

East Midlands Sector Led Improvement in Children's Services

Plan for joint-work between the nine Local Authorities August 2015 – July 2016



Status: This draft version of the plan is presented at 18/9/15 meeting for final development by the EM DCS group to be shared thereafter with Lead Members for advice and support at their 25/9/15 meeting.

Governance: The EM DCS group provide the governance for this plan in partnership with Lead Members. The lead role for sector-led improvement in these groups is:

Lead DCS: Alex Hopkins, Northamptonshire

Lead Member: Cllr Patricia Bradwell, Lincolnshire

During Spring 2015 a revised Memorandum of Understanding secured the on-going commitment of the nine LAs to this approach

EM DCS Meetings 2015/16

The schedule of EM DCS meetings at which oversight of the regional joint-work within this plan is exercised, including some partnership activity, is as follows:

- Friday 18th Sept 2015 10.00am – 3.00pm

Monday 9th Nov **Schedule of meetings for DCSs and Lead Members**

12.00 – 2.00 Seminar on 'all age approaches to disability, incl. transition' with DCSs, DASSs, plus three sets of Lead Members: Childrens, ASC and HWB
Andy Smith (DCS Derby) to plan/lead with Glen Garrod (DASS Lincs)

2.00 – 4.00 DCSs and Children's Lead Members session on 'demand management'
Updates (4 summary slides) from 9 x LAs on:

- The numbers trend behind rises in demand for services
- The % budget challenge being faced
- The issues driving up demand and costs
- Practical steps you are starting to take

Presentations from Lincolnshire, Nottingham and Derbyshire on specific approaches to maintain investment in early intervention to reduce escalation costs

LGA input on national picture relating to the costs of categorisation/failure

Discussion: "Supporting the budgetary case for children's services"

4.00 – 4.30 Any outstanding EM DCS business

- Friday 8th Jan incl. session with Improvement Leads
- Monday 14th March Proposed schedule tbc
 - 12.00 – 2.00 Seminar with LSCB Chairs and 2nd Tier Safeguarding Leads
 - 2.00 – 4.00 EM DCSs business meeting
- Friday 13th May
- Friday 22nd July DCS Peer Challenge day
- Friday 2nd Sept 2016
- Mon 7th Nov pm (similar to Nov 2015?)
- Friday 13th Jan 2017
- Mon 20th March (similar to Nov 2016?)



Self Assessments and DCS Peer Challenge

LAs completed self assessments in May 2015.

These were used as the basis for peer challenge in LA trio groups, both by LA Improvement Leads and by DCSs at their annual summit in July. The identified local priorities within each self assessment and the proposed lines of enquiry for further peer challenge, inform the regional priorities that underpin this plan, see overleaf.

The self assessment be reviewed early in 2016 and then used within a similar process, i.e. submission by end of May 2016 for challenge processes over the summer period.

Priorities to underpin regional plan 2015/16

The following priorities have emerged from the 2015 peer challenge processes as ones to underpin the next phase of joint-work undertaken across the region. Regional networks are asked to consider how they can make an effective contribution to these priorities.

Suggested priorities and themes	Linked DCS	Linked LM?	Outcomes to be achieved this year	Any £ impact
a) Tackling social work and wider workforce challenges	Lesley Hagger (Leics)	Cllr Kate Foale (Notts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Image of children's social work Professional development of the wider children's workforce 	
b) Supporting the implementation of SEND reforms	Tim O'Neill (Rutland)	Cllrs Richard Foster (Rutland) and Ivan Ould (Leics)		
c) Achieving consistently high standards in the work of all partner organisations to combat CSE	Andy Smith (Derby)	Cllr David Mellen (Nottm)		
e) Further developing a partnership-led school system that tackles educational priorities effectively	Frances Craven (Leicester) Debbie Barnes (Lincs)	Cllrs Heather Smith and Matt Golby (Northants)		
f) Influencing public expectations/demand for LA-funded services	Alison Michalska (Nottm)	Cllr Tricia Bradwell (Lincs) tbc		



Peer Challenge Team Reviews (PCTR)

It has been agreed to continue with a strong regional scheme of peer challenge with DCS-led teams of ~5 senior leaders, selected from at least two LA areas, generally including Lead Members (of the Lead DCS) and involving additional colleagues as appropriate to the theme, e.g. LSCB Chair, Headteachers.

PCTRs generally last for three days.

The agreed schedule is as follows:

LA to receive PCTR	Lead DCS	QA DCS	Date	KLoE
Nottingham	Lesley	Andy	10-12 Aug 2015	Early intervention linking to social care, plus CiC, CP
Leicestershire	Andy	Alison	3-5 Nov 2015	Effectiveness of improvement activity
Rutland	Debbie	Derek/Colin	17-19 Nov 2015	tba
Nottinghamshire	Tim	Debbie	Jan-Mar 2016	tba
Northamptonshire	Frances	Ian	Apr-May 2016	tba
Derby	Alison	Lesley	Jun-Aug 2016	tba
Derbyshire	Alex	Frances	Sept-Oct 2016	tba
Lincolnshire	Colin	Tim	Nov-Dec 2016	tba
Leicester	Ian	Alex	Jan-Feb 2017	tba



Safeguarding Assurance Visits (SAV) including SAV MAX

The 2nd Tier group of Safeguarding Leads co-ordinate and deliver a programme of (generally) one day peer challenge visits to focus upon social care issues, generally front door arrangements, thresholds, quality assurance or an associated targeted improvement priority.

Teams are AD-led, with ~3 senior colleagues.

SAV MAX An exceptional form of the SAV has been developed to support LAs in special circumstances where a more thorough scrutiny of a significant improvement issue is warranted, typically deploying a larger team over a longer time period.

Case audits within SAVs will start to use the tool developed between Ofsted and Northamptonshire

The current cycle of SAVs and SAV MAX is as follows

LA to receive SAV	Lead AD	Date
Northamptonshire SAV MAX	Stuart and Janice (Lincs) Mel (Derbyshire)	May 2015
Leicestershire	Helen (Nottingham)	June 2015
Derby	Steve (Nottinghamshire)	July 2015
Rutland	Mel (Derbyshire)	November 2015
Nottingham	Maureen (Derby)	Autumn 2015
Lincolnshire	Walter (Leicestershire)	Autumn 2015

Derbyshire	Clair (Leicester)	Autumn 2015
Leicester SAV MAX	Janice (Lincolnshire) +	February 2016
Nottinghamshire	Satinder (Northamptonshire)	February 2016



Regional pool of peer challengers

All LAs have agreed to field senior members of staff to join peer challenge teams for PCTRs and SAVs.

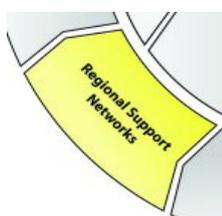
The backing of senior managers is required prior to involvement and an online expression of interest form feeds into a regional database that holds these pool details (www.surveymonkey.com/s/EastMidlandsPeerChallenge)

Just over 100 colleagues are currently on the pool list. Experience has shown that the improvement benefits are most definitely two-way, although care is taken to not 'over-use' colleagues to the detriment of their job role.

Training is provided twice annually in the regional arrangements and the key skills and qualities identified within effective peer challenge. **Wed 7th October and February 2016 tba**

Leadership and Succession Planning

There are no specific initiatives organised within this current regional plan to develop leadership through a collaborative approach. However, in previous years the ALISCE programme and social work leadership programmes have been organised in this manner.



Regional Networks

Regional networks that bring together key groups of professionals for joint improvement work and professional learning sit at the heart of this regional plan.

Over recent months almost all have revisited their Terms of Reference and have updated their work plans, reported through the structure depicted below. Groups are also asked to make a contribution to the regional priorities, wherever appropriate.

The group for Lead Members is supported by LGA as part of their regional support work.

The following three 'upper tier' groups link directly with a DCS and then, in turn, these groups oversee the work programmes of a number of associated groups of colleagues

	Safeguarding and Early Help	EMSIG Schools and Learning	Commissioning
Chair	Walter (Leics)	Kathryn (Derbyshire)	Frank (Derby)
Linked DCS	Ian	Frances	Debbie

Associated regional groups (usually at HoS level)	3 rd Tier SG Leads LSCB Managers Adoption Leads IRO Managers CME Leads (with WM) Young Carers	SEN Strategic Leads Early Years Leads EMRAG Admissions Virtual Heads	Participation Leads 14-19 Leads
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In addition, the DCSs are supporting the development of two further strategic regional groups:

- **Workforce development** (Lead DCS, Lesley)
- **Improvement and Data Leads** (Lead DCS, Alex)



Sharing information online

Further information about many of the regional groups can be found at www.sectorledimprovement.co.uk

This site provides a place for sharing resources. Some regional groups use this facility and presentations from most previous seminars (going back to 2005) are also there.

During autumn 2015 a **forum** tool will be added to the site for online discussions

The proposed Workforce portal (see Project section below) will also be housed within this site



Regional seminars

Seminars are convened from time to time where they can make a specific contribution to regional priorities. Two seminars are currently being planned:

Developing regional standards for organisations dealing with Child Sexual Exploitation Friday 9th October (all day event)

Invited audience

Progress with implementation of SEND reforms and inspection readiness

Part A: LA Leads to share implementation challenges/progress

Part B: Wider audience to support partnership approach and inspection readiness

(Incl health, Lead Members, adult leads, Improvement/QA leads, special school heads)

Being arranged for early in 2016



Regional Projects

A number of projects currently receive DCS endorsement to instigate specific changes from which all LAs can benefit. Sometimes these projects require additional resources, either in agreed time for lead colleagues or for funding from the regional pot or through additional pooling.

At present the following agreed project work is underway.

CSE Standards

Developing standards that support consistent quality of practice across all partner organisations. A set of proposed standards will be introduced at 9th October seminar

Qualified Social Workers Memorandum of Co-operation (QSW MoC)

A two-phased programme of work to tackle the quality, quantity, price and availability of social workers, especially in relation to agency work. The sign-off phase should be reached later in autumn 2015 for immediate implementation of phase one.

Regional Framework

A replacement regional procurement framework for private sector fostering and specialist residential placements. This updates the previous framework with more dynamic processes. The tender process is currently live, with all LAs involved and therefore able to utilise the framework. Therapeutic work and SEN provision to be considered next as framework extension.

Alongside this framework, it has been agreed to pursue actions that can lead to far more inter-LA in-region specialist commissioning from each other that reduces the need to go to market.

Workforce

To develop a website linked to our regional site that holds and hosts a platform of support for the development of the children's workforce. DCSs have agreed to fund the start of this work, but to develop it as a national resource to which other LAs can subscribe.

To stimulate a national programme of work that leads to the development of a modular professional qualification for the children's workforce that sits alongside and complements social work.