

Children, Education and Families Risk Register

Risk		01. Unable to deliver services within the financial allocation across CEF					
Likelihood	5				X		
	4				A		
	3						
	2						
	1						
		1	2	3	4	5	
		Consequence					
Risk Owners		Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)		Current Score	20	Last Review	10/12/2025
				Risk Appetite	16	Next Review	10/03/2026
				Previous Score	20		
		Triggers			Likelihood Factors (Vulnerability)		Potential Consequences
		<p>1. Growing demand on services such as Transport and Children in Care</p> <p>2. Significant inflationary and workforce pressures on the provider market, impacting on the cost of care</p> <p>3. Lack of availability of capacity, resulting in higher costs to place care</p> <p>4. Key partners are also under significant strain, which may lead to further increases in demand as other services that support families are ceased</p> <p>5. Safety Valve failure and DSG deficit (covered in Risk 2)</p> <p>6. Increase in school budgets being in deficit</p> <p>7. Delays in the implementation of the EYES system impacts on financial costs for this programme</p> <p>CIC:</p> <p>1. Demand out-stripping supply of placements, particularly those with high needs and complex</p> <p>2. Lack of affordable and sustainable housing options for placements across Cambridgeshire</p> <p>3. Lack of appropriate accommodation options for those with high and complex needs</p> <p>4. Lack of appropriate provision with the skills to manage those with high and complex needs</p> <p>5. Partner funding is not available to support the right placement package for key individuals</p> <p>6. Delays in progressing the residential strategy</p>			<p>1. Budget pressures are occurring in demand led services such as Transport, Children in Care placements and SEND</p> <p>2. Some investments have been committed into SEND to redesign the education structure to further support the wider Inclusion for All framework</p> <p>3. Families First Partnership has provided some grant funding to implement the reforms within service areas and opportunities to redesign areas which require it.</p> <p>4. Delays are occurring in the implementations of EYES</p> <p>5. Falling rolls and rising demand for SEND impacting significantly on school budgets.</p> <p>CIC:</p> <p>1. Demand is already outstripping supply currently</p> <p>2. In-house solutions have been paused due to delays in planning</p> <p>3. Budget pressures within the children in care placement budget has been reoccurring for a number of years</p> <p>4. Savings allocated to the budget are not currently being reached</p>		<p>1. Statutory services are no longer able to be delivered</p> <p>2. Services are unable to meet demand</p> <p>3. Children and young people do not receive services to time or quality</p> <p>4. Schools become financially unviable which leads to impact on safety of pupils, quality of education and ultimately school closures.</p> <p>CIC:</p> <p>1. Financial impact on cost of placements for children with more complex needs</p> <p>Impact on finding suitable placements</p> <p>2. Children and young people may experience multiple accommodation moves if the right placement for them is not available at the time they enter care</p> <p>3. Increase in workload and reduction of capacity for Children in Care teams</p> <p>Transport:</p> <p>1. Cost of providing transport continues to exceed the budget available.</p> <p>2. Children and young people are not transported to school and not able to access education.</p>

<p>Transport:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in the number of children and young people with EHCP requiring specialist transport 2. Requests from schools and/or parents for transport assistance due to concerns over safeguarding risks in respect of a child or young person's ability to walk to and from school even accompanied by an adult. 3. Increase in the number of contract handbacks has resulted in higher cost contracts and demand on staff capacity to manage procurement processes 4. Increased contract costs, operation and overhead costs eg fuel, insurance 5. Operators having insufficient numbers of drivers and/or passenger assistants to be able to fulfil contracts 6. Cambridgeshire offers over the statutory requirements for transport therefore increasing the number of children and young people utilising home to school transport in Cambridgeshire 	<p>Transport:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transport logistics review has taken place outlining key areas for consideration in the future 2. Savings within Transport has already been identified in previous and future years 	
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Controls	Adequacy	Critical Success
<p>CIC Specific - Contract management and commissioning providers:</p> <p>Continuous improvement through contract management with providers and market engagement.</p>	Good	Providers continue to make improvements
<p>CIC Specific - Inflation Strategy</p> <p>Developing an inflation strategy which is fair and transparent aligned to all our providers.</p>	Good	Inflation uplifts are clear, transparent and fair to providers
<p>CIC Specific - Multi-agency partnership working with other services:</p> <p>Continued working with partners to provide a multi-agency approach of the needs for the child / young person.</p> <p>Working with statutory health partners for the risk pathways for self-harm. Criteria for the MAP panel is progressing for agreement with health.</p> <p>Multi-agency monthly meetings to review cases and provide multi-agency support on where cases can be worked on together when needed (MAPP, 0-25 complex cases)</p>	Reasonable	Partnership working is well established and criteria has been approved
<p>CIC Specific - Provider Communications</p> <p>We are widening our communications within our services to local and national provider bases across all of children services.</p>	Good	Providers feel well informed
<p>CIC specific - Provider training & development</p> <p>Providing training, support and development to upskill providers working with more young people with high and complex needs</p>	Good	Providers are well supported and suitably trained to work with those with high and complex needs.
<p>CIC specific - Residential Strategy</p> <p>The residential strategy outlines further explore the residential accommodation across Cambridgeshire including in-house provision, working better with providers and greater partnership working. The in-house solutions for enhancing properties within the Council's portfolio has been paused due to planning delays.</p>	Poor	Sufficient residential accommodation available across Cambridgeshire and more CiC are in-county.
<p>CIC specific - Sufficiency Statements:</p> <p>The sufficiency statement have been published</p>	Reasonable	Sufficient capacity and future needs can meet demand

<p>Financial Control</p> <p>All temporary and permanent recruitment is subject to recruitment panels by the Director of Childrens, Education & Families (CEF) and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)</p> <p>CEF Criteria has been redefined and restricted on spend.</p> <p>Scheme of delegation for children social care in place to help wit decision-making a mitigate spend</p> <p>Robust school deficit management process in place to ensure schools put in place strong deficit recovery plans that achieve a <u>balanced budget and there is clear Council oversight</u>.</p>	Good	Budget pressures are minimised	
<p>Managing demand</p> <p>1. Reforms have been defined to help manage demand for services such as the Inclusion for All and Families First Partnerships. Working with school leaders, through Schools Forum governance, we have codesigned a 'continuum of provision' to ensure clarity regarding respective responsibility of schools and the council for different types of provision, with associated benefit ultimately of a shift of demand to mainstream from special with a focus on placement close to home to reduce travel time and costs in addition to placement costs.</p> <p>2. Revision of the Children in Care Residential Strategy to ascertain the placements required</p> <p>3. Early help services are operating more effectively to meet demand</p> <p>4. Key improvements to the integrated front door have been identified and being implemented to meet demand</p>	Reasonable	Demand can be met through existing capacity and relative preventative measures	
<p>Transformation Projects</p> <p>There are a number of transformation programmes in progress in each of the 3 areas: SEND - Inclusion for All Transport - Travel to Learn Children in Care Placements (Residential Strategy) EYES implementation</p> <p>All areas are defined and progressing, although demand is continuing.</p>	Reasonable	Budget pressures are minimised and savings are achieved	
<p>Transport specific - Additional Capacity on SEND 0-25</p> <p>Funding secured to appoint additional members of staff who will focus on reducing the number of single occupancy taxis and work with colleagues in the SEND 0-25 teams and in Social Care to ensure that consideration of transport requirements and the cost of these is embedded into the annual review process and conversations with parents/carers and educational establishments.</p>	Good	Reduced spend and high costs for SEND transport	
<p>Transport specific - Travel to Learn Plan</p> <p>Travel to Learn plan is currently in development to consider ways for delivering home to school transport more efficiently.</p>	Good	Once the plan has been agreed at Committee (Winter 2025/26), the delivery of the plan will be implemented.	
<p>Action Plans</p> <p>Additional financial controls</p> <p>This has now been undertaken and key aspects being taken forward - monitoring purposes.</p> <p>CEF Financial diagnostics underway to ensure only essential spend is occurring and identifying other opportunities to reduce spending.</p>	<p>Assurance</p> <p>This has now been undertaken and completed a monitoring action for short period. CEF Financial Diagnostics requires all services to review spend and identify further opportunities to reduce core budget spending.</p>	<p>Responsibility</p> <p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>Target Date</p> <p>31/03/2026</p>

<p>Children in Care transport provision:</p> <p>Managing the provision at the beginning of CYP coming into Care, relying on Social Workers to transport during the first few weeks, which is not sustainable.</p>	Processes are being developed to ensure these can be mitigated where possible	Sarah Callaghan (Service Director for Education) Liz Clarke (Service Director: Quality Assurance and Practice Improvement)	31/03/2026
<p>EYES Implementation programme revised</p> <p>The implementation of the EYES Programme has been revised to ensure implementation occurs in June 2026.</p>	Plans have been verified and approval for reallocation of Capital budget is planned for October		30/06/2026
<p>High cost children in care</p> <p>High-cost children in care reviewed by Service Directors to ensure the child is in the right home at the right cost and where appropriate move on plans are progressed. Also work on review of all placements which purport to include 'therapeutic support'</p>	Placement Panel chaired by Service Director	Liz Clarke (Service Director: Quality Assurance and Practice Improvement) Nigel Denning (Service Director, Targeted Support & Children Social Care)	31/03/2026
<p>Implementation of Families First Programme</p> <p>The Implementation of Families First over the next two years is intended to reduce the demand on statutory services and realign services to support families earlier. The part 2 of the implementation plan will be submitted in December 2025 setting out key milestones for implementation</p>	Families First Partnership Programme Governance will ensure effective oversight of delivery and monitoring outcomes – reported to the DfE	Nigel Denning (Service Director, Targeted Support & Children Social Care)	31/03/2026
<p>Reducing the number of 'high cost' placements and care costs</p> <p>Weekly placement panel and Service Director oversight of all entrants to care</p>	Weekly placement panel and Service Director oversight of all entrants to care	Nigel Denning (Service Director, Targeted Support & Children Social Care)	31/12/2025
<p>Residential Placement options</p> <p>Strategic approach to residential sufficiency to be reviewed applying lessons learned for the approaches that have been attempted thus far .</p> <p>London Road residential property to be progressed for Dec 2026 delivery.</p>	London Road is progressed for December 2026 delivery/	Nigel Denning (Service Director, Targeted Support & Children Social Care)	31/12/2026
<p>Review of commissioning arrangements internally</p> <p>Children's Commissioning review has taken place and identified key areas to improve.</p>	A children in care working group has been established to progress the areas in CIC	Chris Bush (Service Director Strategy and Commissioning)	31/03/2026
<p>Review of placement provider frameworks to access for value for money:</p> <p>This has been agreed at Committee in November 2025. Children's external placements report is due for approval at committee in November 2025. It will outline the plan to review and reflect on capacity and costs for the longer term.</p>	Ensure the time to ensure the provider framework is right	Chris Bush (Service Director Strategy and Commissioning)	31/03/2026
<p>Strategic Provider Meetings</p> <p>Provider meetings are arranged and will be regular to ensure co-consideration of housing proposals and needs collaboratively.</p>	Governed by Commissioning	Chris Bush (Service Director Strategy and Commissioning)	31/03/2026

Risk		02. Non-delivery of SEND statutory timelines, financial risk of the DfE Safety Valve Agreement for Cambridgeshire and increase in DSG spend					
Likelihood	5				X		
	4				A		
	3						
	2						
	1						
		1	2	3	4	5	
Consequence							
Risk Owners		Sarah Callaghan (Service Director for Education)		Current Score	20	Last Review	18/12/2025
				Risk Appetite	16	Next Review	26/04/2026
				Previous Score	20		
Triggers				Likelihood Factors (Vulnerability)		Potential Consequences	
<p>1. Failure to deliver safety valve plan identified through monitoring.</p> <p>2. Unsustainable demand for Education, Health, Care Plans (EHCP's) meaning the financial carry forward becomes unsustainable</p> <p>3. Insufficient capacity within school system which leads to higher cost placements</p> <p>4. Increase in the number of complaints and possible pay-outs</p>				<p>1. Revised submission to DfE in July. Acknowledgement response received early October to state DfE SEND Advisor to work with the Council on possible changes. This would suggest on going delay by DfE to determine when our payments can commence and a decision on the two Special Schools.</p> <p>2. The Inclusion for All programme outlines a whole system approach to SEND to ensure all children and young people access various services available to them which could meet their needs. We had anticipated that our plan would be validated by the likely content of the national SEND reforms however Secretary of State confirmed in October a further delay to those announcements to Spring 2026.</p>		<p>1. DfE withholding payments from the Safety Valve Agreement</p> <p>2. Government statutory duties are unable to be fully met</p> <p>3. Some of the changes we were anticipating within the delayed SEND reforms could have mitigated some of our risks, for example – increased scrutiny on Independent Special School funding and quality, a revised focus on the importance of SEN support rather than EHCP in mainstream.</p>	
Controls				Adequacy	Critical Success		
Delivery of additional school places Following the DfE continual delay of the opening of 2 x new special schools a recent update has been received from DfE setting out two options for the Council to consider by end February 2026. An options appraisal is being developed and the appropriate governance will be followed.				Reasonable	School provision is in place and meets needs		
Management and delivery of the Inclusion for All Programme Full programme management and governance is place with agreed plan between all partners and revised plan, incorporating Ofsted priority actions, agreed by DfE and NHS England and summary published on CCC Local Offer SEND Website. Comprehensive report to C&YP Committee in October with all recommendations agreed, i.e. quarterly reporting to Committee and £780k funding agreed.				Reasonable	Inclusion for All is successfully delivered to time, cost and quality		
Monitoring of Safety Valve requirements Submission of the revised Cambridgeshire Safety Valve in July 2025 to DfE was made. A response from DfE is still be awaited for. Monthly review of position through the Education Finance and Performance Board and reporting to the SEND Executive Board. Financial forecasts continue to reported corporately and updated regularly. Activity currently paused.				Reasonable	Requirements are reported regularly and meets expectations		
Partnership with DfE We were requested to submit an updated SV plan in July and we were proactive in following up this submission by requesting a meeting with DfE SEND Adviser. However, zero contact from DfE between July and up to end September. Early October 2025 brief acknowledgement email regarding July submission and stating that SEND Adviser would again be in touch to discuss possible further work required. Some contact with DfE in relation to the 2 x new schools in December 2025 and further work is being now being considered.				Reasonable	Good working relationship are established		

Action Plans	Assurance	Responsibility	Target Date
<p>ASEND Action Plan</p> <p>the following outlines the recommendations from the Area SEND inspection:</p> <p>There are 3 possible judgements and Cambridgeshire received the 2nd judgement which has made the following recommendations for Cambridgeshire which includes:</p> <p>1.The local area partnership should work together to improve the timeliness and quality of the statutory Education Health and Care (EHC) plan processes so that children and young people with SEND get the right support at the right time. This should include a particular focus on:</p> <p>a. improving the timeliness of EHC plan needs assessments and annual reviews;</p> <p>b. improving the quality of EHC plans;</p> <p>c. amending EHC plans appropriately after annual review.</p> <p>2.The local area partnership should improve access to, and reduce waiting times for, specialist mental health pathways and neurodevelopmental assessments. Leaders should ensure that children and young people and their families consistently receive effective communication and support while waiting for neurodevelopmental assessments.</p> <p>3.The local area partnership should develop better opportunities for co-production with children and young people with SEND, so their voices and views are more fully included in the design of support and services.</p> <p>4.The local area partnership should improve the support for children and young people with SEND as they prepare for adulthood, especially in mainstream schools.</p> <p>5.The local area partnership should improve how it communicates its offer, so that schools, services and families know about and understand what the area seeks to provide. This will mean those who work most closely with children and young people with SEND will be better able to help them access the support available.</p>	<p>In response to the judgement an action has been developed and submitted in June 2025.</p> <p>The Inclusion for All programme will ensure the key elements of the ASEND plan is part of the programme and progress the key areas of improvements required, Regular reporting to the CEF Change Board and the Committee will ensure assurances are provided.</p>	<p>Sarah Callaghan (Service Director for Education)</p>	<p>30/06/2026</p>
<p>Delivery of additional Schools</p> <p>Following the DfE continual delay of the opening of 2 x new special schools a recent update has been received from DfE setting out two options for the Council to consider by end February 2026. An options appraisal is being developed and the appropriate governance will be followed.</p>	<p>A decision will be required by end February 2026.</p>		<p>31/03/2026</p>
<p>Revision of Safety Valve Model</p> <p>Revised Safety Valve Model submitted to the DfE including re-phased savings / potential extension of period of safety valve deal. Awaiting for DfE response.</p>	<p>Revised model submitted alongside with discussions with the DfE</p>	<p>Sarah Callaghan (Service Director for Education)</p>	<p>30/06/2026</p>
<p>Revision of transformation programme to be now the Inclusion for All</p> <p>Programme Board and task & finish groups have been established.</p> <p>In addition, further inspection earlier in 2025 outlined the issues related to Safety Valve.</p>	<p>Regular monitoring and tracking of key actions to ensure progress is being made. Regular updates to be provided at all levels of governance.</p>	<p>Sarah Callaghan (Service Director for Education)</p>	<p>30/06/2026</p>

Risk		03. Risk of significant harm to vulnerable children and young people increases				
Likelihood	5					
	4					
	3					X
	2					
	1					
		1	2	3	4	5
		Consequence				
Risk Owners		Martin Purbrick, Executive Director for Children, Education & Families			Current Score	15
					Risk Appetite	15
					Previous Score	15
		Triggers			Likelihood Factors (Vulnerability)	
		<p>1. High workload in Children's Social Care are in excess of the Council's operating model</p> <p>2. Demand is greater than our capacity</p> <p>3. National initiatives changing the current workforce requirements and model of working</p> <p>4. Reduced universal support through the safeguarding partnership partners</p> <p>5. Lack of financial resilience.</p> <p>6. Non-compliance with safeguarding processes and procedures.</p> <p>7. Inability to recruit and retain experienced Social Care staff leading to challenges in meeting demand</p> <p>8. Lack of placement sufficiency to meet the needs of complex children and young people.</p> <p>9. Major incident results in inability to access Council systems, records or buildings.</p>			<p>Each one below is linked to each of the triggers:</p> <p>1. Children's social care workloads are too high in some areas due to issues with recruitment and retention.</p> <p>2. Difficulty procuring affordable capacity for children's placements. There continues to be a national shortage of foster Carers and affordable Children's Placements (Medium)</p> <p>3. National shortage of recruitment of qualified and experienced social care staff and the competitive marketplace with neighbouring Local Authorities (LA's) (Medium) and retention has improved for those in some teams and more difficult in safeguarding currently. More work is underway for recruitment of permanent social workers (Medium)</p> <p>4. National Reforms influencing future requirements and uncertainty of requirements (Medium)</p> <p>5. Growing demand leading to continued pressure on budgets and exceeding any efficiencies and business planning already made (high)</p>	
					Potential Consequences	
					<p>1. Serious harm to child or young person that could have been prevented</p> <p>2. Reputational damage to the Council.</p> <p>3. Financial impact.</p> <p>4. Appointment of a Children's Commissioner and notice of statutory intervention issued by the Department for Education (DfE)</p> <p>5. Additional external inspection scrutiny</p>	

Controls	Adequacy	Critical Success
<p>1. Multi-agency Safeguarding Boards and Executive Boards.</p> <p>Provides multi agency focus on safeguarding priorities and provides systematic review of safeguarding activity specific safeguarding situation between partners. In February 2025, the joint partnership became a Cambridgeshire specific partnership Board (instead of one board across both Peterborough & Cambridgeshire).</p>	Good	Establishing a Cambridgeshire-specific board will enable greater focus on the needs of Cambridgeshire children and young people, while effectively managing this risk in a more controlled manner. The ILACS inspection of 2024 noted that separation from shared services had led to improvements in outcomes for children. *ILACS - Inspection of Local Authority Children Services
<p>2. Information-sharing and coordinated work between multi-agency partners, providers, and regulators.</p> <p>In particular Police, County Council and other agencies to identify child sexual exploitation, including supporting children and young people transitions to adulthood, with the oversight of the Safeguarding Boards. Regular monitoring of social care providers and information sharing meetings with other local organisations.</p>	Reasonable	Relationships across partners are well established and maintain good working relationships.
<p>3. Comprehensive and up-to-date Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Practice Standards.</p> <p>Continuous process of updating practice and procedures, linking to local and national trends, including learning from local and national reviews such as Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (SPR's).</p>	Good	All policies, procedures and processes are routinely updated and followed within Children's. Implementation of new documentation is clearly communicated to the workforce and ample implementation given to embed.

<p>4. Workforce Training & Development</p> <p>Comprehensive and robust safeguarding training, ongoing development opportunities for staff, and regular supervisions monitor and instil safeguarding procedures and practice.</p>	Good	<p>1. Effective training and development ensures all staff understand and can implement key safeguarding processes.</p> <p>2. Good working relationship with Learning & Development</p> <p>3. Social care academy in place and established to support new and existing workforce in social care.</p> <p>4. Ensuring a comprehensive training offer response to service needs and is able to flex to the requirements of the service.</p>
<p>5. Quality Assurance Framework.</p> <p>Robust process of internal Quality Assurance (QA framework) including case auditing and monitoring of performance.</p>	Good	<p>Recently revised and implemented new practice governance ensuring performance information is more accessible and training has been provided to ensure performance is monitored more closely. In addition, an audit schedule has been reviewed, updated and is underway. QA framework that is understood by all that are using it; reflects the lived experience of children; and helps with practice improvement, whilst supporting practice standards.</p>
<p>6. A clear oversight on practice, quality & performance in Children, Education and Families (CEF)</p> <p>A number of key controls are in place which include, but not limited to: Workforce Strategic Plan, Cambridgeshire Academy for Reaching Excellence (CARE), Recruitment and Retention Strategy, Relational Practice Model (THRIVE approaches), Children's Quality Assurance Framework and greater data availability to ensure performance is measured.</p> <p>In addition, Whistleblowing Policy, robust Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) arrangements and complaints process inform practice.</p>	Good	<p>1. Timeliness & quality of service delivery improvements</p> <p>2. Experiences from Children and Young People provide feedback to influence changes</p> <p>3. The threshold document is adhered too</p> <p>4. The Quality Assurance Framework is being followed</p> <p>5. Improvements made on the OFSTED action plans</p> <p>6. Effective processes for reporting concerns ensure that the response to concerns is timely and effective, with the involvement of appropriate partners.</p> <p>7. There is an effective Dispute Resolution Process in place and utilised when required</p>
<p>7. Strength based approaches review</p> <p>After a review of the family safeguarding approaches, Cambridgeshire has developed a systemic practice model using strength based approaches. Relational Practice Model has been rolled out through the THRIVE approaches. Implementation has been completed, although time to embed is required.</p>	Reasonable	<p>The revised practice model is understood, followed and embedded in the workforce.</p>

Action Plans	Assurance	Responsibility	Target Date
<p>1. Corporate response to Ofsted Inspections</p> <p>Internal audit has completed an audit on the Ofsted Action plan one year after the ILACs inspection and assurances are being provided.</p> <p>Updated self-assessment completed and action plan submitted around the 7 recommendations made by Ofsted, ILACs. the plan is reviewed and actions tracked through the CEF LT meeting. Each recommendation is outlined in the action plan below.</p> <p>An action plan has been submitted in June 2025 following the Area SEND Inspection. The Improvement Plan has also been presented to CYP Committee and update reports will be provided at regular intervals. ASEND Action plan update was provided to CYP Committee in October 2025. CYP Spokes received an update in January 2026 and a Committee update will be provided in April 2026.</p>	<p>Audit actions are underway and progress on Ofsted Actions are being reviewed regularly.</p>	<p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>27/02/2026</p>
<p>1a. Workforce - building the right capacity within the workforce</p> <p>The revised Children's Strategic Workforce Plan has been developed and has been approved through the governance process at CYP Committee November 2024.</p> <p>The action plan outlines activities within Workforce and building the right capacity within the workforce to ensure consistency, quality and timeliness.</p>	<p>Three Drivers from the Workforce Plan is being focused on to ensure progresssion in priority areas</p>	<p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>27/02/2026</p>

<p>1b. Placement Sufficiency (the residential strategy)</p> <p>Placement Sufficiency - One stream of the residential strategy is continuing. This is the London Road project. Additional work around emergency placements, increase of foster-carer and kinship carers is also underway. the placement sufficiency statement is currently developed has now been approved.</p>	<p>London Road project is progressing and the Residential Strategy is being revised.</p>	<p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>27/02/2026</p>
<p>1c. Assessments - additional capacity to improve the quality, consistency and timeliness of assessments</p> <p>Additional capacity to improve the quality, consistency and timeliness of assessments is in place and being recruited to permanently. In addition, Lancashire Council have conducted a sector led improvement review of MASH & Front door and a support plan is being developed and put in place to ensure improvements are being made.</p>	<p>Lancashire SLIP are supporting Cambridgeshire further to progress the support plan agreed.</p>	<p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>27/02/2026</p>
<p>1f. Out of hours support - a review of the out of hours services will be completed</p> <p>An options appraisal and review of the out of hours service has taken place (2024/25). PCC agreed (July 25) to remain in a shared arrangements with CCC and a SLA has been put in place. This has been endorsed by the CCC Change Board in July 25. This has meant that recruitment for a further 10 relief workers to work within the Emergency Duty Team on a rota-basis has been agreed and in ongoing.</p>	<p>Out of Hours work has progressed and implemented with monitoring in place.</p>	<p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>27/02/2026</p>
<p>1g. Homelessness 16/17 year olds - review of this area is planned to ensure a more joined up approach</p> <p>Updated Joint Protocol for Homeless 16 and 17 year olds has been agreed between CCC and the 5 districts and awaits ratification at the Children's Partnership Board on 16/09/2025. The protocol is accompanied by improved paperwork for the triage and joint assessment of homeless teens, to assist with improved practice and recording. Staff from CCC and the 5 districts will be invited to joint briefing sessions in preparation for implementation on 1 October.</p> <p>There remain two key issues to be addressed:</p> <p>Advocacy for children in this situation should be available but has not historically been part of the CCC contract with NYAS.</p> <p>Suitable accommodation for any children requiring emergency accommodation pending a joint housing assessment (and beyond) is a concern due to a lack of sufficiency.</p> <p>Quality Assurance have commenced planned audit in relation to this specific issue</p>	<p>Work with the Districts is being progressed.</p>	<p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>27/02/2026</p>
<p>2. Recruitment of a permanent workforce</p> <p>As part of the children's improvement work, there is a focus on ensuring the recruitment and support of children's workforce. Successful recruitment within management areas with over 90% of permanent Directors, Heads of Services, Service Managers and Team Managers. Over 80% of Social Workers are now permanent</p>	<p>Agency has reduced in recent months and further work is in progress to ensure recruitment is secured.</p>	<p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>27/02/2026</p>
<p>3. Children's Placement Sufficiency.</p> <p>Sufficiency Statement has been published. There has been improved Market engagement and increasing number of Children being placed in Cambridgeshire although 53% are still place in other Local Authority areas. Social Care & Commissioning working more closely together as a strong focus on recruiting in-house foster, showing early signs of success, however, there are still a number of children in unregistered placements</p> <p>Work to manage the local market with support from Commissioning services is underway to support placement sufficiency for Cambridgeshire. This action is likely to remain ongoing. "</p>	<p>Children's placement sufficiency work is underway and external placements is due at CYP Committee in Jun 2026.</p>	<p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>27/02/2026</p>

<p>4. Review of key areas of Children's, Education and Families services</p> <p>The Families First Partnership (FFP) reforms is a government programme to realign better working arrangements for children services, this requires Cambridgeshire to review some of its key areas to better work with each other. In addition, a review of decision making in the MASH and closer integration of Targeted Support and Children in Need work.</p> <p>Essex diagnostics throughout 2023 and 2024 has now been completed. CCC was successful in receiving additional Sector Led Improvement partner work and additional support throughout 2025 is being planned. In December 2025, the DfE outlined the timeline for FFP would be brought forward for a year and further work is underway to consider the impact and implications of this.</p>	<p>FFP placed their submission in December and has general support from the DfE.</p>	<p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>27/02/2026</p>
<p>ASEND Action Plan - following the ASEND inspection, the following have been identified as areas for improvement:</p> <p>There are 3 possible judgements and Cambridgeshire received the 2nd judgement which has made the following recommendations for Cambridgeshire which includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.The local area partnership should work together to improve the timeliness and quality of the statutory Education Health and Care (EHC) plan processes so that children and young people with SEND get the right support at the right time. This should include a particular focus on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a.improving the timeliness of EHC plan needs assessments and annual reviews; b.improving the quality of EHC plans; c.amending EHC plans appropriately after annual review. 2.The local area partnership should improve access to, and reduce waiting times for, specialist mental health pathways and neurodevelopmental assessments. Leaders should ensure that children and young people and their families consistently receive effective communication and support while waiting for neurodevelopmental assessments. 3.The local area partnership should develop better opportunities for co-production with children and young people with SEND, so their voices and views are more fully included in the design of support and services. 4.The local area partnership should improve the support for children and young people with SEND as they prepare for adulthood, especially in mainstream schools. 5.The local area partnership should improve how it communicates its offer, so that schools, services and families know about and understand what the area seeks to provide. This will mean those who work most closely with children and young people with SEND will be better able to help them access the support available. In response to the judgement an action is in development and submitted on 24th June 2025. A full action plan has been developed and is being monitored. 	<p>SEND is being reported regularly to CYP Spokes and a report to the June Committee is due.</p>	<p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>27/02/2026</p>

Risk		04. Inability to meet statutory duties and inspection outcomes across Children Social Care				
Likelihood	5					
	4					
	3					X
	2					
	1					
		1	2	3	4	5
		Consequence				
Risk Owners		Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)			Current Score	15
					Risk Appetite	
					Previous Score	15
		Triggers			Likelihood Factors (Vulnerability)	
		1. Workforce shortages in social care and education transport, including driver and passenger assistant deficits 2. Market dysfunction in external placements, leading to delays and insufficient provision 3. Budgetary pressures from rising costs and increasing demand for specialist services			1. Various government reforms affecting Local Authorities and key Partners may conflict in prioritisation and funding available 2. 3. Increase in demand for children in care placements and not enough market capacity	
		Potential Consequences				
		1. Legal implications under the Children Act 1989, Children and Families Act 2014 and Education Act 1996, if statutory duties are not fulfilled 2. Safeguarding risks due to delayed or inappropriate placements and lack of oversight 3. Ofsted concerns and reputational damage from inadequate service delivery 4. Financial exposure from costly out-of-county placements and inefficient commissioning				

Controls	Adequacy	Critical Success
Children in Care Placements Children in care placements are subjected to governance for external panel for agreement for both accommodation and care packages. In addition work with the residential strategy has paused, although the strategy is being revised to ensure further opportunities for property developments for children residential homes can be developed. All unregistered placements are closely monitored with further support from the service to ensure they are applying to become registered providers.	Reasonable	Children in care are in the right placement at the time they need it. More children in Care are within County
Government Reforms Key Programmes have been applied for the the LGR, Families First Partnership which will deliver the key aspects of the government reforms. Close contact with health as they proceed to deliver on their health reforms, although the implications of this reform is likely to impact on children and young people services.	Good	Reforms are implemented alongside partner engagement and delivered timely to meet the statutory responsibilities required
Ofsted Action Plan The action has been developed to ensure key improvements are underway	Good	Ofsted action plan elements have improved and embedded across CEF
Travel to Learn plan The plan is in development and sets out a different way for delivering services and savings to ensure the budget can be met year on year.	Good	Travel to Learn plan is fully implemented and transport costs and available are stabilised

Action Plans	Assurance	Responsibility	Target Date
CEF awareness of statutory duties All CEF Leaders are fully aware of the statutory responsibilities and being fully monitored.	Through various key programmes based around national reforms: FFP, LGR, Best start in life, SEND reforms and financial diagnostics.	Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)	31/03/2026

<p>Court work</p> <p>Further training is ongoing to ensure the court processes are fully understood and followed</p>	<p>Identified as an area for development and specific training has been undertaken within the relevant service areas to make improvements</p>	<p>Nigel Denning (Service Director, Targeted Support & Children Social Care)</p>	<p>31/03/2026</p>
<p>Families First Partnership</p> <p>This reform has a programme which alters elements of statutory duties. The programme is developed and co-design of services is underway.</p>	<p>Service redesign considers the statutory responsibilities in this area and how it is delivered.</p>	<p>Nigel Denning (Service Director, Targeted Support & Children Social Care)</p>	<p>30/06/2026</p>
<p>Inspection Preparation work</p> <p>Further work to ensure preparation for unexpected inspections which may occur in the future is in place</p>	<p>All preparation work has been complete to ensure readiness for inspections.</p>	<p>Denise Revens (Directors Office)</p>	<p>30/10/2026</p>
<p>Overview of reforms:</p> <p>Mapping of key partner reforms affecting CYP is underway and development of multi-agency outcomes framework has started through the Children's Rapid Improvement Board</p>	<p>Partners are agreed to an approach which would pull together areas of similarities to work through a joint outcomes framework in areas where it makes sense to do so.</p>	<p>Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)</p>	<p>31/03/2026</p>

Risk		05. Services are unable to manage demand and workloads within existing capacity across children, education and families				
Likelihood	5					
	4					
	3				X	
	2					
	1					
		1	2	3	4	5
		Consequence				
Risk Owners		Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)			Current Score	12
					Risk Appetite	
					Previous Score	12
		Triggers			Likelihood Factors (Vulnerability)	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. . Increased number of workforce vacancies in critical services such as Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), front door services etc 2. Increase cost and reliance on agency workers 3. Gaps in recruitment as seen across national labour workforces 4. Unmanageable caseloads within key teams 5. Increase in staffing sickness levels 6. A number of government reforms such as Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), Families First Partnership (FFP), Health Reforms is a moving landscape 7. Emerging changes from children service requirements 8. Working on the improvements from the Ofsted inspections in 2024 & 2025. 9. Changes in practice and approaches 10. More emphasis to focus on narrowing the budget gap 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in permanent workforce has been progressing 2. Less reliance on agency workers (reduced from 39% to now 19% in many areas. 3. A gap occurring in experienced staff as more emphasis on growing our own workforce 4. Reforms work have commenced and are underway and being well managed. 5. Budget gaps are emerging 6. Staff turnover is occurring 	
					Potential Consequences	
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased risk of unsafe services without experience workforce 2. Inconsistent practice 3. Lack of improvement to outcomes for children and young people 4. Failure to meet OfSTED requirements and improvements required. 5. Low morale and demotivated staff delivering poorer outcomes. 6. Poorer services 7. Savings targets not delivered. 8. Transformative change not delivered 9. Inefficient services 	

Controls	Adequacy	Critical Success
ASYE Scheme & Apprenticeships Continue to recruit and support the newly qualified social care workforce and encourage in-house apprenticeships	Good	These recruits become qualified and confident in their workplace.
Communications: Communication with the workforce is regular and has recently been reviewed to ensure a better variety and frequency of communications to staff, including a fortnightly newsletter, virtual staff forums', drop-in sessions in offices with staff etc	Reasonable	Staff are well informed and engaged and share a common understanding of key priorities
Improvements: CEF annual self-assessment is updated and updates on the ofsted action plan is being reported monthly through the CEF Change Board and the Extended CEF Leadership Team, following the audit recently.	Good	The self-assessment priorities for the next 12 months are delivered
Recruitment & Retention Strategy The development of a clear recruitment and retention strategy	Poor	Permanent workforce is place with minimal use of agency staff
Recruitment International Social Workers A number of international social workers recruited during 2024 has been completed	Good	International social workers are recruited and supported across Cambridgeshire and become fully integrated with the workforce
Social work academy Cambridgeshire's Academy in Reaching Excellence (CARE) to deliver across all Children, Education & Families (CEF) service areas from 2024 has been launched and a phased approach in delivering this to the workforce.	Reasonable	All staff are trained through the CARE academy

<p>Social Worker recruitment</p> <p>Increase in permanent workforce, particularly in front-door services has recently been successful which should see improved practice and consistency and therefore greater efficiency within the workforce</p>	Good	Permanent workforce in place and embedded across Cambridgeshire
<p>Workforce Development framework and action plan</p> <p>The implementation of a clear outline the workforce framework for children, education and families for all staff has been updated and reflect revised practice and standards. This also includes the support elements for existing workforce. A need to allow time to embed into services.</p>	Reasonable	The action plan is fully delivered
<p>Workforce impact on reform changes:</p> <p>Key programmes and projects align to consider impact on service delivery, including staff and CYP.</p>	Reasonable	Change is managed well and the workforce responds positively to the changing landscape.

Action Plans	Assurance	Responsibility	Target Date
<p>Recruitment campaigns</p> <p>Sanctuary recruitment company commissioned on a 12-month contract for attracting social workers into Cambridgeshire and have started to see additional resources</p>	Further work is required and a meeting is due to take place to further explore this further	Caroline Adu-Bonsra (Head of HR and Recruitment)	31/03/2026
<p>Sector Led Improvement Support</p> <p>SLI Partners (Essex & Lancs) are supporting the improvement journey particularly with workforce development opportunities on systemic training and with the improvements for the integrated front door.</p>	Learning is reflected into work based practice improvements	Nigel Denning (Service Director, Targeted Support & Children Social Care) Denise Revens (Directors Office)	31/03/2026
<p>Service Redesign work - Families First Partnership</p> <p>Key service redesign work is being developed to ensure capacity can be in place</p>	Families First Partnership reforms are providing additional capacity to understand the service redesign for CEF	Nigel Denning (Service Director, Targeted Support & Children Social Care)	30/06/2026
<p>The MASH capability and capacity will be considered further as part of the Families First Programme Implementation.</p> <p>Additional resources have been agreed and recruitment for MASH has started and will be ongoing as part of the service redesign</p>	SLIP and Families First Governance	Nigel Denning (Service Director, Targeted Support & Children Social Care)	31/03/2026
<p>Workforce action plan</p> <p>Workforce action plan has been developed on key areas to focus on to embed good practice and attract workforce into Cambridgeshire. This has been reworked and further focus on key drivers to make key improvements are underway.</p>	Practice approaches have been fully embedded across CEF	Martin Purbrick (Executive Director for Children, Education and Families)	31/03/2026

Risk		06. Non-delivery of the Early Years and Education System (EYES) Implementation																					
Likelihood	5											Risk Owners	Sarah Callaghan (Service Director for Education)		Current Score	15	Last Review	10/12/2025					
	4												Risk Appetite		Next Review	10/03/2026							
	3										X	Triggers	1. Timelines and milestones are not met for implementation to take place 2. Planned testing highlights significant issues for full implementation 3. Provider unable to deliver			Likelihood Factors (Vulnerability)		Potential Consequences					
	2																			1. August deadline has not been met due to testing highlighting key issues 2. New programme ahs been reconfigured for delivery by June 2026.		1. Delays in the implementation leads to financial impact 2. Case management system	
	1																						
	1	2	3	4	5																		
Consequence																							

Controls	Adequacy	Critical Success
Capacity to successfully deliver Review/optmise resource allocation, prioritising key milestones and deliverables Provide support/training to existing staff to improve efficiency Monitor morale and implement well-being initiatives Implement Operational Oversight to regularly update SRO on progress and delivery timelines	Good	Resources are available and in place
Data Quality Implement automated validation checks for regular (weekly) data migration process Engage data owners/SMEs throughout the process Document and communicate data quality monitoring through governance controls for ongoing quality assurance	Reasonable	Data quality testing highlights data quality is reasonable
External suppliers Set clear service level agreements (SLAs) with suppliers, including delivery timelines and penalties Regularly review supplier performance and hold escalation meetings for non-compliance	Good	A new case management system will be in place and full working order.
Programme plan has been re-baselined and realigned The EYES programme has been re-baselined and aligned for delivery in June 2026. Additional financial capital funding is required and was agreed in October 2025.	Good	A new case management system will be in place and full working order.

Action Plans	Assurance	Responsibility	Target Date
All service areas training completed	All services are adequately trained	Sarah Callaghan (Service Director for Education) IT Lead - Head of Projects and Programmes	22/05/2026
Dry run for go-live	Dry run complete and areas of errors outlined	IT Lead (Head of Projects and Programmes)	05/05/2026

Final data extract from CapitaOne and Impulse Nexus completed	Data extracted successfully	IT Lead (Head of Projects and Programmes)	05/06/2026
Formal round of Testing migrated data and config across services Completed	Migrated data has been tested and configured across Services	IT Lead (Head of Projects and Programmes)	04/03/2026
Formal round of testing migrated data and configuration across services completed	Testing complete and data errors amended.	IT Lead (Head of Projects and Programmes)	30/04/2026
Go-live is completed	Go-live weekend for configuration of EYES	IT Lead (Head of Projects and Programmes)	08/06/2026
Reconfiguration of the programme The programme has been re-baselined for the new go live date June 2026.	The realigned timeline has been approved by all governance areas	Sarah Callaghan (Service Director for Education) IT Lead (Head of Projects and Programmes)	30/06/2026
Training Materials amended and signed off	Training materials reflects sign off and ready for use.	Sarah Callaghan (Service Director for Education)	27/02/2026