

# Children and Families Our Plan 2024-25

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# CHILDREN AND FAMILIES: SUMMARY PLAN

<b>Our Council Vision:</b>					<b>Our Council Priorities</b>	Starting well	
A stronger future where we all play our part in thriving, caring and sustainable communities.						Tackling hardship and poverty	
<b>Our shared values</b>						Resilient people living their best lives	
TEAMWORK	HONESTY	RESPECT	INNOVATION	VALUE FOR MONEY		EMPOWERMENT	Opportunity in a fair local economy
							Neighbourhood pride
						Greener communities	

## Our Vision for Children and Families:

- Put the building blocks in place that improve outcomes for children and young people allowing children to achieve their aspirations and building their resilience.
- Where additional support is needed, provide trauma-informed services; in partnership with other agencies, that are inclusive for all, including vulnerable groups
- All children young people and their families have access to the right services at the right time and through a trauma informed lens.
- All children will have access to the best education in the right setting, right place and with the right resources to meet their individual needs to support them have the best start in life.
- That children who are care experienced are afforded equal opportunities as their peers.

## To make this happen we will.....

<p><b>Ensure that we are inspection ready</b></p> <p>Implement actions in response to the SEND Ofsted inspection and review</p> <p>Ensure the local area is ready for future ILACS and SEND inspections under new frameworks</p> <p>Ensure quality and timeliness of new and amended EHCP's</p> <p>Place planning sufficiency</p>	<p><b>Reduce demand on statutory services through a strong, preventative approach across the continuum of need</b></p> <p>Continue to resource and strengthen the Early Help offer</p> <p>Preventative approach in schools including focus on our SEND children and young people and strengthening Education Psychology support</p> <p>Link through the continuum through OWOW approach</p> <p>Roll out of Team Around the School project</p>	<p><b>Manage risk by working collaboratively with our Statutory partners and through existing trusted partnership arrangements such as the Safeguarding Children Partnership, Children's Trust, Schools Heads Associations and the Health &amp; Wellbeing Board</b></p> <p>Adapt and evolve to meet changing demands and needs</p> <p>Consultation with all stakeholders</p> <p>Promoting inclusive programmes - Averting Exclusions, Our Way of Working and Inclusion Matters</p>	<p><b>Promote the emotional wellbeing of children/ young people and their families/carers</b></p> <p>Continue to provide targeted training opportunities in line with Our Way of Working approach.</p> <p>Joint commissioning of IASS</p> <p>Expansion of ELSA training in schools</p> <p>EBNSA programme</p> <p>Mental health First Aid in schools programme</p>	<p><b>'Close the attainment gap' between vulnerable children/young people and their peers</b></p> <p>Review Averting Exclusions Pilot</p> <p>Review School Improvement Strategy.</p> <p>Support all children/young people to prepare for adulthood, engage in Education, Employment or Training</p>	<p><b>To respond and implement changes suggested in both DfE policy and the National Independent Review of Childrens Social care</b></p> <p>School Admission Arrangements</p> <p>Allocate, manage, and deliver the Capital Programme to ensure a sufficiency of places</p> <p>Secure improved attendance rates in schools and settings in line with new DfE guidance</p>	<p><b>Review place planning and sufficiency procedures and policy</b></p> <p>Review joint commissioning arrangements with ICB</p> <p>School rebuilding programme</p> <p>Allocate, manage, and deliver the Capital Programme to ensure a sufficiency of places</p> <p>Review pupil forecasting in line with DfE guidance</p>
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<p>development for children with SEND</p> <p>Home to School Transport review</p> <p>Develop our QAF relating to CSC and engaging in peer review approach to learn/develop practice</p>	<p>Progress our Safeguarding Infant Project</p> <p>Launch the Inclusion Matters Strategy across the partnership</p>	<p>Developing best practice 'transition models' in consultation with all stakeholders home to school, between key stages.</p> <p>Utilise CSC PIM to develop practice in relation to risk management and response.</p>	<p>Preparation for Adulthood Strategy</p> <p>Transitions guidance and shared best practice</p> <p>High Needs Review Develop our Care Leaver offer</p> <p>Progress our accommodation offer for our Care Leavers</p> <p>Work collaboratively with the ICB regarding increase in children and young people experiencing complex mental health presentations</p>	<p>Monitor, support, and challenge schools.</p> <p>Pupil Premium Steering Group</p> <p>Engage with Teaching Hub/research school re strategies that have impact</p> <p>EEF Tool kit</p> <p>Targeted support for vulnerable cohort</p>	<p>Preparation for responding to SEND Green Paper</p> <p>Ensure we understand, influence regionally and contribute to the progress of the recommendations of the National Independent Review of CSC?</p>	<p>around developer contributions</p> <p>Progress our CICL Accommodation Board Strategy six key workstreams</p> <p>Launch Our Approach to Recruitment and Retention in CSC</p>
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We will know we have made a difference by tracking the following

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive future inspection processes and judgements</li> <li>• Improved 20-week compliance</li> <li>• QA of EHCPs</li> <li>• Increase in children with EHCP educated in borough</li> <li>• Reduction in HTST costs</li> <li>• Increase in QA activity and % of Good or Outstanding practice reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in demand for CSC services</li> <li>• Feedback collected from service users at beginning and end of support.</li> <li>• Evidence of cost savings through embedding of Intervention Hub and focus on Early Help offer</li> <li>• Outcomes of Team Around the School project</li> <li>• Increase in children with SEND educated in mainstream settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External review of governance arrangements within inspections and visits</li> <li>• Reduced rates of exclusions</li> <li>• Attendance and reduced persistent and severe absence</li> <li>• Increased in pupils with SEN being educated in mainstream schools</li> <li>• Reduction in children open to CSC due to effective risk mitigation</li> <li>• Consistency in practice in relation to responding to risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in children requiring support from health services particularly those relating to MH</li> <li>• Increase in school attendance</li> <li>• Decrease in young people 'dropping out' of education, training, or employment</li> <li>• FE providers offering a greater range of courses</li> <li>• Reduction in children coming into care as an exit strategy from Tier 4 provision.</li> <li>• Increase in early partnership TAF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes for vulnerable groups will increase and close the gap.</li> <li>• Improvement in EET data</li> <li>• Improved school attendance for vulnerable groups of children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools will become academies and join local strong MATs as per the DfE guidance</li> <li>• Reduction in school places appeals</li> <li>• Increase in school places for all pupils</li> <li>• CSC will reflect national recommendations and be prepared for key legislation or Working Together amends.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved school buildings either refurbished or new builds</li> <li>• Future needs are planned for and realised</li> <li>• Increased number of children securing first choice places.</li> <li>• SLAs reflect need and equitably funded</li> <li>• Reduction of agency SW spend</li> <li>• Increase in permanent SW across CSC</li> <li>• Improved retention rate of SW's</li> </ul>
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			activity where child mental health a key feature.			
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**The Foundation for our success**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Developing our people by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Recruitment and Retention Strategy</li> <li>• Management Academy accreditation</li> <li>• Working with Data Engineering Team to embrace new opportunities in data analytics to support forecasting.</li> <li>• Opportunities for apprenticeships and traineeships/</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Good financial management by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing in-borough accommodation offer in line with new CIC and Care Leaver Accommodation Strategy</li> <li>• Implementing findings of SEND High Needs Review 2</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Embracing technology by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilising the latest apps to support frontline practice</li> <li>• Speech to text technology</li> <li>• Direct input from tablets to case management system</li> </ul>
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**Agreed Strategic Priorities for Children’s Services agreed by North West Association of Directors of Children’s Services**

Our priorities and **underlying priorities reflect continuity of purpose to lead recovery** from the pandemic and respond to major policy initiatives to secure positive change; strengthening the **regional position and influence**.

**1.Children’s Social Care** –respond to the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care to create the conditions for **purposeful practice which promotes stability and permanence** especially for Looked After Children

- Ensure more children can live safely with their families
- Ensure Looked After Children & Care Leavers benefit from relationships which support stability and better outcomes

**2.Education & Early Years** –co-ordinate a regional response to the Schools White Paper which enables **an inclusive education system which supports all children and young people** to attend and achieve

- Ensure early help and children’s social care services improve educational experiences and outcomes

**3.Special Educational Needs/Disability** –capitalise on opportunities created by the SEND Review to reset multi-agency support and **improve the experiences of children with SEND**

- Ensure early help and children’s social care services identify and respond to needs of children with SEND

**4.Workforce** -support a **resilient Children’s Services workforce** at all levels

- Explore innovative approaches to securing a high quality children’s workforce
- Ensure the development of a sustainable pipeline of children’s services leaders at all levels
- Support existing leaders, through effective representation, advocacy and collective influence

**Our Way of Working**

The vision of our multi agency partnership in Cheshire West and Chester is for a ‘One Service Approach’ that is strong and preventative, embedding a practice and culture that is Trauma Informed to support improved outcomes for children, families, and adults.

All partner agencies have committed to pledges to support the meeting of this programme including across Children's Services as below.

<b>Early Help and Prevention</b>	<b>Children's Social Care</b>	<b>Education</b>
<p>Early Help and Prevention work with children and families who have experienced a broad range of difficulties that need support and interventions. We want to work with families in this new, integrated and targeted way that is Trauma Informed, taking into consideration their lived experiences, trauma histories and understanding their voice. In working in this way we are ensuring families are empowered, feel safe and build trusting and collaborative relationships, to support lasting solutions, improve resilience emotional health and wellbeing.</p> <p>As a Service we will ensure that the strategies that underpin our work take account of the principles of Our Way of Working. In doing this the whole service will take a trauma informed approach to working with families, listening to them and getting to know them as individuals and not just 'a case'. We are changing our language to reflect this. We will continue to take a Think Family approach and we recognise that one size does not fit all. Motivational interviewing is the vehicle we will adopt to engage meaningfully with families in change. It means children and families are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell their story once</li> <li>• Have a one-page profile</li> <li>• Ensure the child/young person is the focus</li> <li>• Brings all services together working with them to make decisions</li> <li>• Ensures clear communication and that we see the whole picture</li> </ul> <p>The workforce will continue to utilise multi-agency group supervision and learning conversations and training will continue to support the embedding of the principles of Our Way of Working.</p>	<p>Children's Social Care (CSC) in Cheshire West and Chester are committed to aligning our practice to Our Way of Working (OWOW), seeking to taking forward trauma informed practice throughout the work we do with children and families, seeking to be trauma responsive in our approach.</p> <p>Our vision is for Trauma Informed Practice to be evidently considered across all our work with Children and Families; being identifiable in both culture, practice and recording. We utilise an Operational OWOW group to support the drive to continue to embed and develop OWOW throughout our practice with children and families.</p> <p>OWOW is the golden thread throughout our CSC vision to "Enable Practice, Empower People and Deliver Progress" – working with children and families to improve outcomes. We reflect and measure the impact of our work through quality assurance and family feedback, which are being developed to be written in trauma informed language.</p> <p>We have develop the 7C's key principles for Children's Social Care in seeking to embed trauma informed practice, that has been developed collaboratively with the workforce and supports consideration of the following four key questions in our interactions with children and families; "What does this mean for the child/family? What is the impact? How does this inform risk? How is this reflected in our planning?". Our priority over the next 12 months is to launch this principles document, then consistently utilise and embed these approaches, alongside our operational group leading delivery against our trauma informed recording plan.</p>	<p>As a Virtual School , we are committed to West Cheshire Children's Trust and 'Our Way of Working' which is about developing a common and consistent approach to working with families in a trauma informed way, using shared language. Our main focus is to support the outcomes of Children Looked After and we also work with partner agencies to promote the education of Children Previously Looked After and those with a Social Worker. Our Way of Working is embedded within the Virtual School's Business Plan – our priority is to ensure that all Personal Education Plan (PEP) documents are written to the child or young person using trauma informed language throughout. The Virtual School has developed one page profiles for children making key educational transitions, these are guided by a person centred approach and use of trauma informed language.</p>

## Working Together 2023

This Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance sets out what organisations and agencies who have functions relating to children must and should do to help, protect and promote the welfare of all children and young people under the age of 18.

# Key additions to Working together guidance since 2018

## 1. A shared responsibility

This new chapter in the guidance highlights how positive outcomes for children depend on strong multi-agency working.

### *Multi-agency expectations for all practitioners*

The guidance introduces a set of multi-agency expectations for all practitioners involved in safeguarding and child protection. These expectations aim to ensure that practitioners:

- share the same goals.
- learn with and from each other.
- have what they need to help families.
- acknowledge and appreciate difference.
- challenge each other.

### *Working with parents and carers*

The updated guidance sets out four principles that professionals should follow when working with parents and carers:

- effective partnership and the importance of building strong, positive, trusting and co-operative relationships.
- respectful, non-blaming, clear and inclusive verbal and non-verbal communication that is adapted to parents and carer needs.
- empowering parents and carers to participate in decision making by equipping them with information, keeping them updated and directing them to further resources.
- involving parents and carers in the design of processes and services that affect them.

## 2. Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

The updated guidance outlines new roles and responsibilities relating to the three safeguarding partners (the local authority, the police and the health service). The head of each statutory safeguarding partner will be referred to as the 'lead safeguarding partner' (LSP), who will in turn appoint a 'delegated safeguarding partner' (DSP).

### *Lead safeguarding partner (LSP)*

- The LSP is the head of each statutory safeguarding partner agency. For local authorities, for example, the LSP should be the Head of Paid Service, also known as the Chief Executive.
- The LSP is responsible for holding their own organisation or agency to account, speaking and making decisions on behalf of their agency, and meeting the statutory and legislative duties of their agency.
- LSPs from different agencies are jointly responsible for the proper involvement of all relevant agencies, and should work as a team, as opposed to as a voice for their own organisation.

### *Delegated safeguarding partner (DSP) and partnership chair*

- The LSP of each partner agency should appoint a delegated safeguarding partner (DSP) responsible for operational delivery.
- One DSP within the partnership should be appointed partnership chair for multiagency arrangements. This role can be rotated between the DSPs if deemed appropriate by the LSPs.
- The partnership chair should facilitate partner discussions, provide greater continuity, and act as a single point of contact for the partnership.
- The partnership chair role should not replace existing formal complaints procedures and does not provide independent scrutiny
- This arrangement removes the need for a local area to maintain another chair or independent chair.

#### *Schools, colleges and education providers*

- It is recommended that LSPs have a representative from the education sector present at strategic discussions.
- It is expected that all local education and childcare providers working with children up to the age of 18 will be included in local arrangements.
- LSPs should consider including voluntary, charity, social enterprise (VCSE) organisations, childcare settings, and sports clubs in their arrangements.

### **3. Providing help, support and protection**

This section is split into three sections: Early help, Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and Child protection.

#### **Section 1: Early help**

##### *Considering family needs in the context of early help*

- Assessments for early help should consider how the needs of different family members impact each other. This includes needs relating to education, mental and physical health, financial stability, housing, substance use and crime.
- Specific needs should be considered such as disabilities, those whose first language isn't English, fathers or male carers, and parents who identify as LGBTQ.
- Early help services may focus on improving family functioning and developing the family's capacity to establish positive routines and solve problems. Where family networks are supporting the child and parents, services may take an approach that enables family group decision making, such as family group conferences.

##### *The role of education and childcare settings*

- Safeguarding professionals should work closely with education and childcare settings to share information, identify and understand risks of harm, and ensure children and families receive timely support.

#### **Section 2: Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children**

##### *Children's social care assessments*

- Assessments should consider the parenting capacity of both resident or non-resident parents and carers, as well as any other adult living in the household that can respond to the child's needs.

- Assessments should also consider the influence of the child’s family network and any other adults living in the household, as well as the impact of the wider community and environment.

#### *Lead practitioners*

- A lead practitioner will be allocated by the local authority and their partners once a referral has been accepted.
- The lead practitioner role can be held by a range of people, including social workers. For child protection enquiries, the lead practitioner should always be a social worker.
- The lead practitioner will have the appropriate skills, knowledge and capacity to carry out assessments, undertake direct work with families and co-ordinate services.

#### *Supporting disabled children and their carers*

- Assessments of disabled children should focus on the specific needs of the child and family, be strengths-based and gather effective information to support the best outcome for the child and family.
- Local authorities should implement a Designated Social Care Officer (DCSO) role to improve links between the social care services and the special educational needs and disability (SEND) system.

#### *Harm outside the home*

- Practitioners should consider the needs, experiences and vulnerabilities of the individuals or groups who are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing, harm outside the home – including from criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation or serious violence.
- Practitioners should work with relevant partner agencies to consider the influence of groups or individuals perpetrating the harm.
- Professionals should assess whether a child who is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, harm outside the home is in need under section 17 or 47 of the Children Act 1989

### **Section 3: Child protection**

#### *National multi-agency practice standards*

The updated guidance introduces new multi-agency practice standards for all practitioners working in services and settings that encounter children who may be suffering or have suffered significant harm within or outside the home.

#### **4. Operational responsibilities**

The guidance introduces changes that emphasise the advantages of prison and probation services exchanging information with children’s social care and other agencies.

#### **5. Learning from serious child safeguarding incidents**

Although not a statutory requirement, the guidance notes how local authorities should “notify the Secretary of State for Education and OFSTED of the death of a care leaver up to and including the age of 24.” If local partners think there may be learning to be gained from the death of a looked after child or care leaver even if the criteria for a serious incident are not met, they may wish to conduct a local safeguarding practice review.



## 6. Child death reviews

Factual updates have been made to reflect the latest legislation and guidance.

## Playing Our Part

The Directorate contributes to the delivery of the Council's Priorities, with the following highlighting just some ways

Council Priority	Our Contribution
Starting well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Since 2018, Children's Centre service delivery has been integrated within the 0-19 Starting Well Service that brings together early years workers with health visitors, Family Nurse Partnership work and 5-19 Health and Wellbeing services to support the health and wellbeing of all children and families. From 2024, the offer is being extended to incorporate the borough's new Family Hubs</li> <li>✓ Reducing Parental Conflict programme now embedded within the parenting work of EHP to support parents from an early stage when needs arise.</li> <li>✓ High percentage of our schools and settings judged by Ofsted to be good or better.</li> <li>✓ Youth Strategy and associated action plan supporting the raising of aspirations and improving outcomes for our young people.</li> <li>✓ Fitness to work – advocating for a multi-level approach to enable young people to access employment, such as diet, sleep, weight management support.</li> <li>✓ Children's Social Care service provides high quality statutory assessment, intervention, planning and support to seek the best start for our children and young people – taking a proportionate and trauma informed approach to risk, prevention considered across the child's journey, and considering plans for permanence at the earliest opportunity.</li> </ul>
Tackling hardship and poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Provision of healthy snacks, hot drinks, condoms and sanitary products available through Youth Service provision and appropriate HAF programme activities</li> <li>✓ Funding available to support meeting outcomes with individuals and families within Journey First and Supporting Families Programme. This can help mental health and wellbeing, steps towards training and employment, etc.</li> <li>✓ Use of section 17 financial support to families as part of planning to enable and empower families where poverty is key factor.</li> <li>✓ Targeted intervention hub support includes supporting vulnerable families around budget planning and empowering sustainable choices.</li> </ul>
Resilient people living their best lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Domestic Abuse Intervention and Prevention service supports anyone who has experienced or is at high risk of domestic abuse, as well as challenging and supporting abusive partners by offering a preventative approach to domestic abuse, with growing focus on community responses to domestic abuse to further build capacity within this work.</li> <li>✓ At the heart of EHP is family intervention, intensive, high quality support and advocacy when multiple and complex issues arise, including when adults are out of work and at risk of financial exclusion and to support a range of health problems.</li> <li>✓ Children's Social Care service provides high quality statutory assessment, intervention, planning and support to enable our children and young people to be safe, therefore empowering them to live longer, healthier and happier lives– taking a proportionate and trauma informed approach to risk, prevention considered across the child's journey, and considering plans for permanence at the earliest stage.</li> <li>✓ Our EHWP contract across CSC and EHP focuses on targeted therapeutic support and intervention for our children and young people.</li> <li>✓ Provide training to schools and settings to support children and young people's wellbeing.</li> <li>✓ Averting Exclusions programme to support vulnerable children to receive continuity of access to full-time education.</li> </ul>
Opportunity in a fair local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The service leads on the Journey First programme, in partnership with Employment Services, using ESF funding to support vulnerable cohorts, including young people who are NEET, (not in education, employment or training), leaving care or have Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) as part of wider work to support young people to be positively engaged in employment and training.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ EHP leads work on supported internships, apprenticeships and the wider development of an economy in Cheshire West and Chester where growth supports local people to have the maximum opportunity to contribute to and to benefit from growth.</li> <li>✓ Our Care Leaver Local Offer is robust and high quality, including empowering the children in our care and care leavers to be engaged in good job or education opportunities.</li> </ul>
Neighbourhood pride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Youth Service facilitates a range of events and outlets for young people aged 11-19, and up to the age of 25 with Special Educational Needs, providing opportunities for positive experiences and to achieve the best possible outcomes. Within this, the Youth Senate gives young people a direct voice at local, regional and national levels on issues that affect them.</li> <li>✓ Within parenting work, the development of community parenting programmes is giving capacity for the independent delivery of parenting in communities, strengthening direct parent involvement.</li> <li>✓ The national Supporting Families Programme sits within EHP and the service has supported over 2500 families locally to meet their identified needs and achieve positive outcomes for themselves and in turn their communities since 2012.</li> <li>✓ Our Children in Care and Care Leavers Accommodation Strategy Board oversees our approach to increasing the opportunity for the children in our care and leaving our care to live in supported and stable local provision.</li> <li>✓ Our locality based child in need and child protection/court teams are enabled to understand their communities and encouraged to map local risk to empower targeted intervention, supported by the CE Hub approach to understanding/responding to risk in relation to exploitation.</li> <li>✓ School sufficiency planning to ensure most children are educated in their local community, including those with SEND.</li> </ul>
Greener communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Delivery of a range of services virtually alongside face-to-face work, including issue-based youth work, 1:1 virtual parenting and group work, and TAF professional virtual support.</li> <li>✓ Statutory visits being undertaken face to face and key meetings where significant decision making required. However, virtual meetings will be utilised where proportionate and safe to do so.</li> <li>✓ Children's Centre, Family Time Accommodation and Residential provision estate planning and repairs undertaken in line with the Council's climate priorities, including prioritising route connectivity.</li> <li>✓ Modern workforce approach – remote and virtual working introduced across the service to best meet service needs and requirements. In addition, there has been support of corporate approaches to staff benefits such as cycle to work scheme.</li> </ul>

# Our Activity Plan

Our One Children's Service actions to complete by 2027 from the local Labour Party manifesto.

Action	To be initiated	In Progress	Completed	Progress commentary
We will develop a <b>programme of support for young carers</b> , including in schools where we will raise awareness of young carers and their needs, so they are not disadvantaged.				
Through our school catering company, Edsential, we <b>support healthy eating and provide good quality meals to children in local authority schools</b> . To support our local economy, we will use local suppliers and farm assured meat.				
We will take action to <b>support young people with their emotional and mental health and to reduce stigma and bullying</b> .				
We will <b>implement the recommendations from our Commission on 'Violence Against Women and Girls'</b> so that we can coordinate our efforts with other public services and organisations to determine practical actions we can take to reduce the number of incidents in our Borough.				
We will work with neighbouring councils to <b>fund refuges across the Cheshire and Warrington subregion</b> where men, women and children fleeing domestic violence can find safety and sanctuary.				
We will work together with businesses, health organisations and education partners to <b>promote our 'Open the Door' campaign</b> , which will raise awareness of domestic abuse and advertise where help can be found.				
We will <b>tackle domestic abuse at an earlier stage by training frontline council staff to identify signs</b> that someone is experiencing violence or abuse. We will give staff the confidence to signpost people to professional support and will ensure our domestic abuse support service responds quickly to people experiencing domestic abuse, so that we can reduce the devastating and long-lasting impact that violence and fear can have on children and families.				
We will <b>deliver programmes that work with perpetrators of domestic abuse</b> to help them understand the impact of their actions on other people in their family so that we can stop abuse escalating.				
We will <b>offer support through the summer holidays for families on free school meals</b> , so people at risk of holiday hunger are able to access food and activities in a dignified way.				
We will <b>build more small-scale and specialist homes for children in care</b> to provide safe, stable housing and support for the growing numbers of children entering the care system.				
We will <b>continue to ensure that foster carers are recognised</b> for the vital role they play in keeping vulnerable children safe. We will also expand and improve our training offer for foster carers to take account of the changing needs of children. We will create specialist foster carer roles who will support some of the children in our care with the most complex needs.				
We will <b>take account of the lived experiences of the children and families who have required children's social care support</b> to improve our early help offer so that fewer young people come into care.				

We will <b>develop a tailored approach to supporting our care leavers as they transition out of care and into education, employment or training</b> , and we will ensure that officers and Councillors play their full part as corporate parents.				
We will support our school community to <b>increase provision for wrap around care for children with SEND</b> and we will identify third sector partners to help us develop and pilot new delivery models.				
We will work with parents, teachers and health professionals to review our systems and <b>provide better support to parents of children with special educational needs</b> . This will include a review of our assessments process so that we can make it simpler for parents and carers and reduce the timescales on decisions. We will increase the number of educational psychologists and improve the links between our systems and processes, so that EHCPs (Education Health Care Plan) are completed in a timelier fashion.				
We will <b>increase the support in mainstream schools for children with special educational needs</b> .				
We will work more collaboratively with third sector providers to support children and families across the borough to <b>develop community-based provision for children with additional or special needs</b> . To help this process we will explore the use of the council estate via our new community asset transfer strategy.				
We will act on the voices of young people in our Borough who have told us they want us to <b>improve the transition to secondary school and Post 16 provision</b> , and to support them to take the next step and attend a school or college where they can thrive.				
Through our <b>Children's Centres</b> we will provide support to new parents to meet the challenges of bringing up children. This will include using new technologies to provide mentoring, as well as advice and support on health, well-being and early years education.				
Despite hundreds of Children's Centres closing across the UK due to government cuts, <b>we will not close our Children's Centre Hubs</b> . Instead, we will continue to invest in our early years' services, and we will look to support community initiatives that deliver affordable childcare for 0-5-year-olds. We will work with schools and community organisations to develop services for children with Special Educational Needs in more of our children's centres.				
Where children, young people and their families are struggling, we will <b>ensure early intervention services are available to help avoid these situations escalating</b> . We will continue to embed trauma informed practice, and we will provide access for children and families in our Borough to get the best possible advice and support, when they need it. We will also continue to improve our response to child exploitation.				
We will work with young people to help <b>target our funding so it supports their positive emotional health and wellbeing</b> , and we will seek new funding to align youth work with projects like our 'Natural Health Service'.				
We will <b>establish the first ever 'Young person's commission'</b> in West Cheshire. It will be led by young people so that we can co-produce changes to our services that support young people so that they are relevant and respond to their needs. This will include the development of our 10 by 10 Programme, which will see all children in our Borough get to experience ten exciting things by the time they are 10 years old. The commission will also help the council to improve its approach to issues facing young people, like mental health, obesity, drug abuse, anti-social behaviour and bullying.				

<p>We will work with young people to <b>develop a new '10 by 10' programme</b> for our borough, so that young people have an opportunity to try ten exciting things before they are ten years old.</p>				
<p>We will <b>keep investing in our youth senate</b>, so that young people in our borough are involved in decision making. We will continue to reform the role of the youth senate to explore new and effective ways to improve the engagement and participation of young people, and to ensure the voices of young people are heard, listened too, and consulted with.</p>				
<p>Since the government cut funding for youth services, we have continued to fund targeted provision from local budgets. We will <b>look to invest more in practical activity by reducing costs of running [youth] services</b>. This could include working in partnership with other providers to co-locate services in buildings which have multiple uses and working with other organisations who have access to different sources of funding to run youth programmes. We will also consider new and innovative outreach models which identify young people most in need of support and we will extend our targeted services to 11-19 year olds, or 25 if they have special educational needs or are a care leaver. We will explore the establishment of youth hubs and look to work in partnerships for cohesive delivery of youth services.</p>				
<p>To <b>increase youth social mobility</b>, we will work in partnership with organisations like the Local Enterprise Partnership and Chamber of Commerce, businesses, and the community and voluntary sector on targeted projects in schools and through our young people's service to offer training, recruitment advice and mentoring opportunities.</p>				
<p>We will <b>campaign against continuing government cuts to school budgets</b> and make the case nationally for the fair funding so that our local schools are able to support students from all backgrounds to receive a good education and be able to progress into further and higher education, employment, and training.</p>				
<p>We will work with schools and post-16 providers through the Education Improvement Partnership, to <b>improve the educational outcomes for children</b> in our borough.</p>				
<p>We will work with schools and colleges to on programmes to <b>inspire young people into adulthood and employment</b>. This will include signposting careers advice, and through partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce, the Local Enterprise Partnership and collaborations like our Anchor Network of large employers, we will work with local employers to encourage workplace learning opportunities, including via the Cheshire and Warrington 'Pledge'. We will also launch a specific programme that works with young people in schools and colleges in our Borough to inspire them to consider a career in professions where the council is struggling to recruit.</p>				
<p>We will set up a <b>Commission on youth social mobility</b> so we can better understand the data, the drivers and the barriers. We will join the dots between our Youth Senate, Children in Care Council and our Young Person's Commission so that we have a compressive plan to meet the challenges of youth social mobility in our Borough. This will begin by addressing educational and employment inequalities faced by young people and recognising that children and young people from low-income families don't remain poor as adults because of a lack of intelligence or willingness to try, but through a series of barriers, disadvantage, and unfairness, including within the education system.</p>				
<p>We will work with children and young people, parents and carers, schools, post-16 providers and other partners to be <b>more inclusive of children with special educational needs, so they are able to be part of mainstream education</b>. This will include asking special schools to share their expertise with mainstream schools</p>				

to help more children living with autism or with moderate learning difficulties to be able to attend their local secondary school.				
We will <b>expand our respite residential provision for over 16's</b> to support their independence to adulthood.				
We will work to <b>improve the educational outcomes for pupils who have been excluded</b> from school by looking at, for example, alternative models of education. This could include specialist support.				
Subject to government funding we will <b>continue working with our partners to expand the Holiday Activity Fund</b> and deliver a more wide-ranging offer that will be attractive to all young people.				
We will <b>support people looking to return to work after adoption or having children</b> to take advantage of their free nursery entitlement and to secure employment. We will look at how our Starting Well service collaborates with other organisations and council services like our business support team, Work Zone and adult education service to enable, support and mentor parents to meet their aspirations and find quality work. We will develop a specific programme to support single parents and their children to address barriers to accessing work, education, skills and training.				
We will apply for funding to invest in new facilities for young people, so that they have somewhere to hang out in our town				
Give Frodsham kids the best start in life by supporting local schools to be rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by OFSTED.				
We will seek external funding to develop better youth provision in Winsford, giving young people things to do, places to go and more opportunities				

## Our Performance Goals

Obj	Indicator	2024/25 Target
1.01	% of young people achieving a Level 3 qualification by age 19	61%
1.02	% of young people aged 16-17 (yr12-13) who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	5%
1.03	Number of complex families open to Early Help and Prevention and partner agencies achieving significant and sustained outcomes	676
1.04	% of all children achieving a Good Level of Development at the Early Years Stage	68%
1.05	% of children eligible for Free School Meals achieving a Good Level of Development at the Early Years Stage	50%
1.06	Key Stage 2, % of pupils achieving Expected Standard, Reading and Writing and Maths – Result for All Pupils	61%
1.07	Key Stage 2, % of disadvantaged children achieving the Expected Standard, Reading and Writing and Maths	42%
1.08	Key stage 4, Progress 8 Score – Result for All Pupils	n/a
1.09	Key stage 4, Progress 8 Score – Result for disadvantaged pupils	n/a
1.10	% of primary school age children with special educational needs and disability who have an education health, and care plan who are taught in mainstream provision	67%
1.11	% of secondary school age children with special educational needs and disability who have an education, health and care plan who are taught in mainstream provision	44%
1.12	% of young people, academic age 16-17 (yr12-13) and have a current education, health, and care plan who are participating in Learning	85%
1.13	% of referrals to children's social care that are within 12 months of a previous referral	19%
1.14	The rate of children in need per 10,000 population 0-17 (all children aged 0-17 with an open referral, children in need, child protection plan and children in care)	310
1.15	% children who become subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	19%
1.16	The rate of children in care per 10,000 population 0-17 years old	72
1.17	% of Care Leavers (aged 19 - 21) who are in Education, Employment or Training (EET)	60%
1.18	Open Contextual Episodes at Medium and High risk rating (extra familial harm for children and young people)	Setting baseline
1.19	Number of children in temporary accommodation (B&Bs, hotels, registered provider or own stock accommodation) who are owed an Accommodation Duty (snapshot)	30
1.20	Rate of children across the partnership open to an Early Help plan (TAF) at period end (rate is per 10k of child population)	168
1.21	Rate of children across the partnership starting an Early Help Assessment(TAF) in the latest 12 months (rate is per 10k of child population)	247
1.22	The percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans agreed within the 20 week standard	49%
1.23	Total number of children in the care of the LA in residential placements	70

*Service specific Performance has close oversight from HOS to ensure detailed understanding and targeted response underneath these PMF performance targets.*

# Our Finance Plan

## Revenue Budgets

Service	Revenue Budget 2024-25		
	Gross	Net	Income
Children's Social Care	77,523	74,143	-3,380
Early Help and Prevention	8,884	5,162	-3,722
Education	112,123	21,933	-90,190
Total Children & Families	198,530	101,238	-97,292

## Capital Budgets

Scheme	Capital Programme (Schemes & Annual Allocations)					Schemes Under Development	Total
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Total		
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m		
School Basic Need	16.728	11.417	14.911	12.000	55.056	-	55.056
School Condition Allocation	4.628	4.628	4.628	4.628	18.512	-	18.512
Devolved Formula Capital	0.750	0.750	0.750	0.750	3.000	-	3.000
Special Education Needs Provision	1.575	-	-	-	1.575	6.042	7.617
School Play Provision	0.079	-	-	-	0.079	-	0.079
Children's Residential Accommodation	0.077	-	-	-	0.077	1.550	1.627
Pupil Referral Unit	-	-	-	-	-	3.203	3.203
Emerging Pressures – Childrens/Youth	-	-	-	-	-	2.500	2.500
<b>Children and Young People</b>	<b>23.837</b>	<b>16.795</b>	<b>20.289</b>	<b>17.378</b>	<b>78.299</b>	<b>13.295</b>	<b>91.594</b>

## Planned Revenue Budget Changes (Policy Options)

Children & Families	24-25 £000	25-26 £000	26-27 £000	27-28 £000	Total £000
Early Help and Prevention					
New Savings					
Making best use of our Children's Centre Estate	-	(64)	-	-	(64)
<b>Total Net Savings Early Help and Prevention</b>	-	<b>(64)</b>	-	-	<b>(64)</b>



<b>Children's Social Care</b>	<b>24-25 £000</b>	<b>25-26 £000</b>	<b>26-27 £000</b>	<b>27-28 £000</b>	<b>Total £000</b>
<b>New Savings</b>					
Maximising use of external funding for Social Care Placements	(651)	-	-	-	(651)
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children	(200)	(100)	100	-	(200)
Expansion of Foster 4	(91)	91	-	-	-
Emergency bed provision	(88)	-	-	-	(88)
Reducing placement fragility and increasing placement costs	(91)	-	-	-	(91)
Complex Youth Team	(352)	(117)	-	-	(469)
<b>Previously approved Savings</b>					
Children in Care and Care Leavers Accommodation Strategy	(859)	(1,989)	(1,301)	(3,070)	(7,219)
Review of Allowances	(100)	-	-	-	(100)
Childrens Social Care Staffing Growth	-	-	(496)	-	(496)
Children's Social Care Early Help and Prevention	-	(945)	(945)	(945)	(2,835)
Safeguarding Infants Programme - Corporate Grandparent Approach	(57)	(28)	-	-	(85)
Safeguarding Infants Programme - Recurrent Care Proceedings	(47)	(55)	(80)	-	(182)
<b>New Investment</b>					
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children dedicated post (Invest to Save) *	54	-	-	-	54
Maximising use of external funding for Social Care Placements (Invest to Save) *	86	-	-	-	86
Emergency bed provision (Invest to Save) *	43	-	-	-	43
Reducing placement fragility and increasing placement costs	10	-	-	-	10
Complex Youth Team (Invest to Save) *	128	42	-	-	170
<b>Previously approved Investment</b>					
Pinewood Plus (Invest to Save) *	478	(106)	-	-	372
Children in Care and Care Leavers Accommodation Strategy (Invest to Save) *	1,008	1,667	232	2,362	5,269
Childrens Social Care growth	15,066	751	2,435	2,434	20,686
Children's Social Care Early Help and Prevention (Invest to Save) *	750	-	-	-	750
<b>Total Net Savings Children's Social Care</b>	<b>15,087</b>	<b>(789)</b>	<b>(55)</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>15,024</b>
<b>Education and Inclusion</b>	<b>24-25 £000</b>	<b>25-26 £000</b>	<b>26-27 £000</b>	<b>27-28 £000</b>	<b>Total £000</b>
<b>New Savings</b>					
Review of School Support Services	(65)	-	-	-	(65)
Personal travel budgets	(573)	-	-	-	(573)
<b>Previously approved Savings</b>					
Home to School Transport - Reduced Demand	(475)	(623)	(236)	-	(1,334)
Pension Liabilities	(75)	(75)	(75)	(75)	(300)
Educational Psychology	(57)	-	-	-	(57)
<b>Previously approved Investment</b>					
Home to School Transport – Special Educational Needs (SEN) Growth	2,763	2,024	2,300	2,300	9,387
Home to School Transport - Mainstream Growth	500	513	500	500	2,013
Schools Funding	234	-	-	-	234
<b>Total Net Savings Education and Inclusion</b>	<b>2,252</b>	<b>1,839</b>	<b>2,489</b>	<b>2,725</b>	<b>9,305</b>
<b>Total Net Savings Children &amp; Families</b>	<b>17,339</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>2,434</b>	<b>3,506</b>	<b>24,265</b>

# Our People Plan

**Skills, knowledge and Capabilities:** Our plan for addressing any capability gaps is as follows

Gap	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Service Priority?	Outcome sought	Formal development activity required?	Impact/outcome?
National shortfall of qualified and experienced Social Workers and residential care workers	High	Yes	Full complement of suitably qualified Social Workers with right blend of levels of experience	Implementation of Children's Social Care Recruitment and Retention Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted recruitment and retention initiatives.</li> <li>Timescaled actions within the strategy and actions and initiatives will be regularly reviewed to assess impact.</li> <li>Active engagement in any regional work.</li> <li>Regular review of impact</li> </ul>
Lack of appropriately skilled and experienced SEN plan writers and Educational Psychologists available nationally	High	Yes	Full compliment of writers to support demand for SEN plans and Psychologists to meet need		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in pressure on service</li> <li>Falling waiting times</li> <li>20 week compliance not progressing at pace.</li> </ul>
Organisational development	Medium	Yes	Children's workforce with enhanced skills to support all roles	Fit for purpose learning and development offer in each service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff access training to enhance work in existing roles and for career development</li> <li>Utilisation of additional resources such as Apprenticeship Levy</li> <li>Critical roles identified and given further support.</li> <li>Focus on skills gaps to remove these..</li> <li>Succession planning in place</li> <li>Digital and manager accreditation successfully completed by workforce as appropriate for the asks of their roles to support their work.</li> </ul>

The Council's [social value policy](#) commits us to creating social value through our workforce. This could be by offering apprenticeships at any level, targeted opportunities for specific groups, or other approaches.

Apprenticeships and Placements <i>Growing apprenticeship and career grade opportunities / utilising levy</i>	Apprentice Level?	Service / Team area	Planned / In place?

Social Work apprentices	Degree	CSC	In place
Educational Psychology traineeships?	Degree	CEP / Education	In place
Teaching Partnership placements	Degree/Masters	CSC	In place
Young people placements/work experience (MW, DM, JG, A-MG)			
Business Support apprenticeships	Level 3	EWS	In place from August 2023
Data Quality and Assurance Officer	Level 3	Education	Planned
Family Support apprenticeships			
Residential Workers apprenticeships			
SLMDA Masters Apprenticeship Programme	Masters	Corporate Business and Governance / Early Help, Schools and Partnerships	In place
Step-up to Social Work	Masters	EHP Casework / CSC	In place

For more information see the learning and development page under the HR section of i-west. Information on apprenticeships is available from the [institute for apprenticeships](#)

## Staff Wellbeing

Key local wellbeing concerns and mitigating actions:

Risk to wellbeing	Reason	Interventions	Assessment of risk (Low, Medium, High)	Escalation or review?
Impact of recruitment and retention challenges	Stable workforce supports wellbeing of staff in service and in turn where wellbeing is reduced in a service is likely to see higher staff turnover.	Regular review of workloads to inform resource planning.  Clear management oversight and regular communication, one to ones & catch ups  Targeted recruitment and retention initiatives.	Medium	Review
Impact of increased demand and complexity across children's services	Trend seen over time exacerbated by pandemic	Regular review of workloads to inform resource planning.  Management to review workloads and processes and take any action needed to streamline processes/make any necessary improvements.  Management to ensure that any staff development is in place to address any skills gaps and	High	Escalation

		<p>that staff are aware of any escalation processes.</p> <p>Clear management oversight and regular communication, one to ones &amp; catch ups</p>		
Office work space capacity in new accommodation and approach to work following experience of home working	While a better balance is generally welcomed, too much home working can be isolating and affect wellbeing. Equally, when accessing offices and space is at a premium due to reduced capacity this too can affect wellbeing and value people feel from the organisation if a desk with their team or service cannot be sourced.	<p>Proactive management/use of office space across teams</p> <p>Communication of the 5 modern workforce key principles</p> <p>Clear management oversight and regular communication, one to ones &amp; catch ups</p> <p>Range of social activities in each team</p> <p>Promote access to help and support (EAP, workfit etc)</p>	Medium	Review
Remote working to continue – impact on some people	As outlined above regarding office work space	<p>Proactive management/use of office space across teams</p> <p>Team catch ups in person and online</p> <p>Identifying arrangements to support home workers</p> <p>Encouragement to take regular breaks and undertake social/physical activities</p> <p>Range of social activities in each team</p> <p>Promote access to help and support (EAP, workfit etc)</p> <p>Access to support on mindfulness and resilience</p>	Medium	Review

		Managers undertaking regular home/workplace assessments & acting on outcomes		
ICT – time taken for new equipment, quality of equipment	Equipment at times cannot be sourced for periods of time affecting the work of both existing staff and on occasion new staff looking to start with our services	Management to raise ICT issues and service needs through Corporate Management channels.	Medium	Review
IASS Office Accommodation	Lack of appropriate space for confidential work to be discussed as a team.		Medium	Review
Accessibility of ICT systems to meet service need	Restrictions to particular applications while broadly required can affect at times best way of providing bespoke roles and tasks	Individual business cases for specific requirements to meet service need	Low	Review

## Our technology plan

Our business challenge	Solution	Lead Officer	Services affected	In place	22/23 Apr – Sep	22/23 Oct - Mar	23/24 Apr – Sep	23/24 Oct - Mar
Lack of available, recommended opportunities to utilise latest technology to support frontline work with children and families, including empowering families to self-help	Development / commissioning of approved apps to support frontline working	Simone Thomas/ Paul Jenkins/ Mark Grady	Education/EHP/CSC					
Utilising technology to directly input case notes onto case management systems	Speech to text technology  Writing to case management systems directly	Simone Thomas/ Paul Jenkins/ Mark Grady	Education/EHP/CSC					
Transport – parent on-line tool	A tool is being developed by Qwest	Carolyn Davis	Home to School Transport	No	No			

## Wellbeing Champions

Service Area	Wellbeing Champions
Service Area 1 – Early Help & Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nicola Halliwell</li></ul>
Service Area 2 - Childrens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rebecca Green</li></ul>
Service Area 3 - Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helen Hughes</li></ul>

## Risks

Children's Services Risk Register is available here and updated quarterly:  [Risk Register](#)

## Asset Management

See next page

<b>Service</b>	Early Help and Prevention		
<b>Service Lead</b>	Zara Woodcock		
<b>How many assets do you have across your service area? What is the main service function for each asset? Is it customer facing, staff only or dual use for staff and customers?</b>			
<b>Name and address of Asset</b>	<b>Main purpose</b>	<b>Customer Facing?</b>	<b>Staff Building?</b>
Blacon Children's Centre, Chester	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes
Stanlaw Abbey Children's Centre, Ellesmere Port	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes
Frodsham Children's Centre	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes
Victoria Children's Centre, Chester	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes
Victoria Children's Centre, Northwich	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes
Kingsway Children's Centre, Chester	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes
Elton Children's Centre	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes
Portside Children's Centre, Ellesmere Port	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes
Parklands Children's Centre, Ellesmere Port	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes
Greenfields Children's Centre, Winsford	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes
Wharton Children's Centre, Winsford	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes
Barnton Children's Centre, Northwich	Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service	Yes	Yes

Leftwich Children's Centre, Northwich	<b>Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service</b>	Yes	Yes
Neston Children's Centre	<b>Children centre, delivery of 0-19 Starting Well service</b>	Yes	Yes

**Do you know if any of your assets listed above are not Council owned?**  
*They may be leased in from partner organisations such as NHS, CWP, occupied on an integrated working basis with partners, or leased in from the private sector.*

Most of the Centres are located on Primary school sites. Some are stand-alone buildings on school sites but many are part of the actual school building itself. Two are stand-alone non-school Centres, there is ancillary hub in a former housing shop, one is held on a hiring arrangement and one is located in part of Chester University's Kingsway building.

The Council is the freehold owner of most of the sites and will retain ownership of them. One of the sites is held by the Council on a leasehold basis, one is on a PFI school site and one is currently held on a hiring agreement.

Where the Children's Centres are located on an operational school site the Children's Centre was subject of a Transfer of Control Agreement, (these are transferring to Management Agreements) between the School Governing Body and the Council in accordance with the Schools Standard and Framework Act 1998. These agreements transfer control of the Children's Centre part of the premises back to the Council from the School Governing Body.

CWP as the provider has a licence of all the designated Main sites plus the Linked sites for the delivery of the contract. If the provider was to change these would need updating.

The Council has granted licences to CWP of all or part of the TOCA (Management Agreements are due) areas. However it is worth noting that these exclude areas that are already leased to the two named Nursery providers.

The Council granted these agreements having received agreement from the DfE for the deferral or waiver of any clawback grant.

The licences started from the contract start date on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 and will be for a term of 5 years with a break at the end of years 3 and 4. Worth noting that extended or changing the term will require licences to be reviewed and updated.

The Licences were granted to enable CWP to carry out the services required under the contract and for no other purpose. The licences are at a peppercorn rental and on an internal repairing basis. The sites were licenced to CWP in their existing condition at the point of contract initiation when the properties are all considered to be in reasonable condition. Worth noting that the licences contain termination clauses in the event the overarching contract is terminated for non-performance or in the event the premises are required by the Council for an alternative use.

**Do you share occupation with other services, partners, or Council Companies, if so who and at which assets?**  
*For example, Coronation Road Offices, shared with CWP and NHS colleagues.*

The Council operates from 15 Children's Centre sites. In Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership (CWP) deliver Starting Well, the integrated service for children and young people aged 0-19 (25 years for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).

The service was established in 2018 and includes:

- The statutory Healthy Child Programme for 0-5 year olds and 5-19 year olds to deliver Public Health programmes and interventions



- Family Nurse Partnership, a nurse-led evidence-based programme for first time teenage parents
- The Children's Centre core offer.

Each of the centres provide accommodation that comprises office accommodation, clinical rooms, meeting room and group rooms plus shared use of kitchen and toilet facilities and car parking. At some centres there is also outdoor space. The services provided from the centres are delivered by CWP staff with council staff able to use and access the buildings to deliver services. This currently includes parenting classes, offering touch down desks for staff and opportunities to use meeting rooms.

**If you don't share occupation with others, is there an operational necessity that prevents sharing at any of your assets?**

NA

**Do any of your listed assets provide a location specific service rather than a borough wide provision, and if so which?**

Centres are based in key areas across the Council. Locations were defined historically using localised information each centre aims to provide services that are responsive to the needs of the communities in which they are based.

**Does your service have only a short term requirement (0-5 yrs) for any of your assets?**

NA

**Is your Service undergoing a reform that will directly impact your Assets now or in the near future (0-5 years)? Please provide a brief explanation.**

Every Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to provide Children's Centres throughout their area. The Children's Centres core offer is focused on:

- Universal services a range of targeted support for vulnerable families to improve life chances and reduce inequalities.
- improving child development and school readiness
- increasing child and family health and life chances
- improving parenting aspirations and parenting skills.

The Council has a requirement set nationally by the DfE to introduce Family Hubs. Children centres will be part of the vehicle for delivering this offer; early help at the earliest opportunity. Providing places where families area can access all the services, advice and support they need in one place. The hubs must provide colocation of various services from the council and partners in one place.

**Are there any legislative changes within your service area that is likely to impact your Asset requirements in the near future (0-5 years)? Please provide a brief explanation.**

The Council statutory function to deliver children centres remains, with the additionality of a need to implement Family Hubs which will have an impact on how these buildings are used.

**Please include any further commentary relating to your assets and delivery of our service.**

Conversations have started with Place based services to understand opportunities to respond to maintenance requirements across all sites in recognition of their current state and the future ambitions. These assets provide a fundamental opportunity to base services in local communities to deliver early help at the earliest opportunity.

Type	Nursery	Primary	Secondary	Special	Totals
------	---------	---------	-----------	---------	--------

Community	0	50	1	8	59
C of E Voluntary Controlled		19			19
C of E Voluntary Aided		14	1		16
Catholic Voluntary Aided		11	1		12
Foundation			4		4
PRU's			2		2
Academy		33	12	2	47
Studio			1		1
Free School		2			2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>161</b>

## Governance documents

Annual Governance Statement



AGS Directors'  
Assurance Statement

Scheme of delegation (from Ofsted FV)