

# Safe Reduction of Looked After Children

**Swansea**

April 2019



Cyngor **Abertawe**  
**Swansea** Council



# Safe Reduction of Looked After Children

## Swansea CFS vision

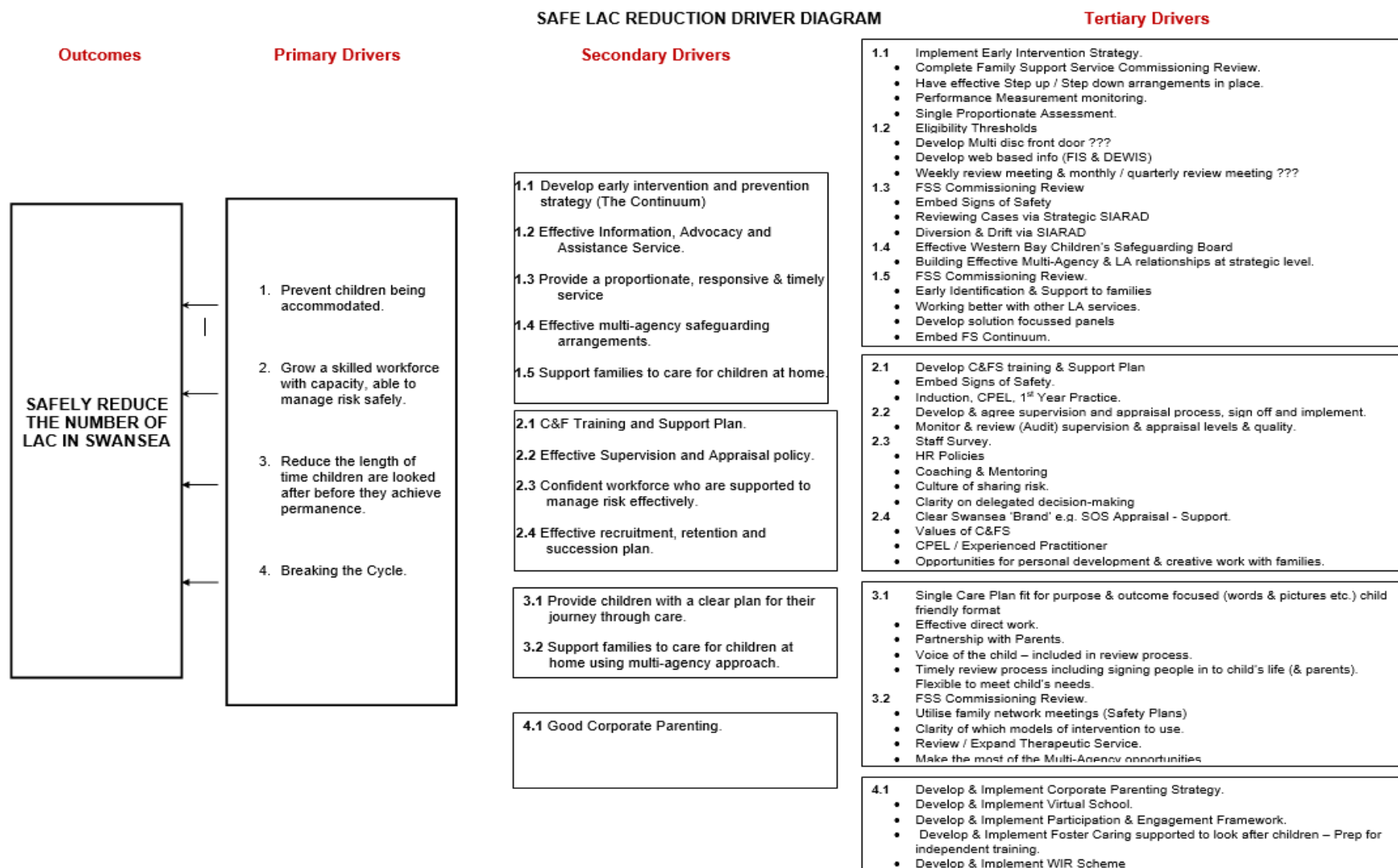
Vulnerable children are safeguarded, live within permanent, stable, secure and loving families (cared for by their birth family and within their community of origin whenever possible) which provide opportunities for success and a content and healthy adulthood where they can fully participate in what life has to offer.

# Safe Reduction of Looked After Children

## CIW Inspection Report August 2018

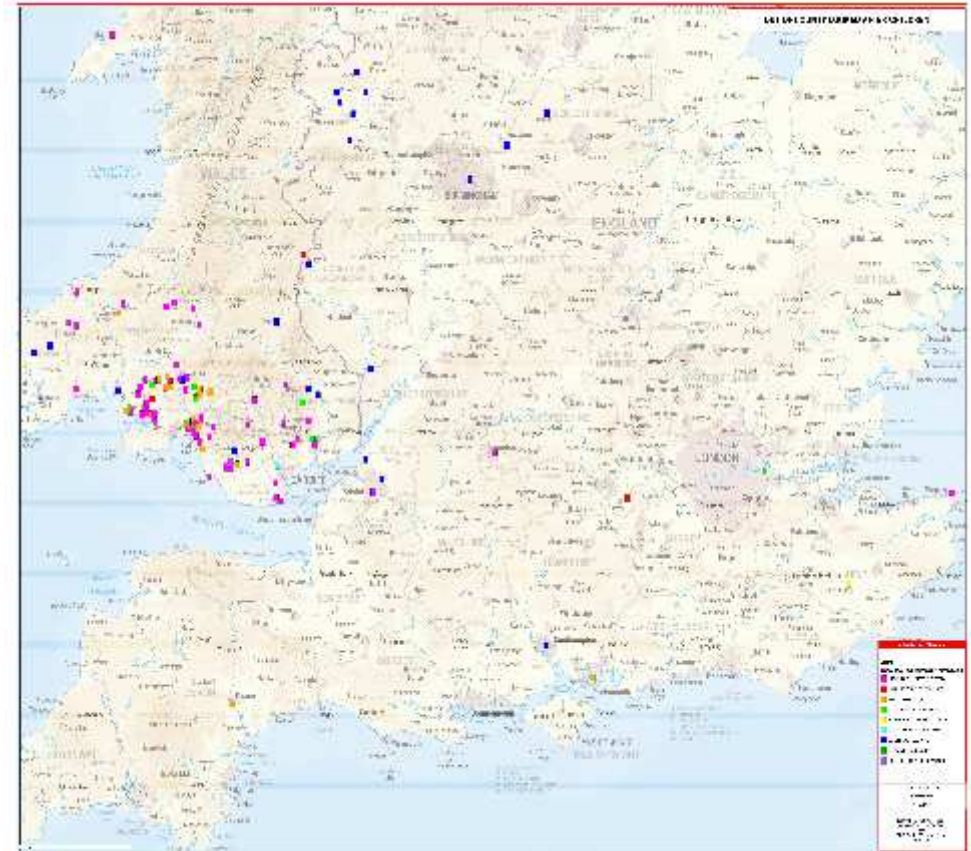
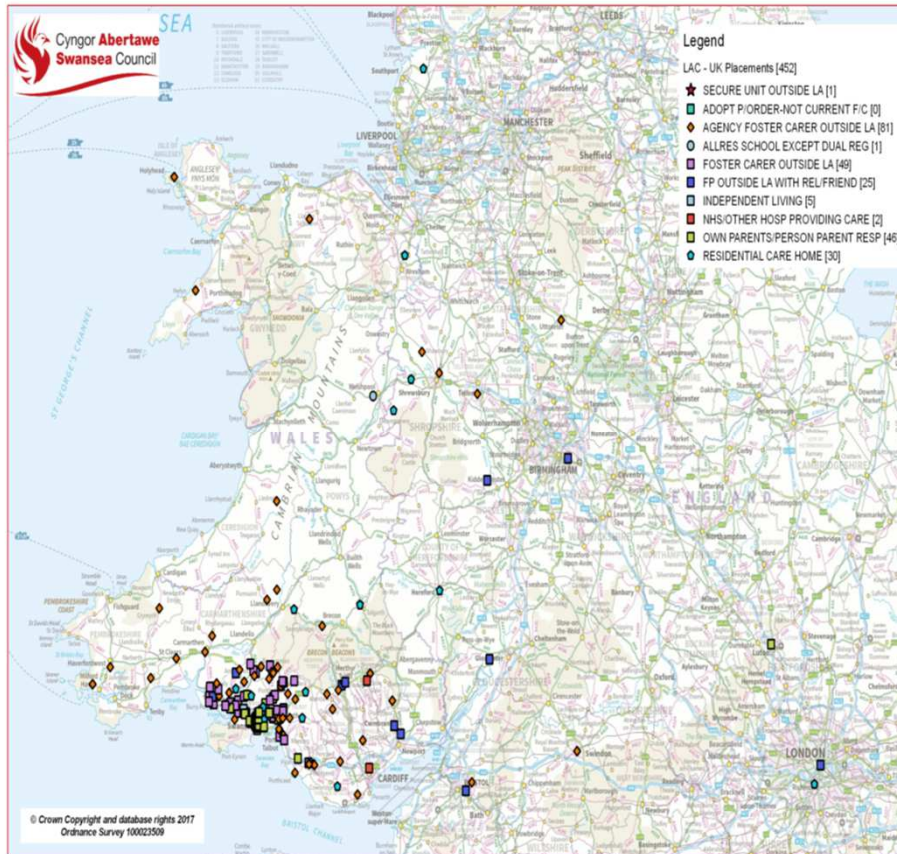
‘The local authority’s vision for children and young people was well-established, corporately owned and invested in throughout the authority. Elected members were committed to delivering positive outcomes for children and had a clear understanding of their role.’

# Safe Reduction of Looked After Children



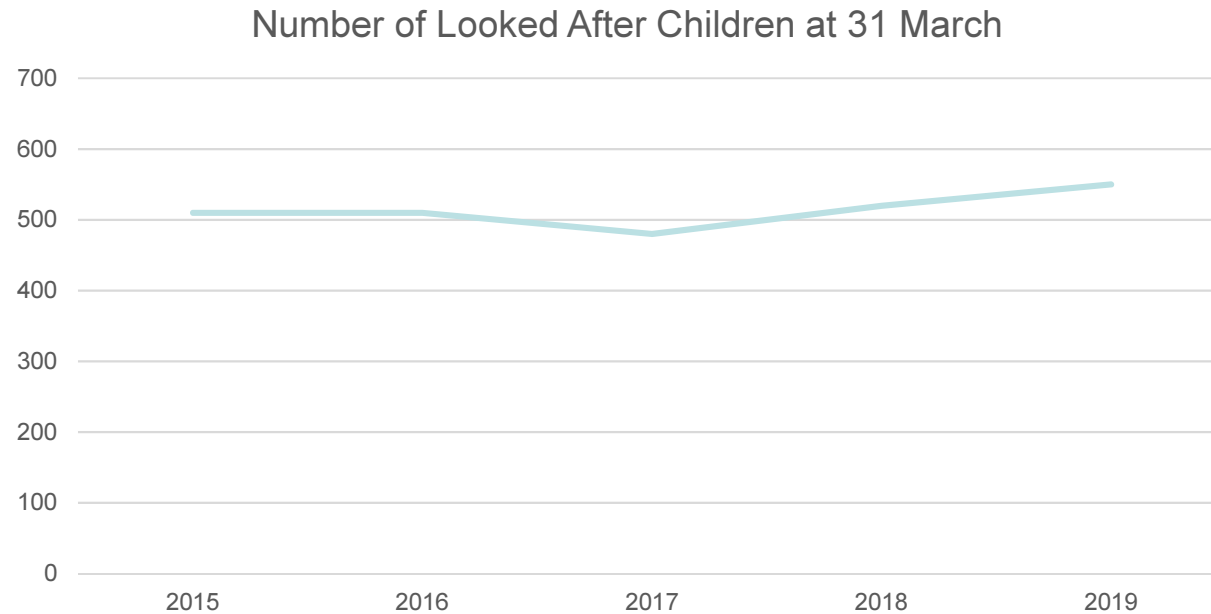


# Context

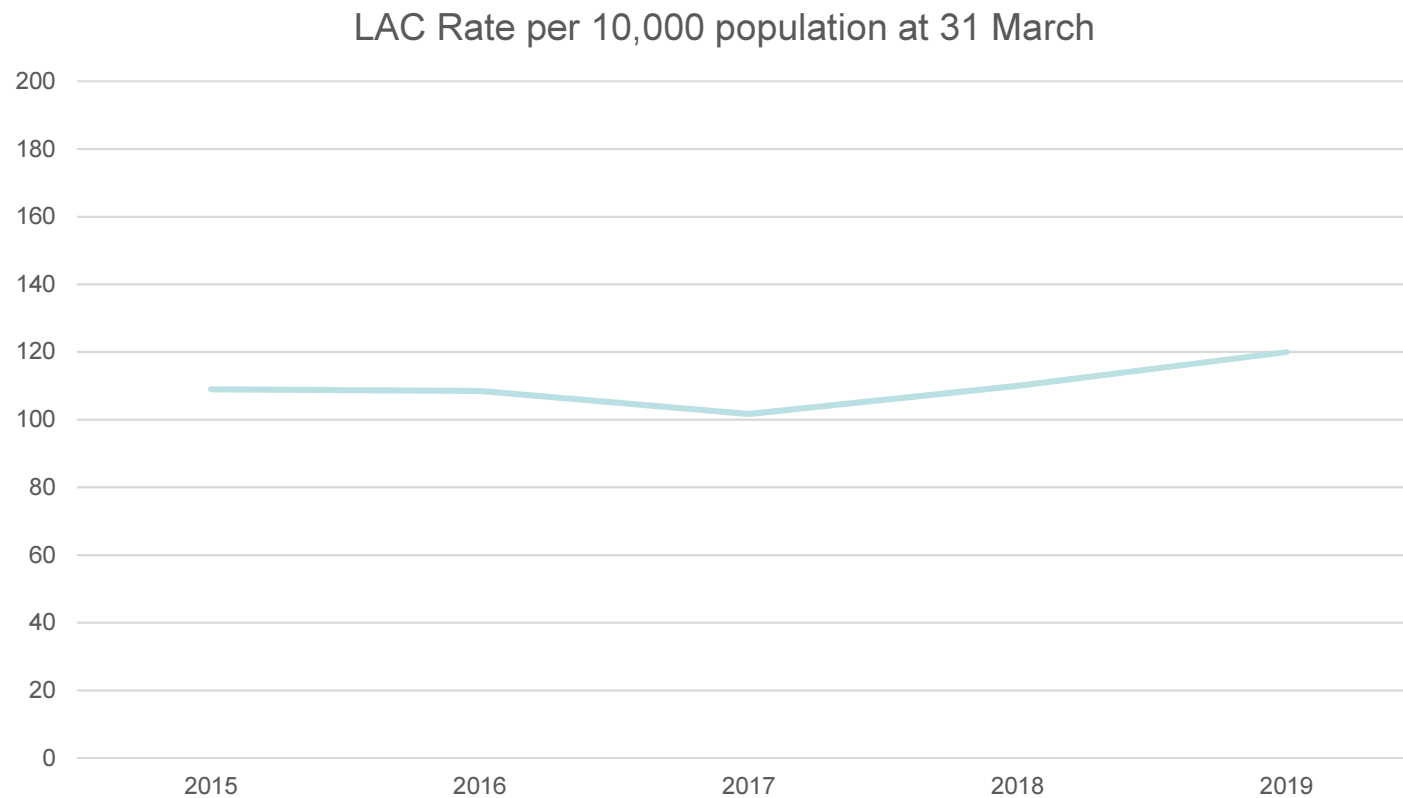


# Safe Reduction of Looked After Children

## Reducing the need for children to enter care



# Rate per 10,000 graph





# Safe reduction of looked after children

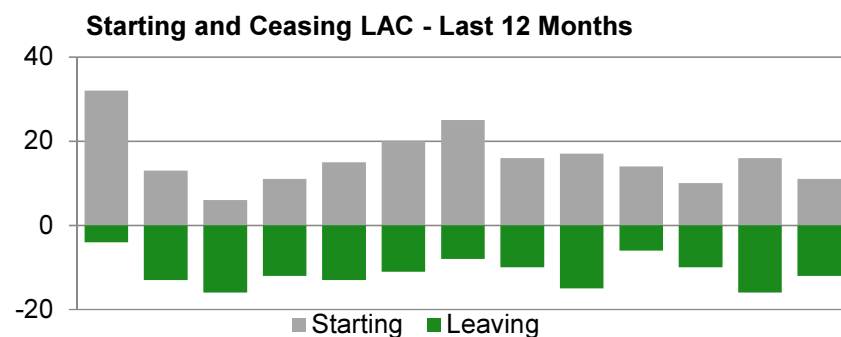
‘After a period which had seen a reduction in the number of children looked after by the local authority in line with the objectives of its safe reduction strategy, there had been an overall rise during 2017/18. The local authority has worked hard to understand and analyse the reasons behind these recent trends, and to utilise this information to inform future policy and practice.’

‘The authority had worked hard to increase the proportion of children and young people placed with in-house foster carer placements as opposed to being placed outside of the local authority. We saw that attempts were consistently made to maintain children within their families, where this was in their best interests.’

CIW Inspection report – august 2018

# Number of children starting to become LAC

## February Performance Graph



Age Profile of Children Starting LAC

Month	Age at LAC Start				
	Under 1	1 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	16 to 17
Jan-17	2	5	6	2	0
Feb-17	2	2	5	4	0
Mar-17	3	5	2	6	0
Apr-17	0	6	2	5	0
May-17	4	6	9	4	0
Jun-17	4	4	3	8	1
Jul-17	2	1	2	4	0
Aug-17	3	3	2	7	1
Sep-17	1	3	0	5	1
Oct-17	1	3	4	9	1
Nov-17	7	6	5	9	2
Dec-17	3	3	4	3	2
Jan-18	5	9	4	2	0
Feb-18	7	4	7	12	1
Mar-18	7	5	1	2	1
Apr-18	5	0	0	2	0
May-18	3	3	3	1	1
Jun-18	5	3	4	3	0
Jul-18	3	9	4	5	0
Aug-18	7	4	7	5	0
Sep-18	5	6	5	3	1
Oct-18	4	3	1	6	2
Nov-18	1	7	5	4	0
Dec-18	5	3	0	3	1

# Rate of Emergency Admissions

## 2017

Month	Number of new admissions	Number of emergency placements	% of new admissions that were emergency
January	11	9	81%
February	12	11	92%
March	13	13	100%
April	7	3	43%
May	18	14	78%
June	14	6	43%
July	8	4	50%
August	11	7	64%
September	7	3	43%
October	8	5	63%
November	18	8	44%
December	15	4	27%

## 2018

Month	Number of new admissions	Number of emergency placements	% of new admissions that were emergency
January	11	3	27%
February	22	17	77%
March	15	10	67%
April	9	3	33%
May	10	7	70%
June	7	6	86%
July	21	17	81%
August	12	4	33%
September	16	7	44%
October	10	2	20%
November	9	3	33%
December	9	3	33%

## 2019

Month	Number of new admissions	Number of emergency placements	% of new admissions that were emergency
January	15	5	33%
February	9	1	13%
March	3 to date (as of 11 March)	0	0%

## Parental factors recorded for children looked after

Factor	Count	Percentage
YOS	7	1.82%
Parental Substance Misuse	139	36.10%
Parental Learning Difficulties	30	7.79%
Parental Mental Health	143	37.14%
Parental Physical Ill Health	18	4.68%
Parental Domestic Abuse	155	40.26%

# Drivers

- ACE's
- Substance use
- Mental health
- Domestic violence
- County lines
- CSE – 12 young people
- Partners – risk averse culture – Police, schools
- Reduced timetables

# Service Development

- Taf, flying start, Jigso, ELDT, young people's services, FWT
- DV Hub – welsh audit office
- Systems review 2017 – multi agency IAA
- SCP redesign – reclaiming SW model
- FIT, IFSS, Flexi service, - edge of care
- Reflect
- Evidence models of intervention
- Internal therapy team
- MAPSS
- PAC
- Respite – including disability/ PAC community
- Relocation of residential home and outreach
- Resource centre



# Service Development

- Review of family support services 2017 – single structure and graduated response (transformation fund)
- Early help services – moved into CFS
- Hub and spoke model – ICF grant
- Family finding – invest to save grant
- Contextual safeguarding – invest to save grant
- Local offer – adoption ICF grant

# Managing Risk

- Weekly/monthly review meetings - MA
- SOS practice framework – risk averse to risk sensible - scaling
- Development of SOW in early help
- Reflective group supervision
- Bi weekly hub managers case specific reflective supervision
- Learning events – Practice lead workshops
- DAAP – solution focused with challenge about safety and outcomes
- LGM

# Inspection Feedback August 2018

‘Swansea Council’s Signs of Safety (SOS) approach, which underpinned their assessments as well as safeguarding and care planning, provided a detailed framework which was well understood by staff, and clearly prioritised risk.’

‘The recently piloted ‘signs of well-being’ framework introduces the potential for greater flexibility, where the assessed need of children and families does not include safeguarding elements.’

# Inspection feedback-august 2018

‘Care and support planning is underpinned by the Signs of Safety framework. We saw social workers were confident in their implementation of this model, which offered a positive, solution focused methodology within a consistent and well understood structure. Many of the care and support plans and pathway plans we saw were detailed, of good quality, and in many cases reflected the direct work undertaken with children, young people and their families. We saw that sharing the direct work social workers had undertaken with individual children, for example through ‘words and pictures’ could have a powerful impact when wider family members were involved in this process. Mapping and scaling, when used effectively with children and families, were helpful in agreeing next steps with families and wider safety networks.’

# Placement Sufficiency

- Placement sufficiency strategy
- Market position statement
- Commissioning hub
- Preferred providers
- Foster Swansea recruitment and retention strategy – fee framework
- Dedicated Kinship care team
- SGO regional project and fee review
- Family network meetings
- IPC project on care packages

# Exit Strategies

- Performance Hub
- Permanence panel – Key mechanism for preventing drift
- Weekly permanence POG – tracks residential/IFA
- Adoption – twin tracking, assessment timescales and targets.....
- Bays+ at Infonation – integrated service for care leavers



# Managing the Business

- SOS/SOW practice framework
- Principal SW who drives and evaluates practice
- WCCIS opportunities – reducing bureaucracy, wellbeing wheel, outcome focus
- Comprehensive QAMPF framework
- Financial tracker with clear targets – CMT/member briefings/scrutiny
- Monthly performance report - SMT
- Strategic POG/Weekly permanence POG

# Managing the Business

- No agency staff for five years
- Induction programme
- Wellbeing strategy for staff
- YOS moving back to CFS
- Schools
- Health – CAMHS
- Housing
- Third sector

# Managing the business

‘Swansea Council children’s services have a relatively stable and resilient workforce that is committed to being child focused, and is passionate about keeping families together and achieving good outcomes for children. Staff consistently told us they enjoyed working for the local authority where there was a culture of support which they valued. The accessibility and visibility of the Principal Officers and the Head of Children’s Services was appreciated. Individual good practice was acknowledged by senior managers and we saw examples of emails sent to individual members of staff from both the Head of Service and the Director reflecting this.’

CIW Inspection report – august 2018

# Managing the Business

‘Children’s services are effectively led with confidence by an experienced Head of Service and management team who managed change well. Staff were dedicated and resilient, they valued the culture of team support within which they worked, and the accessibility of their managers.’

CIW inspection report – august 2018

# Managing the Business

## Corporate Parenting Strategy

To support families to stay together and reduce the need for children to be looked after by ensuring a focus on early intervention and prevention.

- To manage risk confidently and provide support at the edge of care to make sure that children who need to, come into care at the right time.
- To provide and commission a flexible and affordable mix of high quality placements to support all children to have positive experiences in care, whatever their needs and for them to be cared for in family placements within Swansea as long as this is consistent with their needs.
- To ensure all looked after children get a good education, whether this is in mainstream, specialist schools or in alternative arrangements.
- To ensure the health needs of looked after children are provided for, that their health needs are understood through a good quality health assessment and plan.
- To ensure that looked after children get access to cultural and leisure opportunities
- To give children clearly planned journeys through care which enable them to be reunited with family and friends where possible, have stable placements and exit the care system positively.
- To enable Looked after children to participate fully in decision making and service design

‘The authority was proactive in recognising and acting upon its wider role as a corporate parent’



# How do we know our children are happy?

## Bright spots survey 2018

- 80% of children felt their lives are improving
- All children aged 4-11 and 89% of those aged 11/18 had an adult they could trust
- Most children feel safe and settled in their placement
- 86% of children aged 8-18 yrs felt included in SW decision making most or some of the time
- The majority of children who answered the survey said they 'felt happy' the day before completing the survey
- 57% of children scored highly when asked if the things they do are worthwhile
- 68% of children were positive about their future



# How do we know our children are happy?

- Participation forums
- Big conversation events
- Supper clubs
- Child seen/alone performance
- Direct work tools

‘Children and young people we heard from were generally positive about the support they received, and were appreciative of the relationships established with individual social workers.’

CIW inspection report – August 2018