

	Barking and Dagenham's Children's Care and Support Improvement Plan (August 2025)						
	What needs to improve? (Area 1) The timeliness of pre-proceedings pathways.						
Action		Accountable Lead	By When	Expected Outcomes (what difference it will make)	Measures that matter	OCTOBER UPDATE incl risks	Progress / RAG
1.1	Establish an in house court expert assessment team within Specialist Intervention Service to improve timeliness and quality of assessments (subject to funding).	HoS Specialist Intervention Service	Dec 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Timelier, higher-quality expert assessments improve court decision-making and reduce delays (less police protections), positively impacting children's outcomes.</li><li>• Improved timeliness of legal processes where cases move through pre-proceedings and court stages without unnecessary delay, reducing the time children spend in unsafe or uncertain situations.</li><li>• Improved consistency and quality in court documentation maintaining compliance with legal standards and expectations.</li><li>• Reduced reliance on external assessments, enabling in house assessments to be completed</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved timeliness and quality of expert reports and reduced spend.</li><li>• Number and % of children for whom PLO pre-proceedings were completed within 16 weeks (monthly).</li><li>• Number and % of pre-proceedings out of timescale (monthly).</li><li>• Evidence of timely, child-focused assessment</li></ul>		
1.2	Evaluation of the PLO and creation of a targeted action plan to drive meaningful and rapid improvements - progress to be monitored at Legal SMT	Head of Family Support and Safeguarding and Court Progression Manager	Aug-25				

1.3	Ensure all pre-proceedings letters and WTA documents are produced within 3 working days of TCLPM, are impact focussed in clear language (without jargon) and quality assured by Court Progression Manager.	HoS and Court Progression Manager	Ongoing	<p>more quickly and cost effectively, with improved control over quality and timelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved tracking of cases through legal stages, highlighting barriers or delays, improving performance management, accountability and oversight.</li> </ul>	<p>and planning in audits and dip samples.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved case record quality and timeliness.</li> <li>100% compliance with 3 day target.</li> </ul>		
1.4	Deliver targeted staff training on effective pre-proceedings practice including letter writing, developing genograms and undertaking parenting assessments	Court Progression Manager	Nov 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timelier permanency planning and decision making for children and young people.</li> <li>Improved collaboration and communication with legal, CAFCASS, and the judiciary.</li> </ul>	<p>Improved accuracy and clarity. Positive legal feedback.</p>		
1.5	Engagement with family network early by completing 3 generational genograms and referral for SIS FGC prior to TCPLM	HoS -All	Dec 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality parenting assessments reduce delays in making timely key decisions about children's care, including where they will live and with whom to secure greater stability.</li> <li>Timely and accurate documentation supports efficient court progression, reducing delays and improving outcome.</li> <li>Less delay with letters being sent to parents.</li> <li>Parents have a clear understanding of expectations and actions.</li> <li>Staff have improved knowledge and skills, resulting in clear, legally sound correspondence and evidence that supports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved quality of evidence to TCLPM, pre proceedings letters and WT evidenced in audits.</li> <li>More Kinship care permanence outcomes reported</li> </ul>		

				<p>timely and effective court proceedings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three generational genograms will improve understanding of family networks, increasing opportunity for more kinship care permanence outcomes and more consistent engagement with fathers.</li> </ul>			
	<p><b>What needs to improve? (Area 2)</b>  <b>The effectiveness of direct work and the more consistent use of tools to inform decision making when children's circumstances change or when insufficient progress is being made.</b></p>						
Action		Accountable Lead	By When	Expected Outcomes (what difference it will make)	Measures that matter	OCTOBER UPDATE incl risks	Progress RAG
2.1	Launch and implement clear practice standards for the timely and high quality completion of the new child exploitation risk assessment tool	Exploitation lead	Sept 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent and timelier completion of Child exploitation risk assessments results in earlier identification of risk, informing analysis planning and intervention.</li> <li>Improved quality and consistency in the usage of GCP2 /2A and DARAC to better inform decision making - with earlier identification and improved safeguarding where neglect and DA are features.</li> <li>Continuous improvement and increased practitioner usage of tools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly/quarterly audits/dip samples on completion and quality of Child exploitation risk assessments tools.</li> <li>Timeliness monitored through ROTH tool and compliance Tracker.</li> </ul>		
2.2	Where neglect / Domestic abuse is identified as a factor at point of referral, GCP2/ DARAC tools to be completed as part of the initial Single Assessment and then reviewed as casework progress.	HoS	Sept 2025			Use of GCP2 is increasing but not yet consistently used or reviewed.	
2.3	Implement regular case file audits on the use of tools and the quality of application of those tools.	Head of CARES academy	Monthly/Quarterly				

2.4	Monitor compliance of the use of tools through use of Risk assessment identification dashboard and analysis of performance data, including completion rates.	Principal Manager Performance and Intelligence	Monthly/ Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted support for underperforming teams.</li> <li>Women who are victims of domestic abuse experience those working with them as "partnering" with them through shifting focus to the perpetrator.</li> <li>Improved safety planning and perpetrator engagement.</li> <li>Early identification of risk of neglect in prebirth cases.</li> <li>Age appropriate direct work and engagement evidenced in records.</li> <li>Staff demonstrate increased confidence in using age appropriate direct work resulting in improved relationships with children with a stronger sense of the child's voice and lived experience. Assurance of tool application quality.</li> <li>Identification of training and practice gaps.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance data on completion of tools across the service.</li> <li>% of exploitation risk assessments rated as Good or above in audits.</li> <li>Audits of the voice of the child evidence report increase in good and outstanding.</li> <li>Audits of direct work report increase in good and outstanding practice.</li> <li>Increase in number and % of staff trained in Safe &amp; Together.</li> <li>Audit indicates increase in number and % of assessments</li> </ul>		
2.5	Ensure direct work is consistently recorded cross referenced with direct work tools used in accordance to child's age, clearly demonstrating the lived experience. Test compliance through audit.	TM's /SMs/HoS	Nov 2025				
2.6	GCP2A to be introduced across the partnership to identify unborns and newborns at risk of neglect and to trigger the access to Baby Boxes	Neglect Improvement Board	Dec 2025			Family Support Workers in SIS and TEH have been trained in the GCP2A. The first cohort of midwives is due to be trained on 6.10.25 Risk: Baby Boxes not yet available; insufficient midwives trained	
2.7	Provide ongoing support and training for staff to improve skills in direct work with children and families, ensuring access to age appropriate	HoS CARES academy	Nov 2025				

	resources that facilities meaningful engagement.				showing improved analysis, due to tool use.		
2.8	Safe & Together approach to be embedded through training, workshops and consultations-adopt the DA Practice lead approach across the services ( same as CSA PL programme).	HoS CWD	Oct 2025		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit evidence 'majority 'of cases where tools use led to improved intervention, safety planning and / or escalation.</li> <li>• Audit shows tracked increase in number and % of files with direct work recorded and influenced planning decisions and linked to improved outcomes.</li> <li>• Increase in number and % of unborns/newb orns assessed using GCP2A.</li> <li>• Increase in number and % of eligible families</li> </ul>	S&T monthly workshops have begun to support staff in putting the approach into practice. There has been increased use of the S&T Practice Lead for consultation and attendance at Strategy Meetings.	

					receiving Baby Boxes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in number and % of staff trained in direct work tools and techniques.</li> <li>• More children successfully ending their CIN or CP plan in 12 months</li> </ul>		
<b>What needs to improve? (Area 3)</b> <b>The focus on safety planning and contingency planning to inform timely and decisive action when risks for children are not reducing quickly enough.</b>							
Action		Accountable Lead	By When	Expected Outcomes (what difference it will make)	Measures that matter	OCTOBER UPDATE incl risks	Progress RAG
3.1	Embed the ROTH pathway and ensure the consistent use of the safety planning tool as part of this pathway for children at risk of harm outside the home.	Head of AYJS	Sep 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved multiagency response to children where the risk is outside of the family home.</li> <li>• Families, children and young people are clear about their plans and families are supported to find their own solutions.</li> <li>• Children feel safer and more secure as they know what is</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For children at risk of exploitation audit shows ROTH pathway utilised and conferences held for children where risk is contextual.</li> </ul>		
3.2	Training for the wider partnership on safety and contingency planning and the role they play, particularly for cases that have been stepped across following statutory Social care involvement.	BDSCP Board	Jan 2026				

3.3	Deliver targeted training workshops for social workers and Managers on effective safety and contingency planning.	HoS CARES Academy & Exploitation lead incl DFE lead	Jan 26	<p>happening and understand (and participate) in decisions about them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in children being left as long in environments that are not safe.</li> <li>Partners and Social workers have a good understanding of good safety and contingency planning and the skills to manage risk effectively.</li> <li>Family network meetings empower families to make decisions about their child's care, allowing them to take a more active role in their child's life.</li> <li>Improved quality and effective use of safety plans.</li> <li>Contingency plans are clearly recorded, actionable, and include emergency arrangements such as placements, legal timelines, and escalation pathways and used to inform action when risk increases.</li> <li>Midway reviews of child protection plans lead to timelier decision making.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New practice standard re: FGC and Family Network meetings to include contingency and safety planning.</li> <li>100% of CP/CIN cases with safety plans co-produced with families.</li> <li>Tracked month on month Increase in number and % of audits showing 'good' and 'outstanding' safety planning and contingency planning plans that are tailored to the child's individual needs and have clear</li> </ul>		
3.4	Families First partnership transformation work to include the introduction of Family Network Meetings for every child to strengthen co-production with children and families in developing tailored needs lead safety plans and contingency plans.	HoS SIS	Jan 26				
3.5	<p>We will co-produce detailed safety plans with families and children.</p> <p>Safety plans will Include immediate, medium and long term protective action.</p> <p>Safety plans will be child-focused, dynamic, and reviewable at agreed intervals depending on the levels of concerns.</p> <p>A Safety plan template will be designed on Liquid logic.</p>	HoS Adolescent & YJ	Dec 25				
3.6	Undertake monthly audits of CP/CIN children to evaluate the quality and impact of safety and contingency planning.	HoS CARES Academy	Monthly				

3.7	Co produce contingency plans with families. They will include alternative caregivers or emergency placement options, legal consultation timelines, escalation pathways. Midway reviews, strategy meetings, supervision, and management oversight panels will routinely review whether contingency plan needs to be enacted.	HoS CARES Academy	Dec 2025		<p>timescales set which are evident on children's files, reducing risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit shows midway reviews are timely and effective on assessing safety and contingency plans.</li> <li>Increase in children successfully ending their CIN or CP plan in 12 months</li> </ul>		
<b>What needs to improve? (Area 4)</b> <b>The effectiveness of supervision to inform and support decision making for children.</b>							
Action		Accountable Lead	By When	Expected Outcomes (what difference it will make)	Measures that matter	OCTOBER UPDATE incl risks	Progress RAG
4.1	Update and implementation of bespoke team manager Induction that articulates our relational and reflective approach to supervision reflecting the CARES framework - setting out what good reflective supervision looks like	HOS CARES Academy	Nov 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The induction programme will promote clearer understanding of professional curiosity, strengths based and reflective, restorative practice, cultural competence, and use of genograms and chronologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All new employees will have undertaken our CARES induction prior to being given</li> </ul>		



	for new managers and staff (supervisees) from the outset.  This will include key messages from audit re: areas of practice requiring improvement that needs focus in supervision e.g. curiosity, culturally competent, genograms and chronologies			and risk assessment tools as standard practice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improved cross service collaboration leads to better cohesive joint planning and timely interventions and better outcomes for children where more than one service / manager is involved.</li><li>A feedback mechanism between Workforce Lead and HoS captures the worker's experience of supervision, informing continuous improvement.</li><li>Supervision routinely provides high quality support and challenge and is a safe space for workers to reflect on their practice. It ensures that workers have the knowledge and skills to ensure they undertake their role confidently and competently to ensure that our children and families receive the best possible service.</li><li>Evidence of children's voices, distance travelled, and impact of supervision should be visible in case files.</li><li>Staff will feel safe, contained and supported and understand what is expected of them in the supervision process. There will be no drift and delay in casework with children's plans moving forward.</li></ul>	case responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increase in timeliness of supervision at 4 weeks to over 90% compliance in monthly performance reporting.</li><li>Audit and dip sample activity reports 80% of supervisions are rated Good or Outstanding and that show supervision is frequent, timely, good quality, reflective, purposeful and improving decision making for children.</li><li>Audits report joint supervision evident on file and staff feedback loop</li></ul>		
4.2	Deliver ongoing targeted training and reflective supervision practice sessions to skill managers up in delivering outcomes focussed, defensible, timely and safe decisions. Promoting joint supervision when cases cross service areas.	HOS CARES Academy	Ongoing				
4.3	Develop a feedback loop, so Managers understand their workers experience of supervision.	HoS CARES Academy, Workforce Lead	bi-annual				
4.4	Supervising managers to always ensure they include reflective discussion on the most recent recorded home visit / management oversight recorded on the child's file by another service that is co-working with the same family e.g. YJS, EH, YARM, SIS , Care proceedings case manager/ NRPF / Exploitation lead -	Team and Service Managers	Ongoing				

	thereby ensuring joined up planning			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved consistency in management oversight and improved timeliness of supervision. Feedback from the workforce on supervision demonstrates a shared understanding of our approach to supervision.</li> </ul>	<p>highlights staff are clear on what to expect from supervision and they feel supported by the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% and above of cases include updated and current genograms and chronologies.</li> <li>Through regular staff surveys and feedback sessions, over 80% of staff report feeling supported and clear on supervision expectations.</li> <li>100% of managers have completed targeted supervision training.</li> <li>Reduction in caseload averages</li> </ul>		
4.5	Regular audit of supervision with a focus on children's experiences and distance travelled, including children's voices, SW's analysis.	All HoS and Service Managers	Ongoing				

What needs to improve? (Area 5) Focus on developing positive workforce morale by reducing caseload pressures whilst delivering effective training , learning and stable leadership.							
Action		Accountable Lead	By When	Expected Outcomes (what difference it will make)	Measures that matter	Dependencies and risks	Progress RAG
5.1	Enhance and sustain investment in management capacity by recruiting experienced leaders, providing targeted training and development opportunities, and ensuring that managers have access to the resources and support required to effectively oversee complex casework.	HoS CARES Academy Work Force Lead	March 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruiting experienced leaders and managers will significantly strengthen the services operational capacity and strategic direction, drive good practice and support safe and effective social work.</li> <li>Workers will have manageable caseloads relative to their roles and responsibilities / specialism.</li> <li>Managers will receive targeted training focused on effective leadership, coaching, and feedback techniques, with mandatory annual refreshers to maintain high standards.</li> <li>There will be open communication channels, such as anonymous feedback forms and build on our dedicated forums, so staff can raise concerns or suggest improvements to oversight processes.</li> <li>We will see improved staff retention and morale, due to manageable caseloads and robust support structures.</li> <li>The service will improve and develop a more resilient and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of staff participating in mandatory training.</li> <li>Improved workforce data.</li> <li>Number of career conversations and stay interviews conducted.</li> <li>Internal cross service opportunities and promotion rates increased.</li> <li>Staff feedback sought and feedback analysed showing improved workplace satisfaction.</li> </ul>		
5.2	Recognise and celebrate good practice through a structured programme of internal recognition overseen by the CARES Academy.  This will include introducing regular staff awards, highlighting and celebrating outstanding achievements.	HoS CARES Academy Work Force Lead	March 26				
5.3	Embed feedback mechanisms via the PSW and Work Force Lead that encourages open communication between staff and leadership. This will include regular one to one sessions with	HoS CARES Academy Work Force Lead	March 26				

	<p>senior leaders, team reflections, and anonymous surveys, allowing all team members to share their experiences, challenges, and suggestions.</p> <p>We will actively respond to feedback by implementing positive changes (You Said, We Did), sharing updates on actions taken, and recognising contributions, promoting a culture of trust, engagement, and continuous improvement that sustains workforce morale.</p>			<p>engaged workforce. This stability will allow staff to build deeper relationships with colleagues and the children and families they serve, enhancing continuity of care and trust.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will feel valued and supported, leading to increased job satisfaction and a greater sense of professional fulfilment, growing their expertise and knowledge, thus remaining in their roles longer by seeing B&amp;D as the employer of choice.</li> <li>With the implementation of quarterly monitoring of workload and staff wellbeing, we will see a year on year reduction in staff turnover rates, meaning better experiences for the children and families we work with.</li> <li>Staffing levels will stabilise with permanent roles recruitment to reducing the reliance on interim / agency staff, thus providing a more consistent staff group committed to delivering Social Work practice against our CARES Framework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced reliance on agency/interim staff.</li> <li>Quarterly caseload audits and distribution reports, and % of staff reporting manageable caseload in wellbeing surveys.</li> </ul>		
5.4	Investigate and implement flexible workplace models into a workforce offer that can adapt to the changing needs and demands within teams, with the aim of reducing caseload pressure and supporting workforce wellbeing.	HoS CARES Academy Work Force Lead	March 26				
	<p>Through the Families First National Reforms process we will strengthen our response to complex need by enhancing and updating our evidence based continuum of need criteria, develop our FFPP model and review our TOM.</p> <p>Using the CARES Academy, we will embed a culture of</p>	HoS CARES Academy Work Force Lead	March 26				

	excellence as standard, learning from CSPR's audits and dip samples, so that insights gained from complex cases help to inform wider service delivery and workforce development.						
	The CARES Academy will support workforce development and retention, broaden progression and succession pathways and provide enhanced opportunities for continuing professional development with existing and new staff.	HoS CARES Academy Work Force Lead	March 26				