

CROYDON COUNCIL
Children's Plan for Improvement 2019/20
October 2019

be the change
for children and young people in croydon
#bethechangecroydon



OUR DESTINATION



OUR PRINCIPLES



OUR PRACTICE
FRAMEWORK



Delivering for Croydon

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Introduction

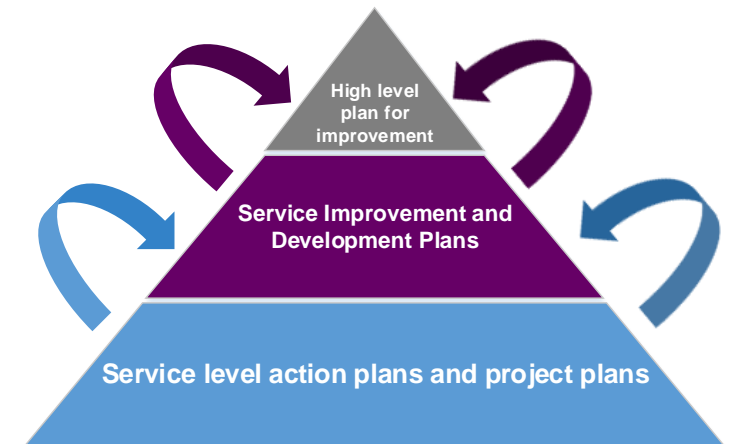
Our determination to improve our services for children young people in need of help and protection and champion the interests of children in our care and care leavers is clearly set out in the council's corporate plan 2018-2022¹. The considerable political support for continued improvement was recognised by Ofsted in the July 2019 monitoring visit² including significant financial investment to support wholesale change.

Following senior leadership appointments in November 2018 and January 2019 (Executive Director, Children, Families and Education and Director, Early Help and Children's Social Care), a new strategic direction for Children, Families and Education (CFE) in Croydon was developed with the aspiration to deliver outstanding outcomes for children and young people by 2021-22. This is simply described in appendix 1 "Who we are and where we are going" and outlines four key areas of work that will help us deliver outstanding outcomes for children underpinned by 6 key principles; the values that will guide all our work.

Since the Ofsted judgement in 2017 the service has made a lot of changes and has been subject to six monitoring visits focused on different service areas, with inspectors observing improving practice, higher staff morale and an accelerated pace of change at the visits in February and July 2019.

This is the third iteration of our improvement plan, initially developed in September 2017 in response to the inspection judgements and reviewed in October 2018. This 2019 'plan for improvement' is high level, underpinned by and referring back to a series of service improvement and development plans owned by Heads of Service in CFE and across the Council, and cross cutting multi-agency plans overseen by senior leaders. These plans detail clear actions, owners and timescales against which progress is monitored by the Executive Director. Underneath these are more granular action and project plans.

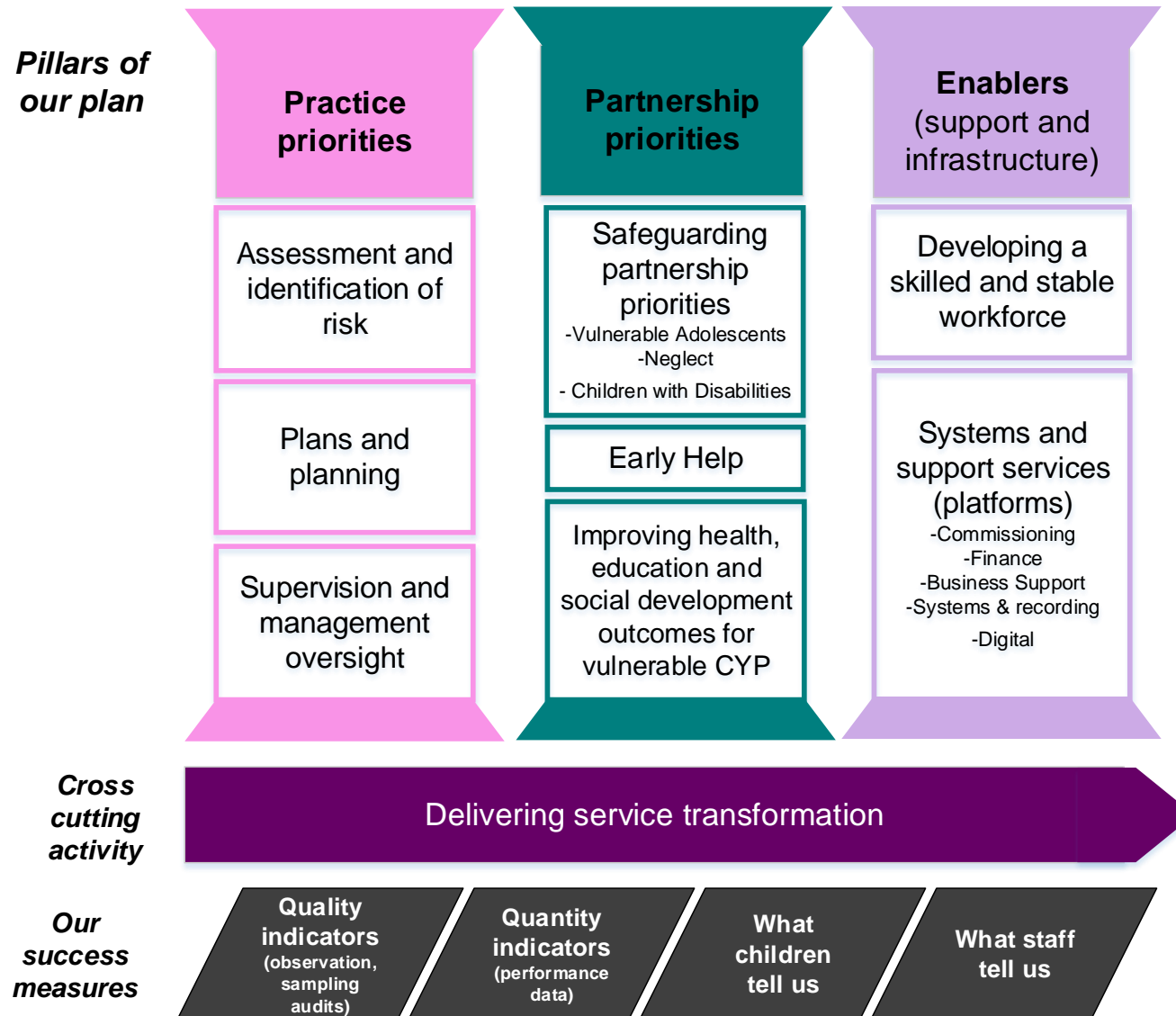
This high level plan and the priorities within it are set out in the picture below. It should be noted that this plan does not describe ongoing service transformation activity (for example to establish or commission new or different teams and services) as these changes are set out in the service improvement and development plans.



¹ <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/Corporate%20Plan%202018-22.pdf> (see page 12)

² <https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50097925>, (see page 2)

OUR PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT ON A PAGE 19/20



Practice priorities (lead: Nick Pendry [NP], Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care)

Ref	Priorities and key activity	Delivered through	Lead & Owner/s	By when	Success measures (targets based on benchmarking, impact for children and what good looks like)
1	<p>Assessment and identification of risk. Including activity to:</p> <p>1.1 Work with partners to improve the quality of referrals into the front door (SPOC) and knowledge of thresholds [CQC inspection CLA and Safeguarding Feb 2019]</p> <p>1.2 Improve the quality of C&F assessments across service through robust management oversight, training and use of systemic consultation [SIF 2017 recommendation 12]</p> <p>1.3 Improve timeliness and multi-agency input of all strategy meetings through improved coordination and tracking [SIF recommendation 7]</p> <p>1.4 Increase compliance with agreed procedures in order to reduce risks where;</p> <p>a) Children and young people go missing b) CYP face exploitation risk outside the home [SIF recommendations 3 & 4]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Partnership response to CQC recommendations, CLAS Action plan ✓ Service improvement plans ✓ Systemic practice roll out ✓ All service improvement plans ✓ Adolescent Services plan & service plans for Assessment, SWwF and SWwCLA 	<p>IL & EC</p> <p>IL & all HoS</p> <p>NP & all HoS</p> <p>HD & all HoS</p>	<p>Ongoing Test impact 31/1/20</p> <p>Ongoing Test impact 30/11/19</p> <p>Ongoing Test impact 1/12/19</p> <p>Targets met by 1/12/19</p>	<p>Targets by 3/3/22*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5600 children's social care (CSC) referrals or fewer • 90% of referrals to assessment • 18% or less re-referrals in 12 months • 4700 or fewer assessments (per yr) • 10.2% or less assessments NFA'd • 45 days or fewer avg. assessment duration • 95% of missing risk assessment and strategy meetings in timescales <p>Impact for children and families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people benefit from timely and robust assessment of risks and needs which result in direct help if needed at the right level • Fewer children and families subject to unnecessary CSC assessments and social work interventions <p>What good looks like See para 249 Framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance for the inspection of local authority children's services</p> <p><i>*progress against 2022 targets will be monitored by the Executive Director and reviewed on a quarterly basis to ensure targets remain suitably ambitious</i></p>
2	<p>Plans and Planning. This includes activity to:</p> <p>2.1 Continue to improve the quality of all written plans across the service to ensure they are SMART, child focused, reflect the views and wishes of children and include contingency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All service improvement plans 	<p>NP & all HoS</p>	<p>Ongoing Test impact 1/11/19</p>	<p>Targets by 3/3/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 617 or less CIN plans (excl CWD) • 3640 or less open CIN cases by • 438 or less CP plans by • 14% or less repeat CP plans

	<p>planning. [SIF recommendation 5]</p> <p>2.2 Achieve early permanence for more children by ensuring all children looked after (CLA) have a clear plan for permanence by week 5 of their care journey and this is monitored and challenged by permanence Service Manager and IRO's [SIF recommendation 14]</p> <p>2.3 Improve participation of all children and young people in plans for their future, through purposeful and creative direct work, especially Life Story work</p>	<p>✓ SWwF, SWwCLA & QA Service improvement plans</p> <p>✓ All service improvement plans</p>	<p>VS & all HoS</p> <p>NP & all HoS</p>	<p>From Aug 19, test impact by 1/12/19</p> <p>Ongoing Test impact 1/1/20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 482 or fewer local CLA 95% CLA have permanence plan in timescales <p>Impact for children and families Children and young people benefit from purposeful planning informed by creative direct work which supports more children and young people to remain safely within their families, or secures permanence for them where this is not possible (e.g. through guardianship or adoption)</p> <p>What good looks like See para 249 & 250 Framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance for the inspection of local authority children's services</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Supervision and management oversight</p> <p>3.1 All practitioners to receive monthly supervision that is increasingly reflective and impactful [SIF recommendation 1]</p> <p>3.2 Management direction to be included at all decision points in case notes and that the Director and Heads of Service have oversight of key decisions about children's lives [SIF recommendation 8]</p> <p>3.3 Coordinate a cycle of quality assurance activity across the service (including collecting feedback from CYP and their families) and collate and communicate findings across the service to drive practice improvement and develop a 'high support - high challenge' culture</p>	<p>✓ All service improvement plans</p> <p>✓ All service improvement plans</p> <p>✓ Systemic practice roll out</p> <p>✓ Quality Assurance Service improvement plan</p>	<p>NP & all HoS</p> <p>NP & all HoS</p> <p>SH</p>	<p>Target met by 1/12/19</p> <p>Ongoing Test impact 1/11/19</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Targets by 3/3/21 90% of children's cases supervised in timescales [QA1]</p> <p>Impact for children and families Children and young people benefit from timely and transparent decision making and are supported by practitioners who receive regular reflective supervision.</p> <p>What good looks like See para 249, 250 and 251 Framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance for the inspection of local authority children's services</p>

Partnership priorities (lead: Robert Henderson [RH], Executive Director Children, Families & Education)

Ref	Priorities and key activity	Delivered through	Lead & Owner/s	By when	Success measures
4.	<p>Supporting the local safeguarding partnership priorities. This includes activity to:</p> <p>4.1 Agree and implement contextual safeguarding model (as an alternative to child protection) for adolescents facing risks outside the home (e.g. criminal/sexual exploitation) <i>[CSCB Vulnerable Adolescents Review 2018]</i></p> <p>4.2 Oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the vulnerable adolescents review</p> <p>4.3 Embed the use of the graded care profile (GCP2) tool for neglect across the service and wider partnership <i>[CSCB multi-agency neglect audit]</i></p> <p>4.4 Raise awareness across the partnership around the additional vulnerabilities of children with disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adolescent Services Plan ✓ VA Priority Group Action Plan ✓ Violence Reduction Programme ✓ Neglect Strategy & Neglect Strategy Implementation Plan ✓ Safeguarding Children with Disabilities Business Plan 	<p>NM (police) HD (LBC)</p> <p>RH</p> <p>EC (CCG) MB (LBC)</p> <p>MB</p>	<p>1/1/20</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Targets by 3/3/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in local CLA subject to section 20 • Reduction in 13-17 yr olds becoming looked after • Reduction in average duration in care for 13-17 year olds <p>Impact for children and families More vulnerable adolescents are supported through purposeful safety planning to reduce risks outside the home and remain within their families where possible.</p> <p>Children and young people at risk of neglect and those with additional vulnerabilities due to disability are identified and safeguarded more effectively by knowledgeable and proactive partners.</p> <p>What good looks like See para 251 Framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance for the inspection of local authority children's services</p>
5.	<p>Early Help. This includes activity to;</p> <p>5.1 Embed the Croydon Partnership Early Help Offer to support partners to hold lower level risk and make referrals to the council's Early Help Service where appropriate <i>[SIF recommendation 11]</i></p> <p>5.2 Transform the council's Early Help Service to increase capacity and improve the offer for vulnerable adolescents. To include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Partnership Early Help Steering Group Delivery plan 	<p>RH</p>	<p>Ongoing test impact by 1/1/20</p> <p>1/12/19</p>	<p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avg 208 Early Help (EH) referrals per month by 31/3/2021 • 700 or more CYP supported via EH 31/3/21 • 5% or less EH cases stepped up to CSC by 31/3/21 • 10% or less families disengaging with EH by 31/3/2021

	<p>a) Creation of a social work 'spine'</p> <p>b) Integration of the Youth Engagement Service</p> <p>c) Recruitment of specialist workers <i>[SIF recommendation 11]</i></p> <p>5.3 Develop and utilise locality hubs to coordinate multi-agency early intervention activity closer to home for children and families and strengthen relationships with partners and the voluntary sector on the ground</p>	<p>✓ Early Help Service Plan</p>	<p>CS</p> <p>CS</p>	<p>1/3/20</p>	<p>Impact for children and families</p> <p>More children and families benefit from effective early intervention and support closer to home from multi-agency partners.</p> <p>Fewer families receive unnecessary CSC assessments and social work intervention.</p> <p>What good looks like</p> <p>See para 249 Framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance for the inspection of local authority children's services</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Improving health and education outcomes for vulnerable children and young people (CYP) (including children looked after (CLA) and care leavers)</p> <p>6.1 Integrating a CAMHS front door into the SPOC</p> <p>6.2 Work with CCG and health professionals to;</p> <p>a) Deliver improved timeliness and quality of initial health assessments, review health assessments, immunisations, dentals and SDQ's</p> <p>b) Develop an integrated and collocated tier 2-3 CAHMS service for CLA that supports social workers to recognise and respond to particular mental and emotional health and well-being needs of children looked after and care leavers (e.g. attachment and trauma)</p> <p>6.3 SEND</p> <p>a) Work with the key partners in Education, Health and Care will deliver an effective local area approach in line with the expectations of</p>	<p>✓ SPOC and Assessment Service plan & joint project plan</p> <p>✓ CLA and care leavers health action plan</p> <p>✓ CLA and care leavers health action plan</p> <p>✓ SEND strategy</p>	<p>RH & SW</p> <p>NP, EC & SW</p> <p>RH & SW</p> <p>SD</p>	<p>31/1/20</p> <p>Targets met by 31/12/19</p> <p>31/1/20</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% of CLA receive IHA in timescales 95% of CLA receive RHA in timescales 95% of CLA receive SDQ in timescales 85% CLA have PEP in timescales 100% of CYP with SEND are referred for assessment at the earliest indication of possible need 100% of assessments and outcomes of assessments are completed within statutory timeframes with all partners understanding each other's time pressures and working collaboratively to meet them. All partners, providers and stakeholders sign up to local area SEND practice and delivery and identify this in their own planning. <p>Impact for children and families</p> <p>Children and families benefit from better joint working between Early Help, Social and CAMHS at the front door, accessing support earlier.</p> <p>Children looked after benefit from more timely and robust assessments of their</p>

	<p>the Children and Families / Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015</p> <p>b) Identify and assess of SEND needs through a collaborative and integrated approach involving all partners / providers / parent/carers and the children and young people in a more timely manner to support earlier identification.</p> <p>6.4 Work with schools to deliver improved educational outcomes (including attainment, attendance and inclusion) for CLA and care leavers including;</p> <p>a) improve the quality and timeliness of PEPs b) use the PPG more effectively to improve outcomes c) reduce the number of CLA subject to exclusions or managed moves</p> <p>6.5 Mobilise colleagues in other council departments as corporate parents to offer practical support and identifiable actions that improve outcomes for children looked after and care leavers. To be achieved through;</p> <p>a) Reviewing the local offer for care leavers with council wide input b) Rolling out mentoring programme for CLA</p>	<p>✓ PEP improvement action plan</p> <p>✓ Social work with CLA and care leavers service plan</p>	<p>SB & VS</p> <p>VS & AF</p>	<p>Targets met by 31/12/19</p> <p>31/12/19</p>	<p>health needs and better joint working between their social worker and CAHMS specialist to support their emotional wellbeing.</p> <p>Children and families benefit from earlier identification of SEND.</p> <p>Children looked after and care leavers' educational outcomes are improved through purposeful education plans.</p> <p>Children looked after and care leavers' benefit from a council wide focus on corporate parenting to improve their outcomes (e.g. health, education and housing).</p> <p>What good looks like</p> <p>See para 250 Framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance for the inspection of local authority children's services</p>
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Enablers (lead: Jacqueline Harris-Baker [JHB], Executive Director, Resources)

Ref	Priorities and key activity	Delivered through	Lead & Owner/s	By when	Success measures
7	<p>Developing a skilled and stable workforce including activity to;</p> <p>7.1 Deliver the recruitment action plan to recruit more permanent frontline staff and managers across the service and reduce unfilled vacancies (via locum routes where necessary) <i>[SIF recommendation 2]</i></p> <p>7.2 Coordinate and publicise career progression pathways to improve retention and 'grow our own' approaches to social workforce sustainability including ASYE programme, frontline and social work apprenticeships <i>[SIF recommendation 2]</i></p> <p>7.3 Deliver the 2019/20 learning and development offer, including bespoke training for frontline staff and managers <i>[SIF recommendation 2]</i></p> <p>7.4 Roll out systemic practice amongst frontline practitioners and managers including;</p> <p>a) Establishing a systemic family therapy service to support practitioners through case consultation and group supervision</p> <p>b) Commission, deliver and evaluate training which supports systemic social work</p>	<p>✓ Recruitment action plan 2019</p> <p>✓ Workforce Development Service plan</p> <p>✓ L&D offer 2019/20</p> <p>✓ Systemic service plan</p>	<p>SM & RH</p> <p>NS</p> <p>NS</p> <p>NB</p>	<p>31/1/20</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>31/3/20</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve agency rate 30% • Reduce number of unfilled posts • Maintain average caseload targets across the service <p>Impact for children and families</p> <p>A more stable workforce will provide continuity for children and families, and allow practitioners to build relationships of trust to make positive change together with families. Children and families will benefit from the support of confident and skilled practitioners who will work with the child, young person and their family to make positive change.</p> <p>What good looks like</p> <p>See para 251 Framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance for the inspection of local authority children's services</p>

<p>8</p>	<p>Systems and support services which create the conditions for social work to flourish</p> <p>8.1 Commissioning</p> <p>a) Develop and implement the commissioning model for Early Help, to support the EH strategy and locality-based service model</p> <p>b) Deliver the sufficiency strategy to ensure that more children looked after benefit from local placements that are suited to their needs</p> <p>c) Deliver improvements to the children's placement processes, ensuring the needs of children and young people are at the centre of placement planning</p> <p>8.2 Finance</p> <p>a) Provide accurate and timely budget reporting to HoS, Director and DCS</p> <p>b) Improve payment processes to make it easy to meet children and families care needs (systems)</p> <p>c) Improve support for short and medium term financial and service planning</p> <p>8.3 Business support</p> <p>Develop and implement a model which supports and enables frontline practitioners in Early Help & Children's Social Care</p> <p>8.4 System & Recording</p> <p>a) Improve the accuracy of operational data through close working between social workers, managers, performance and digital system leads to improve the recording system</p> <p>b) Make continued improvement to the case recording system, utilising the contract update in April 2020 to reflect user feedback</p>	<p>✓ Children's Commissioning Service Improvement plan</p> <p>✓ Placement Improvement plan</p> <p>✓ Children's Finance Service Improvement plan</p> <p>✓ Business Support Service Improvement plan</p> <p>✓ CRS Improvement plan</p>	<p>SW</p> <p>LT</p> <p>SF</p> <p>SH</p>	<p>31/03/20</p> <p>31/03/20</p> <p>31/01/20</p> <p>30/04/20</p>	<p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to reduction in CLA (482) • Increased % CLA placed in borough • Improved % CLA placed less than 20 miles from home <p>Impact for children and families</p> <p>More children and families benefit from effective early intervention and support closer to home from multi-agency partners</p> <p>Fewer families receive unnecessary CSC assessments and interventions</p> <p>Children looked after are provided with high quality homes that are suited to their needs (e.g. specialist foster carers)</p> <p>Children and families benefit from well-supported practitioners who have the time, tools and capacity to provide consistently good services</p> <p>Resources are deployed efficiently and effectively, with decisions on service development informed by quality and cost analyses</p> <p>What good looks like</p> <p>See para 250, 251 Framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance for the inspection of local authority children's services</p>
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	8.5 Digital a) Develop hardware and software that supports agile early help and social work b) Improve CFE's online presence including website development and the SEND Local Offer to manage demand for statutory services	✓ Children's Digital Development plan	DB	31/03/20	
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Action leads/owners and other abbreviations

Action leads/owners

Initials and full name	Role
RH Robert Henderson	Executive Director of Children, Families and Education
NP Nick Pendry	Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care
IL Iain Low	Head of SPOC and Assessments
VS Vanessa Strang	Head of Social Work with Children Looked After and Leaving Care
HD Hannah Doughty	Head of Adolescent Services
SH Shaun Hanks	Head of Quality Assurance and Safeguarding
MB Michael Brown	Head of Children with Disabilities and Transitions
CS Clive Seall	Head of Early Help
NS Nicki Shaw	Head of Children's Workforce Development
NB Nana Bonsu	Systemic Practice Lead
EC Elaine Clancy	Chief Nurse, NHS Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group & NHS Croydon Health Services
SW Sarah Warman	Director Commissioning and Procurement – London Borough of Croydon Director of Joint Commissioning – NHS Croydon CCG
SD Shelley Davies	Director of Education
SB Sarah Bailey	Head of Virtual School
SM Sue Moorman	Director of Human Resources
NM Neil Matthews	Detective Superintendent for Safeguarding
SF Savio Fernandes	Head of Business Support
LT Lisa Taylor	Director of Finance Investment and Risk
DB Dave Briggs	Head of Digital Operations
AF Alison Farmer	Head of SEND 0-25

Abbreviations

Author: Fern Barber Version: 4 (final) Date: 25/10/19

Abbreviation	Description
CYP	Children and young people
CLA	Child(ren) looked after
CSC	Children's social care
HoS	Heads of Service
NFA	No further action
SPOC	Single point of contact
C&F assessments	Children and families assessments
CIN	Child in need
CP	Child protection
CWD	Children with Disabilities (service)
IHA	Initial health assessments
RHA	Review health assessments
SIF	Ofsted Single Inspection framework report 2017
SDQ	Strengths and difficulties questionnaire
PEP	Personal Education Plan
SEND	Special educational needs and/or disabilities
CAMHS	Children and adolescent mental health service
ASYE	Assessed and supported year in employment (newly qualified social worker)
SWwF	Social Work with Families Service
SWwCLA	Social Work with Children Looked After Service

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