



SESLIP Regional Improvement Plan 2019-20

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this regional improvement plan is to identify action that will assist all the local authorities in the South East to deliver effective services which improve outcomes for children and young people. The aim is to identify ways in which local authorities can support each other to improve and look at how collective action can help address systemic issues within the region.
- 1.2. The plan recognises that all children’s services have strengths which can help inspire improvement in others; it also recognises that they are all capable of further improvement. The plan aims to be non-stigmatising. It aims to discourage the conclusion that only poor or weak services need improvement help; instead it celebrates honest self-evaluation and constant improvement as antidotes to complacency.

2. Objectives of this plan

- 2.1. To support all children’s services authorities in the South East to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.
- 2.2. To ensure that authorities who are facing more challenges have access to support from others in the region and, where appropriate, national support.
- 2.3. To take collective action where this will support several authorities with their improvement journeys, including lobbying government where necessary.

3. 10 proposed priorities for this improvement plan

Table 1: 10 Priorities for South East Sector Led Improvement in 2019-20

Priority 2019-20	Outputs
Actions that will address practice issues:	
<p>1. Collaborate to improve provision for complex LAC. The work of the edge of care and complex LAC project will be developed to improve our collective knowledge of the needs and opportunities in this area; it will build on the data base of 800+ cases from 12 LAs; it will contribute to sufficiency planning within authorities; it will work with providers and commissioners to explore new ways of working; it will explore the financial, legal and political basis for future cooperation.</p> <p>DCS Sponsor: Lucy Butler - Oxfordshire</p>	<p>Bid to DfE’s “Improving Commissioning and Sufficiency Planning to Increase Stability and Permanence for Looked After Children - Seed-Funding Opportunity” by 24 March – [Note successful - £85,350 grant awarded]</p> <p>Contribute to the Office of the Children’s Commissioner’s investigating into the true costs and underfunding of children’s services by the end of July 2019</p> <p>Deliver project “viability report” by the end of September 2019</p> <p>Report on options for local authorities to collaborate on recruiting foster carers, align terms</p>

Priority 2019-20	Outputs
	<p>and conditions and share expertise by end March 2020</p> <p>Subject to funding, to deliver a business case for a possible regional commissioning hub by April 2020</p>
<p>2. Collaborate on increasing in-house foster placements: The Regional Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board will consider options for local authorities to collaborate on recruiting foster carers, align terms and conditions and share expertise.</p> <p>DCS Sponsor: Pinaki Ghoshal – Brighton and Hove DCS Sponsor for Adoption and SG Leadership Board: Hilary Brooks - Southampton</p>	<p>Desk research, survey to establish current position and demand for future action on in-house fostering</p> <p>Maintain regular meetings of the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board</p>
<p>3. Collaborate on ways to promote educational inclusion: SE19 SEND collaboration. There is an increasing risk to children as a result of the pressure to use exclusions and part-time timetables which are seen as doing harm. There seem to be few options for local authorities to encourage schools to persist with challenging children and young people. The AD Education Network will investigate effective strategies for: working with schools to prevent exclusion; working with LAC and previously LAC children; promotion of restorative and inclusive practices in schools; new or innovative ideas to reduce exclusion and part time timetables. They will continue their joint work with the SE19 group to consider how authorities might collaborate in providing high quality and cost-effective SEND provision.</p> <p>DCS Sponsors (Education): Cate Duffy – Slough and Lucy Butler – Oxfordshire; DCS Sponsor (SEND SE19): Kevin McDaniel – Windsor and Maidenhead</p>	<p>Report on exclusion prevention strategies, including tackling part-time timetables by April 2020</p> <p>Report on LAC and previously LAC strategies by end December 2019</p> <p>Report on restorative and inclusive practices by end October 2019</p> <p>Report with SE19 on high quality cost-effective SEND provision by end July 2019</p> <p>Maintain regular meetings of the AD Education Network and SEND SE19</p>
<p>4. Share and develop new models of social care practice that fit the times. Authorities are questioning their models of social care practice. Some are seeking to integrate early help and social care and would value some collective thinking about how these services are delivered in this new context. Some large LAs have been spending significant amounts on consultancies to deliver major systems changes. We will investigate the options for shared learning and other collaborative approaches to support new models of practice.</p> <p>DCS Sponsor: Nikki Edwards – Bracknell Forest</p>	<p>Dissemination during 2019 of work already undertaken within the region including the East Sussex Connected Care model; the Hampshire PiP resilience programme; and Brighton and Hove’s relationship-based approach. Other models will also be included.</p> <p>To organise a conference to be held in spring 2020, with associated publication of the different models of practice.</p>
<p>5. Developing the regional quality assurance capacity. One common theme from the Triad Peer Challenge days was concern over the effectiveness of existing quality assurance activities and whether or not they help members, directors and management teams answer the “how do we know about the quality of our services” question. We will initiate a new project</p>	<p>Exploration of current practice across the region to be completed by December 2019; followed by recommendations for future work programme in spring 2020.</p>

Priority 2019-20	Outputs
<p>to support our joint working on improving quality assurance capacity and capability.</p> <p>DCS Sponsor: Steve Crocker – Hampshire and Isle of Wight</p>	
Actions that will develop leadership capacity and staff resources:	
<p>6. Build leadership capacity across the region. A number of authorities want specific coaching for identified members of staff who have recently taken on new roles from equivalent experienced managers in other authorities. An option may be to develop a register of experienced managers who are willing to provide coaching beyond their authority. It might also be worthwhile to offer these managers the incentive or option of training on coaching and mentoring if they have not received this previously. Also, to connect to the LGA's officer peer pool.</p> <p>DCS Sponsor: Ian Sutherland - Medway</p>	<p>An initial a needs analysis across the 19 local authorities, concentrating on second and third tier (this definition to be flexible bearing in mind the difference between county and unitary authority size) management development needs. The needs analysis exercise could be informed by expert input from the Staff College. To be completed by October 2019</p> <p>In the light of the needs analysis to specify and commission a regional programme for delivery in 2020 onwards</p>
<p>7. Workforce matters; recruitment and retention; agency. The impact of the memorandum of co-operation has been welcomed; and the strength of the agreement has been tested by two partners taking themselves outside the agreement. There is a willingness to continue the dialogue and exchange of ideas on workforce matters.</p> <p>DCS Sponsor: Ian Sutherland - Medway</p>	<p>To manage and maintain the MoC throughout the year including: dialogue with 3 LAs currently outside the agreement; review of payrates in the light of anticipated changes in London.</p> <p>Maintain dialogue about the workforce with 6 phone calls and one face-to-face meeting per year, including the Social Work Health Check Benchmarking to be completed by the end of June 2019</p>
Actions that will underpin the cycle of self-assessment and peer challenge:	
<p>8. Data Benchmarking. We will continue to support the quarterly collection and publication of regional benchmarking data across the range of children's services. In particular the group will support the annual cycle of self-assessment and triad peer challenge. The group will also continue to develop data sets for children's social care, early help, adoption and fostering, education, special educational need, workforce. This will include data support for a quarterly conversation with DfE and others about headline performance data for each authority.</p> <p>DCS Sponsor: Stuart Gallimore – East Sussex</p>	<p>Quarterly publication of benchmarking data for: social care; 18 national headlines; adoption. Twice yearly publication for SEND. Annual publication for CSC workforce census; Peer Challenge data. Quarterly meetings of the data benchmarking group Development work to scope education data benchmarking, to be produced by the end of December 2019</p> <p>Work to integrate SE benchmarking with the What Works Centre and other national initiatives that relate to better use of data to improve outcomes for children and young people</p>
<p>9. Annual Self-assessment and Triad Peer Challenge. There will be an independent review of the process as delivered in 2019, and, subject to that feedback, there will be a further round of peer challenges in early 2020.</p> <p>DCS Sponsor: Stuart Gallimore – East Sussex</p>	<p>To commission an independent review of 2019 by ADCS staff to report by the end of July 2019</p> <p>To deliver for self-assessment and triad peer challenge in the winter 2019-20</p>
Action to address the funding gap:	
<p>10. Increase political lobbying to address the funding gap. We will support officer and member efforts to describe the challenges being faced by</p>	<p>LGA survey of lead members will be completed by end July 2019</p>

Priority 2019-20	Outputs
children's services. We will gather evidence of the impact on children and work with the ADCS and LGA to deliver the messages. More support will be given to the SE network of lead members. The DCS sponsors: Pinaki Ghoshal – Brighton and Hove, Lucy Butler – Oxfordshire and Matt Dunkley - Kent	Programme of activity to be agreed by end September 2019

4. Budget

Table 2: South East Sector Led Improvement Budget 2019-20

	Income	18-19 actual	19-20 planned	Notes
	Carry forward previous year	75,910	10,000	
	DfE contribution	0	130,000	
	SE subs	162,500	162,500	
	Data only subs	2,250	2,250	
	Total In	240,660	304,750	

Plan Ref	Expenditure	18-19 actual	19-20 planned	Notes
1	Complex LAC Project	23,600	38,000	Planning DfE bid for financial support
2	Adoption and SG Leadership Board and In-house Fostering	9,250	13,000	
3	AD Education Network	14,100	14,100	
3	SE19	22,500	22,500	Matched with further £22.5k from DfE
4	New models of social work practice	0	10,000	Initial scoping
5	Quality Assurance capacity	0	10,000	Initial scoping
6	Leadership Development	0	40,000	Needs analysis with The Staff College
7	Workforce/AD Safeguarding Network	10,200	10,200	
8	Data Benchmarking Group	55,000	55,000	Includes quarterly data share with DfE
9	Education Data Capability – development phase	0	10,000	
9	Triad Peer Challenge	50,250	38,000	
10	Lobbying	0	5,000	
other	SE ADCS Rooms	10,150	10,150	
other	Programme Management	14,110	20,000	
other	Website maintenance	3,500	3,500	
other	ESCC Overhead (2 payments in 18-19)	10,000	5,000	
other	Topical Peer Challenge carried forward from 17-18	8,000	0	
	Total Out	230,660	304,450	
	Carry forward to 19/20	10,000		
	Carry forward to 20/21		300	

5. Future actions that await the identification of resources:

- 5.1. The planning process has thrown up other possible activities that are not included in the current list of actions for want of sufficient resources:
- 1. Articulate how comprehensive mental health services for children should operate.** There is a feeling that the current mental health services for children are not fit for purpose. The rise in numbers of children with mental health difficulties may need more of a public health response, drawing on the latest research on what works. Finally, the region needs to work together to secure effective crisis intervention including beds within the region to support children and young people. **DCS Sponsor – Pinaki Ghoshal – Brighton and Hove**
 - 2. Transform the model of support provided to care leavers.** Some directors are concerned about the extremely poor outcomes for some care leavers and the fact that, for example, 50% of young people in young offenders’ institutions under the age of 21 nationally are actually care leavers. There was a suggestion that a project which looked at the systemic issues that lead to this state of affairs, and what could be done to prevent it would be productive.
 - 3. Create better mechanisms to share learning across the region.** There was a desire to make it easier to share best practice across the region but to think more carefully about how this might fit with people’s current ways of communicating. More events that shared good practice would be helpful, but there were more radical ideas. For example, producing an “SE app” for social workers to enable them to post questions, and share tools and links to help each other’s practice might be one solution. Another idea was to increase the number of networks, so for example, enabling the managers of QA services to meet across the region to share their stories for improving quality was one request. Another was to enable the Heads of MASH to get together and share best practice. Directors identified people who might be interested in leading these networks if directors agreed to set them up. The LGA “knowledge hub” could be part of the solution.

6. South East Sector Led Improvement Programme

- 6.1. The Regional Improvement Alliance for the South East is known as the South East Sector Led Improvement Programme (SESLIP). Further details can be found at www.seslip.co.uk.
- 6.2. The members of the steering group which oversees the programme are: Stuart Gallimore (DCS East Sussex, in the chair); Alison Jeffery (DCS, Portsmouth); Steve Crocker (DCS Hampshire and Isle of Wight); John Coughlan (Chief Executive, Hampshire); Cllr Gareth Barnard (Lead Member Bracknell Forest) and the Improvement Advisers from the LGA (Mona Sehgal and William Brooks; Children Improvement Adviser, vacant).