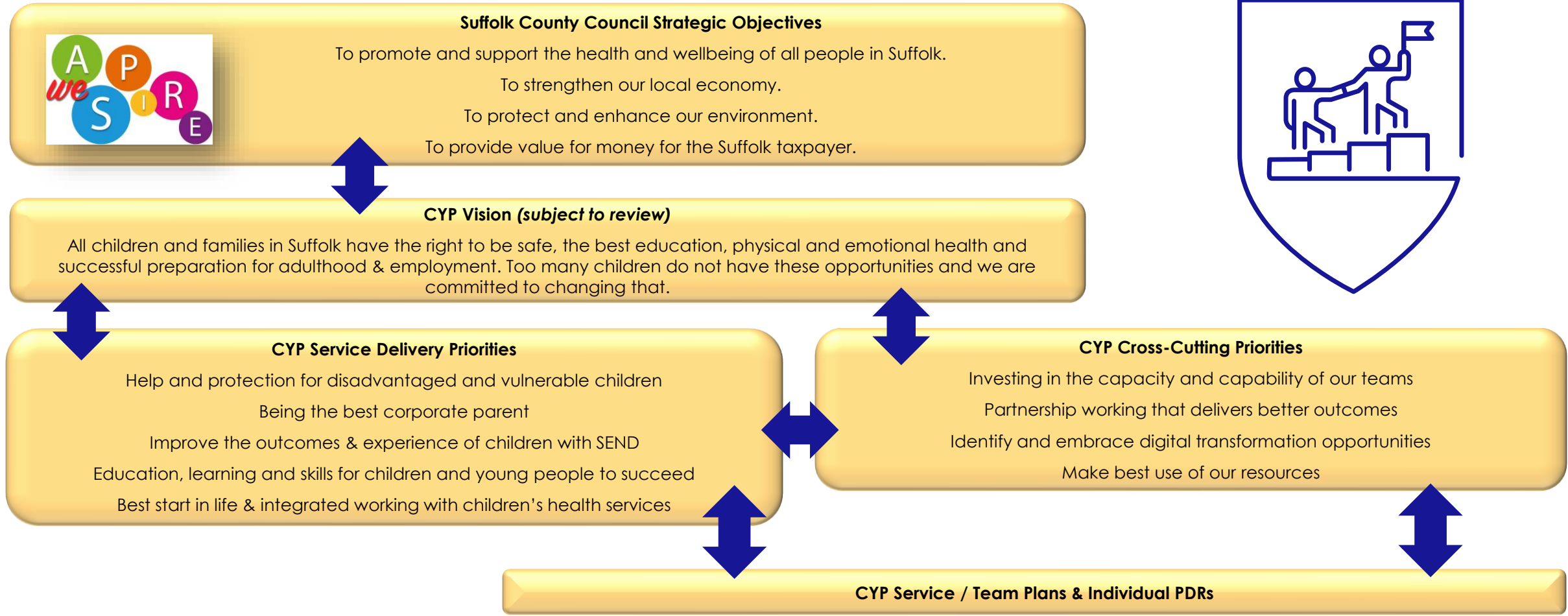
In the short time that I have been in Suffolk I have met very many committed and skilled practitioners and support staff. I am in no doubt that together we will respond positively to the national and local issues above, overcome the challenges and seize the opportunities to make Suffolk a good place for children to grow, to thrive in school, to be safe and to be prepared for their adult lives.



Sarah-Jane Smedmor
Executive Director, Children
and Young People's Services

Connecting our goals across the organisation

This shows the links between the overall Suffolk County Council objectives and values, the CYP vision, our over-arching and service delivery priorities ultimately feeding local team plans and Personal Development Reviews (PDRs)



Achievements 2022/24



- 99% of families received one of their preferred schools in primary applications
- Residential Services Development: North Manor, Heather House Pod, Redwood Lodge, Staying Close Service together with Children’s Homes capital grant from DFE for Elisabeth House and Ashby House providing more high-quality, loving homes and wrap-around support for Suffolk children
- Regional Adoption Alliance delivering more adoption opportunities for children
- SEND Sufficiency: 741 places delivered from Phase 1 and funding for Phase 2 and 3 agreed by Cabinet providing more specialist school places for children with SEND
- Modernising Adoption agenda embedded supporting family contact
- Education Access Team established to help avoid school exclusion
- Delivering Better Value programme delivering evidence-based interventions with schools supporting children’s skills and confidence
- Friends & Networks Programme supporting children’s school engagement
- ‘You Said, We Did’ loops taking action on young people’s feedback
- Liquid Logic implemented for SEND Family Services
- Reflective ‘conversations’ throughout CYPS about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Significant further investment in SEND Services agreed
- 95% of Case Learning Audits in the year to November 2023 judged ‘Working Together’ to be Good or better.
- Safer in Schools Board improving safeguarding arrangements
- Improved Mental Health & Emotional Well-being offer: CHRIS, CATAT, Peripatetic Offer, MHSTs
- Improved LA Maintained School Performance
- Leading on the creation of the Suffolk Education Partnership
- Expanding our suite of Business Intelligence dashboards
- Embedding the ‘Graduated Response’ Inclusion Toolkit: VSEND, Essential SENCO Toolkit, AANT
- Good Skills Inspection outcome



**LEAVING CARE
LOCAL OFFER**



Help and protection for disadvantaged and vulnerable children

Improve the outcomes and life-chances of children through timely and effective multi-agency early help and intervention.

Priority	Responsible	Measures of Success
Families will be supported to build and maintain a supporting network within their extended family and friends and in their communities.	ADs Social Care	Individual children's support and care plans identify the supporting networks families can draw upon. Case audits evidence the building of networks.
Ensure the voice of the child and their lived experience influences how we practice at an individual case and system-wide level.	ADs Social Care	Collaborative Case Audits evidence the child's voice. 'You Said...We did' loop with young people.
Focus on school engagement, school exclusion, suspension, part time timetables and missing education for children supported by social care services.	Safer in School Board	Engagement in education and learning by children supported by social care services. Comparative rates of school attendance, suspension, exclusion.
Review options for a single 'Front Door' access to Children's Services built on family conversations and multi-agency input. This will have a broader focus than Safeguarding, more effective connections to early help and access to the right family support at the right time for families of children with SEND.	AD Family Support, Safeguarding, MASH, QEPD, Resource and Support	Timely identification and appropriate intervention for children and young people's that need support.
Develop and implement a roadmap to realise the potential benefits of Family Help reforms.	AD Family Support, Safeguarding, MASH, QEPD, Resource and Support	Family Support increasingly aligned with Social Care delivering family help. Practitioners enabled with more knowledge of community resources.
Implement the action plans following the ILACS Inspection June 2024.	ADs Social Care, Heads of Service	Delivery of the plan and sustained improvements in practice.

Being the best corporate parent

Ensuring high quality and value for money of services where Care is needed.

Priority	Responsible	Measures of Success
<p>Implement the CiC Reforms Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reducing the need for care entry - Increased focus on reunification - Reducing escalation of need and cost for children already in care - Embed a culture that supports a balanced approach to risk in supporting children to stay together with their families - Partner Agency and VCS support to avoid the need for care, reduce escalation in care and support sustained reunification - Delivering our Sufficiency Strategy to ensure cost-effective, high-quality placements that meet children’s needs 	<p>ADs Social Care, Head of Programmes</p>	<p>Audit evidences safe and appropriate application of thresholds for care.</p> <p>Achievement of the target reduction of the number of children in care (excl. UASC) by 50 per year from December 2023 to December 2026, a total reduction of 150.</p> <p>Maintaining the placement costs of CiC within the Budget, inclusive of inflation pressure, demand pressure and savings objectives.</p> <p>Effectiveness of Staying Together Panels.</p> <p>Use of unregistered placements is eliminated as far as is possible.</p>
<p>Develop therapeutic environments within our Children’s Home provision to meet the range of needs and complexities of children in care.</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Parenting</p>	<p>Children flourish in our homes, measured by their feedback and audit.</p> <p>Suffolk children’s homes used to maximum capacity and capability.</p>
<p>Increase the consistency of the quality of Pathway Plans for Care Leavers</p>	<p>Head of Service CiC & Leaving Care</p>	<p>Collaborative Audit, including the views of young people</p>
<p>Maximise the opportunity for Care Leavers to be engaged in employment, education and training</p>	<p>Head of Service CiC & Leaving Care Head of Virtual School</p>	<p>EET Rates for Children in Care, Care Leavers and other disadvantaged groups of young people</p>

Improve the outcomes & experience of children with SEND

Together we will understand and support children and young people so that they feel included, supported, and fulfilled to live their best lives.

Priority	Responsible	Measures of Success
Deliver the SEND Strategy 2024-29 to improve the experience and outcomes for children with SEND and their families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication and Information Commitment - Timeliness and Quality Commitment - Right Support, Right Time Commitment - Preparing for Change Commitment 	AD Inclusion, Deputy Director Transformation SNEE ICB	Parents/Carers feedback that there is effective communication, co-production, person-centred planning and transparency of decision making through the EHC process. 50% of final EHCPs issued within 20 weeks by September 2025. 75% of Annual Reviews held in time by March 2025. Young people are better prepared for post-16 transitions and adulthood.
Implement the Priority Action Plan following the Area SEND Inspection November 2023.	AD Inclusion, Deputy Director Transformation SNEE ICB	Delivery of the Priority Action Plan.
The capacity and capability of the SEND Workforce is maximised within the increased SEND Funding agreed.	AD Inclusion	SEND Family Services sustain progress towards EHC Plan and Review timeliness and quality measures.
Strengthen the Quality Assurance of SEND services.	AD Inclusion, Head of Programmes	QA Board and programme established with emphasis on family and young person feedback. Progress of young people measured through their Annual Review.
Continued delivery of the capital programme to delivery 874 new school places for children with special educational needs.	Head of SEND Funding and Provider Services	Delivery of the planned additional places.

Education, skills & learning to equip children and young people with the skills and knowledge to succeed in their adult lives

Suffolk as a great place to learn, teach and lead

Priority	Responsible	Measures of Success
Support school leaders' leadership of their school and settings improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximise the potential of being in a 'system convenor' role through partnership and collaboration - Implement, evaluate, refine the school improvement engagement model to fulfil the LAs roles and responsibilities for LA maintained schools 	AD Education, Skills & Learning	% of all schools in Suffolk judged with Good and better judgements above national Attainment and progress of all children in Suffolk including of disadvantaged groups in line with, then above, national. In top 3 of statistical neighbours.
Suffolk as an evidence-based education community using proven, effective practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue the positive Education Endowment Foundation based work - Build on and extend early success of the Delivering Better Value Programme - Share Suffolk school and settings evidence based effective practice - Maximise the impact of the Suffolk based research school 	AD Education, Skills & Learning	Evidence based practices used and shared wider School leaders use proven practices; share and access learning from each other. Impact seen on key performance indicators - pupil outcomes; attendance; Ofsted.
Build a strong inclusive education community across Suffolk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve attendance in collaboration with school leaders - Work with school and sector leads to identify and support CYP at risk of NEET - Reduce the number of non-choice EHE CYP - Work with school leaders to ensure their schools and settings model strong inclusive approaches 	AD Education, Skills & Learning	Attainment and progress of children in disadvantaged groups is in line with, then above, national Ofsted report cards show positive inclusion Numbers of EHE children stabilises then declines Rates of persistent and severe absence compare favourably to national
Support leadership and career development and ensuring school leaders have access to well-being support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with headteacher associations to ensure routes to support are known - Facilitate leadership development opportunities 	AD Education, Skills & Learning	Recruit and retention improves

Best start in life and integrated working with children's health services

Support every child to get the best start in life and to continue to have their physical and mental health and wellbeing needs met.

Priority	Responsible	Measures of Success
Children's Community Health Services meet the targets of the Healthy Child Programme	AD Health, Community Services and Commissioning	Antenatal contact completed after 28 weeks 10-14 day new birth visits 2-2 ½ year review
Finalise and roll out a 'best start to life' strategy co-produced with parents and families	Head of Community Health Children and Young People	Delivery of a co-produced 'best start to life' strategy
Scope and develop a parent-infant mental health service with our ICB and PH colleagues including the development of a specialist health visitor role for perinatal/parent-infant mental health	Head of Community Health Children and Young People	New service delivered
Build upon our level three baby friendly accreditation to gain gold level status	Head of Community Health Children and Young People	Gold-level status attained
Finalise and roll out a co-produced service user engagement strategy including the development of parent/carer panels	Head of Community Health Children and Young People	Co-produced service user engagement strategy produced
Develop Family Hubs as a local community resource where parents and children aged 0-19 and their parents/cares can go to access a wide range of early help support. Together with Community Health Teams, local Family Help Teams, schools, early years settings and local community organisations, Family Hubs will be anchors of locality-based working	AD Health, Community Services and Commissioning Head of Service – Family Support	A network of local Family Hub buildings, outreach venues and local digital support is in place where early help support can be readily accessed

Cross-Cutting Priorities

Priority	Leads	Measures of Success
<p>Make best use of our resources to achieve value for money</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CiC Reforms Programme - Family Hubs Programme - High Needs Funding for children with SEND - Home to School Transport 	<p>Executive Director CYPS</p> <p>AD Social Care, Corp Parenting, YJ</p> <p>AD Health, Com. Services & Comm.</p> <p>AD Inclusion</p> <p>AD Education & Learning, AD GHI</p>	<p>Corporate Parenting remains within budget</p> <p>Target savings secured</p> <p>DSG Management Plan on track</p> <p>Target savings secured</p>
<p>Invest in the capacity and capability of our teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to enhance, a comprehensive multi-disciplinary professional development programme - Embed the practices of co-production with children and families throughout our services 	<p>Head of Workforce Development</p>	<p>Staff Survey</p> <p>Feedback from families</p>
<p>Identify and embrace digital transformation opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging web-based self-guided help - Generative AI - Multi-media communications 	<p>Project Leads & Digital Champions</p>	<p>Feedback from practitioners and from families</p>
<p>Partnership working delivers better outcomes for children & families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deepen co-operation with partner agencies and networks including schools and settings, Health, Police, District & Borough Councils, Housing - Improve links with, and support for, voluntary and community services that can play a vital role in sustaining and supporting families 	<p>Executive Director CYPS</p> <p>AD Comm. Health & Commissioning</p>	<p>Developed Outcome Frameworks that reflect the shared objectives of partner organisations</p> <p>Impact of 'Warm Handover' Scheme</p>