



Doncaster  
Children's  
Services Trust

# Business Plan

## 2016-2019



To be an outstanding partner and provider of services to children, young people and families

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## Forward

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We are pleased to share with you our business plan for Doncaster Children's Services Trust.

Our work is pioneering. Our approach is innovative. Our pace is swift. During these past 18 months we have taken some significant steps on our journey towards delivering 'outstanding' children's services, improving services that support children and young people in Doncaster.

We are seeing better impacts for children and families, a re-energised the workforce, strengthened partnership working with stronger leverage and challenge. Our strengthen capacity means we are able to be innovators and contribute locally and nationally to the enhanced reputation and value of social work.

Our workforce is the key to our success. We have invested significantly in developing their skills and talents so we can improve our practice. It is right, therefore, that this continues to be a key focus going forward.

We are pleased with our progress, but not yet satisfied. Improving the quality of practice and delivering 'outstanding' services for children, young people and families in Doncaster is our key priorities.

In order to thrive we need the Trust to grow. Our business plan sets out our ambitions to extend and to take on joint provision with other partners across other closely linked disciplines.

We are confident that if we deliver the commitments set out in our business plan, we will meet our ambition to ensure that every child and young person we support stays safe, well and reaches their full potential.



**Colin Hilton**  
Doncaster  
Children's  
Service Trust  
Chair



**Paul Moffat**  
Chief Executive

## At a glance

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Our mission is to **make a positive impact** on the lives of our children, young people and families, by being an **outstanding** partner and provider of services, which **maximise life opportunities** for all.

Our business plan sets out our ambition for the direction of Doncaster Children's Services Trust over the next three years. It explains how we operate as business, and it provides our commissioners, employees and partners with a clear definition of the services and improvements that we will deliver and how they will be monitored and evaluated.

It explains how we will grow and develop so we can achieve our mission by help Doncaster children to have safe, happy and successful lives.

Our objectives mean:

1. **We will** identify the needs and risks to children, young people and families. We do this so we can help those who need our services to stay safe and improve their opportunities in life.
2. **We will** keep on improving the quality of our work.
3. **We will** make sure our staff have the skills they need and do the things which make a real difference.
4. **We will** work closely with partners so we can all provide the best possible service. For example we may work with school staff, doctors and police officers may need to support a family to end domestic abuse.
5. **We will** make sure how our organisation works and everyone who works in it is working well. This includes our board of directors, our managers and all of our staff.

The overall things we want to achieve (our strategic priorities) are:

1. Quality of practice - providing a good service to children, young people and families.
2. Customer voice - listening and responding to what our customers say.
3. Financial sustainability - using our money wisely to provide outstanding services.

The things we will do to achieve this (our operational priorities) are:

1. Safeguarding the most vulnerable
2. Reducing domestic abuse
3. Supporting children in care and care leavers
4. Reducing child sexual exploitation
5. Making sure people get support when problems start, and before they become really serious. We call this Early Help.

We will continue to develop better ways of working with children, young people and families so that we can support them to make lasting, positive changes. We have decided to use key workers to get alongside families and support them to really get to the heart of their problems. This is working better than asking families to go to deal directly with several different organisations who are helping them with separate problems.

Our innovation programme has been all about finding new, more effective ways of working and they have changed and improved the way we support people. We will submit bids to Department of Education for further innovation projects, which will help us make further improvements. These projects make it possible for us to try new things. If this works well we can make a massive difference to children and young people in the future.

We know that changes are taking place in the way social care is provided for children, young people and families in the UK. Because of this, it is particularly important that we are prepared to make any changes that are needed for us to play a full part in this service.

## Doncaster Children's Services Trust

### Our business

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We're the first children's services trust in the UK. We're an independent company, limited by guarantee, created by Department of Education. We work under the direction of the Secretary of State for Education, providing children's social care services for Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council. The council retains its statutory duty and responsibility for the children of Doncaster.

We opened our doors to the public on 1 October 2014 offering children's social care, intensive family support and youth offending services. Working with the council and other partners we want to support children and families. We're responsible for own finance, staffing and property requirements, as well as the day- to-day delivery of children's social care services.

***We want to help Doncaster children to stay safe, well and reach their full potential.***

#### Our aims

- To transform our services so that they significantly improve the outcomes of the most vulnerable children and that they will be recognised in future Ofsted judgements (or peer review) as:
  - Good or better by October 2017
  - Outstanding by October 2019
- To focus on the potential and safety of children, young people and families by providing effective and value for money services.
- To listen to children, young people, their families and communities to ensure that their experience of our services is the best it can be, which meets their needs and reflects their views.

## Our governance

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for overseeing how the Trust is run and providing advice on its future direction and strategy.

There are 13 members on the board including a Chair, who is appointed by the Secretary of State, Chief Executive Officer, Expert Non-Executive Directors, and partner Non-Executive Directors.

Reporting to the board are six committees which look at:



The board's six committees are:

- 1. Executive task committee** is responsible for Board business in between Board meetings and takes the lead for equalities and diversity.
- 2. Workforce and professional standards committee** is responsible for ensuring assurance on workforce planning, development and professional standards.
- 3. Nominations and remuneration committee** is responsible making recommendations to the Board about the pay of staff, senior management and Non-Executive Directors.
- 4. Children and young people committee** is responsible for ensuring that the voice of our children, young people and families is heard.
- 5. Finance and infrastructure committee** is responsible for assuring the financial policies and performance of the Trust and that its support services serve the front line staff effectively.
- 6. Audit committee** is responsible for assuring internal controls, effective governance and risk management.

## **Our services**

We deliver a full range of children's services to children and families in Doncaster.

### **Early help**

Early Help services provide targeted help and support to children and families in Doncaster at the earliest stage, so that concerns do not escalate to an extent where they require higher-level and more specialist support.

Early Help brings together services that strengthen families, engage young people into positive activities, develop emotional health and wellbeing, and prevent youth crime and anti-social behaviour.

### **Social care**

Specialists social care services provide support to children and young people in need of help and protection.

Our services include statutory assessment and care planning for children at risk of significant harm. Our teams are based in sites across the borough.

### **Children's homes**

Our children's home provide care for children and young people on a short-term and long-term basis.

### **Intensive family support**

Intensive family support works with families to help them to keep their children and young people safe, healthy enough to thrive and achieve their potential in education, training and employment. We work with children and young people from birth to 19 and their families.

We offer a responsive service including one-to-one support to families, evidenced based programmes that support parents and co-ordinated multi-agency interventions.

The team also works alongside social care to bring children of all ages home to family members in a safe and planned way.

### **Youth offending services**

Children and young people offend for a variety of reasons – social and family problems, peer group pressures, social exclusion, truancy, and drug problems.

To help young people stop re-offending they need the input of staff with a variety of knowledge and skills to help them to make the right life choices.

Our Youth Offending Service (YOS) brings together staff from a variety of professional backgrounds including social workers, police officers, probation officers, health advisors, education officers/careers advisers, drugs workers, and accommodation officers.

### **18+ Service**

We want every young person who has been looked after in the care system to be successful and to know that they have someone on their side who can support them up to the age 21. This can extend to the age of 25 if they want to pursue education training or employment.

Our 18+ service provides each young person with a personal advisor to help and support them, and offers a wide range of support and information to help them make positive choices.

### **Fostering and Adoption**

Our fostering and adoption services are registered as independent voluntary agencies.

### **Corporate support services**

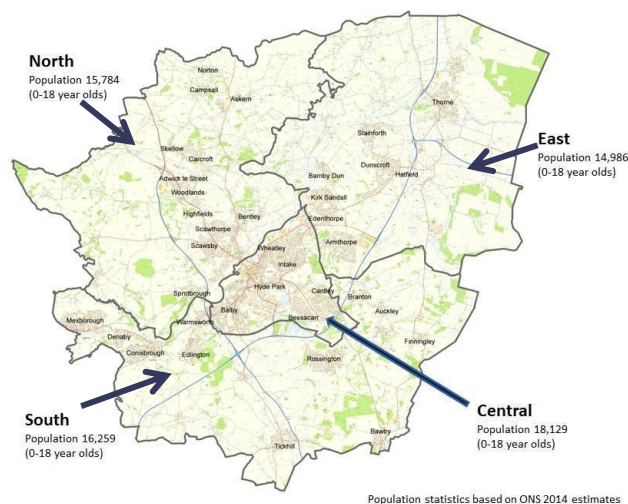
Corporate support services including Finance and Business Planning, Performance, Organisational Development, Human Resources, Legal, Executive Office, Business Support and Communications; they all play a role in improving the effectiveness, efficiency and productivity of our services.



Our services sit within three core areas; Operational, Corporate Support Services and Performance, Quality and Innovation.

<b>Operational</b>	<b>Corporate Support Services</b>	<b>Performance, Quality and Innovation</b>
Assessment Child Protection Service	Finance and Business Planning	Safeguarding and Standards
Children Homes: Pinewood Avenue, Morrison Drive, Cromwell Drive, Tickhill Square	Organisational Development and Human Resources	Performance and Business Intelligence
Planned additions in 2016: Amersall Road		
North (based at Adwick)	Executive Office and Business Support	Commissioning and Procurement
South (based at Edlington)	Communications	IT and Governance
East (based at Thorne)	Legal Services	Innovation programmes
Central (based in Doncaster)		
Adoption and Fostering		
Youth Offending Service		
18+ Team		

The borough is divided into four geographical areas – Central, East, North and South.



## What we know about children living in Doncaster

**20%** of the borough's population are under 18 = **65,000**



**24%** children live in poverty.



Entitled to **free school meals**



**17.3%** primary school  
(national average 15.6%)

**14.9%** secondary school  
(national average 13.9%)

**17%** of children living in the borough are from ethnic groups (national average is 29%).

Largest groups are **White Eastern European and Pakistani**

**ABC** Main language for children if not English, is **Polish**

Children with **English as a second language**

**9%** in primary schools  
(national average is 19%)

**6.5%** in secondary schools  
(national average is 15%)

Over **half** of pupils are in schools which 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'.

**48%** achieve level **3 qualification** ( such as A'Level, NVQ, GNVQ, Key Skills)

Regional average 53% and national average 56%.

**351** referrals to Youth Offending Service

Worked with **169** young people following referrals from Court or a Youth Conditional Caution.

between April 2015 and March 2016

## Our journey so far

### We have taken some good big steps

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#### Where we started

We've achieved significant improvements across children's services since our launch in October 2014. These were highlighted in [our animation film](#) which was created to support our first annual report.



Through our improved systems, pathways and performance management we have seen improvements in areas which have historically significantly under-performed. There is now much greater rigour in front door arrangements, which means we are able to get the support children and families need to them quicker.

Our response rate now meets statutory requirements and the re-referral rate for services has stabilised at 23%, which is better than the national figure of 24%.

We have improved our timeliness across all casework areas, meaning that more children are being seen sooner than statutory expectations on timescale. During 2015, 92% of continuous assessments were completed in timescale, compared to a national figure of 82% and 89% of initial child protection conferences took place within the timescale, compared to a national figure of 75%.

Other key impacts of our work:

- Our average length of care proceedings for children has reduced from 34 weeks at transfer to 24 weeks.
- More care leavers are in suitable accommodation. We have made sure no young people have been placed by us into Bed and Breakfast accommodation.
- Children adopted from care have increased from 17% in 2013/14 to 28% for the year to date. This includes very strong performance on sibling groups and children with complex need.
- 70% of children in long-term care are in a stable placement, compared to 58% in 2013.
- There has been a reduction in the number of children experiencing three or more moves in a year from 11% to 7%.

### **The foundations to support change**

Since our creation, we have:

- Established our management team.
- Understood our finances, where we spend our money and what on (pay and placements).
- Benchmarked our skills and competency analysis of our frontline workforce, through external evaluation.
- Created a continuous improvement plan, which is aligned to our initial business plan and key priorities.
- Embedded a series of staff engagement seminars/workshops.
- Undertaken a review and commissioning of our key services.
- Developed and strengthened our relationships with key partnerships within Doncaster and surrounding areas.
- Secured significant additional funding from the Department for Education (DfE) for four innovation projects.
- Completed and filed our first annual report and account, which showed that we made a small surplus.

## Our inspection results












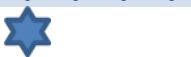

During our first twelve months, we've had a total of thirteen regulatory inspections of children's services. They have reported clear improvements to services provided to children, young people and their families.

***"In this inspection, there is evidence of the progress made with services for children looked after and care leavers, requiring improvement to be good.***

***Adoption is judged to be good, overall, this is a reflection of the progress leaders and managers are beginning to make in improving outcomes through better services for children in Doncaster."***

Ofsted Inspectors, October 2015

## Summary of our inspection results

Judgement area	Latest judgement
Overall effectiveness	 Inadequate
Leadership, management and governance	 Requires improvement
Children who need help and protection	 Inadequate
Children looked after	 Requires improvement
Adoption services	 Good
Care leavers	 Requires improvement
Trust as an independent fostering agency	 Good
Trust as a voluntary adoption agency	 Good
Children's homes (all four of our homes have been inspected)	 Good
	 Good
	 Good
	 Outstanding
Youth offending services	 Unsatisfactory

Our key focus is now on achieving consistency in the quality of practice.

There is now a shared focus between us and our partners in 'Getting to Good'. To support this, we are working with Ofsted through its improvement package offer, which provides support and a forensic level of challenge to ensure that we and the Council are on track to achieve the 20 recommendations outlined in the action plan.

Here's our approach to the Ofsted action plan:

**Quality**

- Effective and timely recording of casework.
- Improve quality and consistency of practice
- Ensure plans are SMART, regularly reviewed and updated

**Management**

- Improve tracking of case work to reduce drift and delay
- Routine supervision of staff
- Performance Management Framework to measure impact
- Strengthen partners' contribution to Child Protection work
- Effective Corporate Parenting Board

**Prevention**

- Provide assurance that Early Help services are making a positive impact
- Monitor and learn from episodes of children & young people who go missing

**Readiness for Independence and Adult Life**

- Support transition to independence for care leavers
- Improve outcomes for Children in Care through the Virtual School.

The Executive Leadership Team holds weekly 'Getting to Good' meetings with Heads of Services to monitor progress against the Ofsted action plan. There is also regular reporting to the Trust's Board, along with wider reporting through contract management to the Council.

## Transformation through Our innovation

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We use our Innovation Programme as the core of our transformation and improvement work. We have been successful in four Department of Education funded innovation projects. They act as catalysts for improvement and transformational change, giving us the space to experiment and to think big. The strapline for one of the projects is *'life doesn't have to be like this'* and this applies to how we practice, as well as the impact on residents' lives.

These are not stand-alone projects; each reflects our philosophy of practice and there are formal links across the projects themselves and our plans for mainstreaming and sustainability. They each reflect our philosophy of social work practice which moves away from a process-driven case management approach to one which has the social worker as the change agent for the family. Our philosophy priorities the following elements of practice:

- A clear focus on outcomes for children
- Cultural change - challenge assumptions, think differently about service delivery and take calculated risk
- Whole family working
- Relationship-based interventions
- Direct work
- Therapeutic engagement - recognition of trauma
- Robust considerations of risk
- Strengths informed approach
- Evaluation and evidence informed practice
- Supporting staff and carers in high risk and high stress activities

All of our projects have been extended into 2016/17. The learning and new practice will continue and be mainstreamed into core practice.

Each of our innovation projects promotes social work practice. It is driven through a relationship-based approach. The embedding of this approach is a key area of workforce and partnership development over the coming year.



Growing Futures offers a new approach to tackling domestic abuse. Specialist workers deliver a new therapeutic practice for families affected by domestic abuse, working with the whole family including the perpetrators. In its first year, we've seen a 7.1% reduction in re-referrals to social care where domestic abuse is an issue.

The core elements of the programme include:

- New specialist therapeutic practice approach delivered by domestic abuse navigators (DANs).
- A new approach to working with perpetrators including a conditional cautioning approach.
- A revision of the borough-wide Domestic Abuse Strategy with associated workforce and financial plans.
- A new PHSE curriculum for use in schools.
- A ground-breaking coaching programme for leaders across the children's system.
- A communications strategy aimed at cultural shift in terms of tolerance of domestic abuse and its impact on children.
- Research led by young people into the reasons why domestic abuse is so high in Doncaster.



Pause is an innovative, dynamic and creative approach designed to address the needs of women who have had multiple children removed from their care.

It is an intense programme of therapeutic, practical and behavioural support through an integrated model. It supports the women to regain control in their lives and address the underpinning issues which have blighted their lives.

The 21 women in our cohort have had 65 children removed from their care. Whilst on the programme, all are using long-acting reversible contraception to give them a break from further pregnancies and allowing them the space - the pause - to concentrate on themselves.

The impacts so far have included major improvements to the women's lives - with them now accessing healthcare and learning and some of them moving into employment. Our analysis shows that over the next five years, without intervention these women would have had a further 40 children between them. The cost avoidance alone on this is over £400,000 per year, let alone the human misery involved in further proceedings and subsequent loss.

It works intensively with the women to address their own needs and build their resilience to make informed and supported decisions about future life chances. This too has helped us to change our approach to families struggling to keep their children safe with a focus on sustainable change for adults rather than simply a transactional child rescue approach.





We're successfully trialling the approach to fostering which has a ten-year evidence base in the USA. It creates 'constellations' of carers with a supporting Hub Carer at the centre, which create an 'extended family' approach for children in care.

In its first eight months of operation our project has already demonstrated an increase in placement stability, brothers and sisters having improved contact, and a strengthening of skills and confidence among carers.



We know child sexual exploitation is an issue that affects our whole region. That's why we are working with our neighbouring local authorities in Sheffield, Barnsley and Rotherham together with Catch 22 to develop a new therapeutic practice for young people at risk of, or involved in child sexual exploitation (CSE).

It promotes a '*team around the child: team around the practitioner*' approach with clinical psychology supervision and support to assist intensive therapeutic interventions to young people and their families.

It has created new specialist foster carers and uses a new 'integrate' delivery methodology which is based on a youth work model. The work so far has delivered improved placement stability and beginning to demonstrate impact in reducing the need for high cost, low impact external placements.

### **Tackling child sexual exploitation**

The Trust is working across its services to help children and young people in Doncaster to stay safe and protected from this type of abuse. The Trust has trained colleagues within specialist teams in forensic risk assessment of sexual abuse cases.

### **Missing children in care**

Our work with South Yorkshire Police has led to a significant reduction in the numbers of children missing from care. This has included having three dedicated police officers linked to children's homes and developing a new multi-agency operational group for swift identification of risk where children do go missing.

### **Home from home**

We are investing in our children's homes to create an environment which is as homely as possible, building on our Ofsted "good" and "outstanding" inspection results.

## Our approach

# How we do things

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### Our values

Our three core values underpin our expectation of our staff; who are the heart of our business. They are:

- We'll make a difference
- We'll be respectful
- We'll be excellent

We wanted staff to own the values so we invited them to tell us what behaviours they felt should sit under each one. You can see the behaviours they identified in the tables below.

#### **We'll make a difference**

Be child focussed - remember that children and young people are our primary concern.

Respect people, including customers, stakeholders and colleagues, treating them with courtesy, dignity and consideration.

Do what we say we are going to do.

Be respectful of difference and celebrate diversity.

Deal with information about other people with sensitivity, care and consideration.

Take time to listen, it's a two way conversation.

Use appropriate language and tone and challenge inappropriate behaviour or language

Make sure we say sorry when we get things wrong.

Be on time for work, meetings, appointments, conferences and training courses.

Promote professional standards of behaviour in your team.

Be decisive and confident in your professional judgement.

Look after your own health and be a support to others

Take responsibility for our profession development, have regular high quality supervision.

Dress professionally and appropriately to the occasion and activity.

### **We'll be respectful**

Respect and encourage the hopes and dreams of the children, young people you work with.

Make sure your work focusses on improving outcomes for children, young people and families.

Seek always to raise aspirations for children, young people, families and communities.

Act as a role model for children, young people you work with.

Be a change agent in people lives and empower families.

Encourage others to learn from you and be prepared to support others in their growth and development.

Challenge poor practice, accept challenge constructively.

Lead by example.

Keep your team informed.

Display a positive attitude at all times, supporting and promoting the Trust.

Speak up for the Trust and always present its work in a positive light.

Raise concerns within the Trust first.

Be an Ambassador for Doncaster.

### **We'll be excellent**

Ensure that the voice of the child is reflected accurately and appropriately in our work.

Work ethically and safely at all times, be fair, honest and transparent.

Be open to change and willing to work in different ways.

Always strive to be the best.

Work hard, take responsibility for completing work on time.

Show commitment and dedication to your work.

Meeting the needs of children, young people and families by being flexible in your working arrangement to help and support the work of the Trust.

Use initiative and tackle challenges with a positive attitude.

Praise the achievements of others, no matter how small

Make sure people know where you are and how to contact you.

Make sure we use our resources wisely.

Be creative, if you have a good idea share it.

## Continuous improvement

We are determined to deliver the very best service for children, young people, and families in Doncaster. We will only achieve this if we continue to embrace a work environment that focuses on learning and raising the standards of practice. We identify our priorities and outline our actions to achieve our outcomes.

The quality of practice is our highest priority. We use our performance and quality framework to continuously inform our thinking about service user and wider community needs and views and the quality and impact of services we provide to them.

## Staff development

A vital part in the achievement of our sustained improvement will be embedding a stable workforce. Our aims are:

- Staff turnover below 20%
- Sickness levels below 7%
- Reliance on agency staff to be 8%
- Convert agency staff onto permanent contracts wherever possible

We will continue to refine our approach to social work practice to ensure that we provide high quality effective social work. Our leadership team is committed to moving away from a process-led approach, and to embracing a model of social work where social workers are the direct change agents for the families they support.

We will embed our "Signs of Safety" model of a whole system and whole family approach. It emphasises outcomes for children; recognising the strengths in families as well as making robust considerations of risk. It uses relationship-based interventions which recognise the impact of trauma and the need for therapeutic input as part of recovery. We encourage our staff to achieve a cultural shift in practice delivery, to challenge assumptions, to think differently about service delivery and to take calculated risks supported by evaluation and evidence informed practice.

Importantly, we recognise that staff and carers need good support in what is a high risk and highly stressful environment.

Our advanced practitioners meet every month with our Principal Social Worker and Workforce Development Manager to discuss their own development requirements and going forward will develop supportive tools to assist the delivery of consistently good quality social work decisions. We use monthly 'stop the clock' sessions to focus on practice improvement.

We will continue to invest and develop our staff.

- All social workers have been assessed against the professional competency framework standards. This, together with our own quality assurance work highlighted areas for improvement. We will now deliver an intensive Practice

Improvement Programme (PIP) in partnership with Research in Practice and iPeople to put direct and group coaching in place to address areas of shortfall. Staff will undertake core training through 65 workshops which will be delivered by Research in Practice. Practice Advisors will be embedded in teams to apply the learning into practice.

- We will embrace the enthusiasm for the programme and reflect on the real appetite for this approach to practice improvement which will raise confidence, as well as skill and knowledge levels.
- We will pilot an assessment and accreditation of social workers.
- We will also be one of four Teaching Partnerships in the country, which will allow us to develop new relationships with local Higher Education Institutions and bring academic learning and social work practice much closer together.
- We will continue to be involved with the Step Up to Social Work programme.
- As part of our recruitment strategy, we will take a cohort of Assessed and Supported Year Employment (ASYE) Social Workers. Our dedicated Development Officer will co-ordinate their learning and encourages their development journey. A series of training workshops and service specific sessions support knowledge and skill development.
- We will build upon our successful staff award ceremony, where the experience of being told 'well done and thank you' has been a fresh and encouraging approach.

## **Keeping our staff in the loop**

- The senior team is committed to being highly visible and will continue to regularly visit teams across the borough to observe practice and engage in direct debate.
- We will hold staff summits twice a year, to celebrate and share the achievements of our staff and the Trust.
- Our staff representative group will meet regularly and feedback to the Trust Board through our staff member who sits on the Board.
- Our aim is to maintain our staff morale at over 70%.
- We acknowledge that staff play an active role in providing an authentic insight into the world of the Trust within Doncaster, which is why we reflect this through our direct communication and social media updates.

## **Improvement and participation of our stakeholders**

We believe that long-term entrenched failure is rarely the responsibility of one single agency. Therefore, we will continue to work with "Team Doncaster" to improve local systems to influence change at all levels within the borough. We believe that our pace of change will act as a catalyst to support local partnership working, and to help fill a historic void in local system leadership. We accept at times this may involve leading beyond our immediate authority and having to manage challenges around ensuring the consistent pace of improvement across the partnership.

We encourage our staff to engage in partnership beyond the traditional footprint of social care, such as the Cultural and Creative Partnership and the Fairness and Inclusion

Forum. The work on leading the faith and cultural partnership was commended in the Ofsted inspection and we will build upon this going forward.

We will also strengthen our relationship with voluntary, community and faith sector partners, and build new alliances with major local providers such as the Community Health Trust and Arms-Length Management Organisation (ALMO) to develop joint priority areas for action.

## **Commissioning**

There are times where we need to ask others to help deliver services. When we need to commission someone else to deliver a service we will be open, transparent and fair. Wherever possible we will work with the people we support, parents and carers, in partnership, to enable them to influence the services that we commission for them.

## **Equality and diversity**

We take our role and responsibility seriously in respect of equalities and diversity. It is everybody's duty to uphold and promote equalities and diversity. We also believe that we should use our wider influence as a local partner to secure outcomes for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our community.

## Our next big steps

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Over the next three years, we have clear ambitions that set out the direction of our work. These are:

By 2017:

- Getting to Ofsted "Good"
- Improving our quality of practice
- Transferring children with disabilities to the Trust
- Investing in people - workforce development
- Investing in places - children's homes
- Playing our part to strengthen local partnership working

By 2018:

- Getting to Ofsted "Outstanding"
- Embedding our quality of practice
- Growth of the Trust and informing the national debate on new models of delivery

By 2019:

- To be a nationally recognised sector leader in the delivery of children's services.
- To deliver the highest quality staff support and development for our own staff and be known as a top quality employer.
- To be known as an innovator; which has informed the social work reform debate and has delivered new and effective practice into the sector.
- To have achieved an embedded and sustainable culture; which balances creativity, value for money and great outcomes for children and young people.

The tables on pages 24 to 31 set out how we will achieve these goals.

**Objective one:** We will identify the needs and risks to children, young people and families. We do this so we can help those who need our services to stay safe and improve their opportunities in life.

How we will achieve this objective:	We have:	We will by:	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Producing reports and management information that help our staff to plan their work and secure the right outcomes, ensuring the voice of the child is appropriately reflected.	Overhauled our performance reports in order to deliver more timely and more detailed intelligence to our managers to improve performance.	Deliver our intelligence in a new way so that it is "brought to life" and allows services to interrogate their performance to drive improvement.	→		→
		Driving deregulation debate and creating new flexibilities in practice.		→	
		Implementation of post-inspection action plan - getting to "Outstanding".		→	
		Produce a quality performance framework which reflects Ofsted's recommendations and action plan, which will also provide evidence for future inspections/audits.	→	→	
		Embedding an effective management of front-door arrangements.	→	→	
	Provided additional support to Services to understand and act upon Performance Management information.	Developing and embedding a locality based delivery model.	→	→	
		Establishment of a Multi-Agency Looked After Children's Partnership (MALAP).	→	→	
		Developing the capacity with Liquid Logic to record and report on providers of Looked After Children services.	→	→	
		Developing managers' skills so that they are more confident in the use of performance data.	→	→	
		Working closer with our teams to understand what performance information they require and reflected through system upgrades if appropriate.	→	→	
Ensuring we work effectively and efficiency with our assessment and recording systems to analyse the needs of our children and families.	Conducted needs assessments and profiles to support Innovations projects, and improve our understanding of the communities we serve.	Working with our key strategic partners to share intelligence in order to better understand the communities we serve, and develop a shared evidence base.	→	→	→
		Consider mobile/ digital solutions to mobile care.	→	→	
		Reflect upon mobile/digital solutions to social care and implement as appropriate.	→	→	
	Improved the quality of the information we hold so that we are better informed.	Our training strategy to be revised to offer a blended training approach with more targeted support across the services.	→	→	
		Examine the recording pathways on our case management systems and revise them so that they are more efficient and reflect current/ emerging practice.	→	→	
		Our recording systems to be updated to reflect 'Signs of Safety' model.	→	→	
		Implement revised training strategy.	→	→	



How we will achieve this objective:	We have:	We will by:	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
<p>Ensuring that all the services we deliver are commissioned effectively, so that they meet your needs, are high quality and give value for money.</p>	<p><b>We have reviewed and re-commissioned a number of services and contracts which has improved the service we offer and represented better value for money.</b></p> <p><b>Established a commission panel which reviews placements to ensure that they reflect the individual's needs and is the most cost effective option.</b></p>	<p>Monitoring our contracts and commissioned services using robust performance frameworks and regular review.</p> <p>Ensure that our commissioning framework is effective.</p> <p>Review our offer to residential care.</p> <p>Review our offer to residential care.</p> <p>Deliver a family focused offer to social care.</p>	<p>→</p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>→</p>
<p>Ensuring that our innovation projects are sustainable and benefits are realised.</p>	<p><b>Successfully attracted grant funding for a number of projects: Growing Futures, PAUSE, Mockingbird, Empower and Protect.</b></p>	<p>Delivery phase of projects.</p> <p>Establish plans to mainstream each project.</p> <p>Benefit realisation phase.</p> <p>Seek additional innovation funding which enhances the work of the Trust.</p> <p>Ensure that our training and development strategy reflects our learning from our innovation projects.</p>	<p>→</p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p>	<p>→</p>	
<p>Demonstrate our improvement journey through independent inspections and reviews.</p>	<p><b>Secured a "good" rating for our adoption service and fostering service. Secured "good" and "outstanding" ratings for our children's homes. Demonstrate improvement through the inspection of services to children in need. Set a path for improvement through development and management of detailed action plans.</b></p>	<p>Deliver our Action Plans, in preparation for inspection of our services and homes by Ofsted and other Inspectorates. Use external inspection as an opportunity for formal recognition of the improvements to services made by the Trust, including Youth Offending Services.</p> <p>Services delivered by the Trust to children in need of help and protection will be graded as "Good" by Ofsted. Ensure that Children's Homes continue to be at least "good" and an increasing number are "outstanding" or showing "improved effectiveness".</p> <p>Services delivered by the Trust to children in need of help and protection will be ready to be graded as "Outstanding" by Ofsted.</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>→</p>

**Objective two: We will keep on improving the quality of our work.**

How we will achieve this objective:	We have:	We will by:	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
<p><b>Ensuring that the voice of the child is at the heart of all decisions.</b></p>	<p><b>Engaged with children and families through a range of activities such as the Big Summer Survey, Chief Executives Advisors, and Children in Care Council.</b></p> <p><b>Actively encouraged children to participate in reviews of the case work through Child Protection reviews, Independent reviews of care plans; and through the use of advocates.</b></p>	<p>Making sure that the voice of the child is clearly recorded and considered in our case work, through regular audit and staff development programmes.</p>	→		
		<p>Improving and embedding quality of practice.</p>		→	
		<p>Internal challenge systems ensuring right solutions in teams and avoid excessive service proprietorial focus.</p>		→	
		<p>Enhanced focus on exit/ return home for children.</p>			→
		<p>'Ensuring that we have consistent thresholds for referral.</p>	→		
		<p>Improving and embedding quality of practice.</p>			→
		<p>Effective performance, advice and support systems to help children – self-help, prevention.</p>	→		
		<p>Front door/ access - one point entry.</p>		→	
		<p>Continue to embed our participation strategy regarding consultation with children and young people so that we can demonstrate "you said, we did" consistently when children's views are gathered.</p>			→
		<p>Develop a calendar of consultation events that ensures that a wide range of children are routinely offered the opportunity to inform service development.</p>	→		
		<p>Criteria/ locality based.</p>		→	
		<p>Children in Care Council will meet regular throughout the year to ensure that children of all ages are represented.</p>			→
		<p>Undertake a review of all services to ensure that we work consistently to record and influence the voice of the child.</p>	→		
		<p>Continue with the appointment of young people to act as advisors to the Trust and meet regularly (at least three times a year) with the Chief Executive Officer.</p>	→		

How we will achieve this objective:	We have:	We will by:	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
<p><b>Ensuring that there is consistency in the service that we deliver</b></p>	<p><b>Revised our practice standards manual, and associated policies to ensure there is clear guidance to follow.</b></p> <p><b>Trained managers and auditors to set the same rigorous standards for assessing and managing good practice.</b></p>	<p>Reviewing the effectiveness of Safeguarding Standards and Policy service, strengthening social work functions.</p> <p>Focusing on the specialism of foster carers.</p> <p>Develop our foster carers so they can support children and young people in different ways.</p> <p>Development of an evidence-based approach to early years targeted/universal intervention.</p> <p>Continuing to stabilise our workforce, through reduced turnover, and securing a permanent workforce.</p> <p>Implementing signs of safety, a solution focused approach, into social work practice.</p> <p>Investing in training for our staff to improve practice knowledge, through our practice improvement programme.</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>→</p> <p>→</p>	<p>→</p> <p>→</p>
<p><b>Providing a robust audit and quality assurance framework which will inform and improve the services we deliver.</b></p>	<p><b>Established a comprehensive audit calendar, covering regular practice audits as well as thematic deep dives.</b></p>	<p>Actions plan are developed following learning from audits, incorporated into locality action plans so that key themes are communicated to all staff to improve practice through supervision and training.</p> <p>Share the lessons learned from audits across the Trust, by aligning oversight of practice performance and quality.</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>→</p> <p>→</p>	<p>→</p>
<p><b>Taking a multi-agency approach to our work and how it can support the work that we do.</b></p>	<p><b>Established the initial Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), allowing sensitive information to be shared securely amongst child protection agencies, social care, police, and health.</b></p>	<p>Embedding the MASH into our streamlined front-door arrangements.</p> <p>Reviewing the performance of the MASH and revising the model based on an initial review, and by learning from exemplar authorities.</p> <p>Producing quarterly reports on MASH activity and performance.</p>	<p>→</p> <p>→</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>→</p>
<p><b>Managing our customer experience so that the complaints process is provided in accordance with statutory requirements and that compliments are gathered, analysed and celebrated.</b></p>	<p><b>Established a complaints process which reflects best practice.</b></p>	<p>Monthly reporting to be established which shows the number of complaints received, action taken, the length of time to resolve and lessons learnt. Information on "how did we do" to be published on our website.</p> <p>Gather, analyse and celebrate compliments and share best practice among teams.</p> <p>Lessons learnt will be cascaded and embedded within the Trust going forward, with quarterly internal assurance checks taking place to reflect tone, style, and language.</p> <p>Ombudsman policy established and embedded, our aim is for no complaints to be escalated to Ombudsman, Department of Education or Ministers.</p>	<p>→</p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>→</p>

**Objective three: We will make sure our staff have the skills they need and do the things which make a real difference.**

How we will achieve this objective:	We have:	We will by:	2016/17	2017/18	2018/2019
<p><b>Having a stable, healthy workforce, with a manageable workload.</b></p>	<p><b>Permanently recruited the Trust's Senior Leadership Team.</b></p> <p><b>A number of agency staff are now on permanent contracts.</b></p> <p><b>Appointed a number of Assessed and Supported Year Employment (ASYE) social workers.</b></p> <p><b>Introduced a number of management policies and procedures, which have been underpinned by training.</b></p>	<p>Review the business support function across the Trust to ensure that it meets the needs of our locality based offices and represents value for money. Consideration of centralising functions and the use of technology to bring efficiencies and change to the Trust. There is to be a year on year reduction of 5% in overall support costs.</p>			→
		<p>Introduce a workforce strategy which includes a recruitment and retention policy to ensure that we attract and retain the best skills.</p>	→		
		<p>Introduce a competency framework to enable professional benchmarking of our skills</p>	→		
		<p>Build upon our learning and development offer to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the Trust.</p>	→		
		<p>Continue with our staff engagement programme, to ensure morale is monitored and if required appropriate action taken.</p>	→		
		<p>Review, consult and embed policies and procedures relating to staff conduct.</p>	→		
		<p>Assess resilience in our management chains and review our approach to succession planning.</p>	→		
		<p>Our training strategy will be revised to offer a blended learning approach with more targeted support across the service.</p>	→		
		<p>A reward and recognition strategy is to be developed.</p>	→		
		<p>Continue with recruitment campaigns which highlight the work of the Trust and attract new staff.</p>	→		
		<p>Be an employer of choice.</p>		→	
		<p>Reviewing and improving the quality of practice.</p>		→	
		<p>Building system leadership capacity with the emphasis on Early Help.</p>		→	
		<p>Developing our leadership role.</p>		→	
		<p>Review of corporate services resources and skills.</p>		→	
<p>Become a training partner with others to educate and cascade good practice.</p>		→			
<p>Implementing a social work learning academy.</p>			→		

How we will achieve this objective:	We have:	We will by:	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
<p><b>Making sure our staff have the skills they need to provide an outstanding service.</b></p>	<p><b>Restructured management of our front-line services, so that there is greater accountability and ownership.</b></p> <p><b>Rolled out our revised supervision and performance policies to make sure staff are well managed and supported.</b></p> <p><b>Supplied managers with timely management and performance information.</b></p> <p><b>Introduced a managers training programme which ensures that there is a consistent approach adopted reflecting HR, finance, governance and performance.</b></p>	<p>Successful implementation our Practice Improvement Programme (PIP), which is aligned to the Ofsted action plan with staff actively, engaged through attendance, contribution, and feedback.</p>	<p>→</p>		
		<p>Review of the impact of PIP, one year on.</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>→</p>	
		<p>Successful implementation of Signs of Safety model.</p>	<p>→</p>		
		<p>Practice educators play an important role in the education of new social workers, offering guidance and assessing students' first-hand experiences of becoming a social worker.</p>	<p>→</p>		
		<p>The Trust has been working with other partners in the South Yorkshire Teaching Partnership to submit a bid to partake in the Early Adopter bid to develop Teaching Partnerships.</p>	<p>→</p>		
		<p>Training and development from our innovation projects are to be embedded within our overall training strategy.</p>	<p>→</p>		
		<p>Embedding our workforce strategy.</p>	<p>→</p>		
		<p>Review job descriptions and personal specifications of our residential staff to ensure we recruit, train and retain appropriate staff to provide outstanding care for our children.</p>	<p>→</p>		

**Objective four: We will work closely with partners so we can all provide the best possible service.**

How we will achieve this objective:	We have:	We will by:	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Contributing towards a coherent and clearly defined early help offer to Doncaster families.	Developed and reshaped Doncaster's Early Help offer and reported accordingly.	<p>With partners continuously review early help offer, providing recommendations on partnership and system improvements.</p> <p>Establishment of Partnership Accountability Board.</p> <p>Stronger partnerships and extending the Trust role as a shaper of future services.</p> <p>Recognition as strategic partners in improving lives not just effective deliverers.</p> <p>Culture across partnerships, as well as organisation - less passive, catalyst for change, delivering what's promised.</p> <p>Work with Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council to engage with wider partners to improve the quality of casework and user feedback.</p>	→	→ → →	→
To better understand the needs of the children and the families we work with.	Improved safeguarding procedures.  Commitment to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and Early Help Hub.	<p>Promote the work of the Trust and identify growth opportunities through developing links with private sector organisations.</p> <p>Provide an extended family support offer to include our partners (health visitors, adults).</p> <p>Improve our outreach into schools.</p> <p>Evidence of partners understanding and deployment of the Signs of Safety model.</p> <p>Offer an integrated youth support service.</p>	→	→	→ → → →
Working together with other agencies on priority areas to identify gaps in services for vulnerable children.	Child sexual exploitation reporting.	<p>Establish a child sexual exploitation strategy and practice.</p> <p>Working towards a fully integrated solution to health and well-being.</p> <p>Community development and partnership agreements.</p>	→		→ →

**Objective five:** We will make sure how our organisation works and everyone who works in it is working well, this includes our board of directors, our managers and all of our staff.

How we will achieve this objective:	We have:	We will by:	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
<p>Making sure that there is a "clear line of sight" for all our staff to see how we are performing, which includes the effectiveness of the Trust Board.</p>	<p>Members of the senior leadership team regular visit frontline service areas.</p> <p>Senior leadership demonstrates the values and beliefs of the Trust.</p> <p>Executive Leadership Council established which allows best practice to be shared.</p>	Non-Executive Directors to visit frontline services areas.			→
		Members of the senior leadership team will continue to regularly visit frontline service areas and feedback to the Chief Executive's Team			→
		New opportunities - Joint commissioning/ joint budgets/ shared opportunities to learn from innovations to support re-design.			→
		Develop further and communicate values and behaviours of the Trust.	→		
		Ensure Performance Management Information is clearly communicated and understood throughout the organisation.	→		
		Production of Trust Business Plan, reflecting aims and strategic objectives to be produced for the start of the new financial year.			→
		Contract negotiations with Doncaster Council are reflected in overall budget.			→
		Established a balanced budget which reflects the financial envelope of the contract.			→
		Continue with the production of our monthly management account which shows current spend and our forecast outturn position.			→
		Communicate our Business Plan to our staff and partners.			→
		Operational financial reporting to be introduced, with the support of finance business partnering.	→		
		Commissioning framework to be reviewed to ensure that effective and value for money placements are made.	→		
		Review contracts (including those with Doncaster Council) to ensure that they reflect the services we require and represent value for money.	→		
		Hold contract review meetings quarterly to discuss and report on key performance indicators.			→
		Consider our Estate strategy.	→		

How we will achieve this objective:	We have:	We will by:	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
<p><b>Take responsibility and to be held accountable for our role within the Trust.</b></p>	<p><b>Management deliverable established.</b></p> <p><b>Managers training course to ensure consistency of practice established.</b></p> <p><b>Risk strategy and policy created and communicated.</b></p>	<p>Take personal ownership to ensure delivery of appropriate and fair management responsibilities in accordance with recognised policy, processes and statutory obligations.</p>			→
		<p>Embedding risk management within the Trust.</p>			→
		<p>Reflecting the values and beliefs of the Trust.</p>			→
		<p>Ensuring compliance across policies and procedures.</p>			→
		<p>Manage people and performance.</p>			→
		<p>Manage finances.</p>			→
		<p>Ensure the Trust's governance is followed.</p>			→
		<p>Service Plans which underpins the Trust's Business Plan are produced on time to a high standard, reflecting the objectives and priorities of the Trust.</p>	→		
<p><b>Promoting the Trust's work and contribution to others to identify growth opportunities.</b></p>	<p><b>Engaged with a number of local authorities who are considering the Trust's model as alternative option for their children's services provision.</b></p>	<p>Evidence the impact of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, Early Help offer, Child Sexual Exploitation, and Innovation projects.</p>			→
		<p>Continue to support other organisations that are transferring to the Trust model or those who are considering the possibility.</p>			→
		<p>Develop potential growth areas as potential additional income generation.</p>			→



## Expanding our remit

### Our plans for the future

We acknowledge that the delivery of children's services is a changing and challenging environment. In order to secure a positive outcome for the children, young people and families we support, we need to adapt and be flexible. As well as the innovation projects we are delivering we are considering our wider remit and the part we can play in the social service sector. This will require us to review our underpinning service provision, our approach to commercialisation and income generation ideas.

#### Financial: Income and expenditure

The Trust receives income from Doncaster Council, Department for Education and other partners. The main areas of spend for the Trust are pay and placements for looked after children.

The aim is for a balanced budget, where the level of planned expenditure is matched by funding. The draft budget for 2016-17 is as follows:

	Ongoing £000	Budget Projects	Total
<b>Income</b>			
Doncaster Council	42,231	416	42,647
Department for Education (DfE)	3,256	1,629	4,885
Miscellaneous income	827		827
<b>Total income</b>	<b>46,314</b>	<b>2,045</b>	<b>48,358</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Pay	20,406		20,406
Placements	19,873		19,873
Others	6,183	2,045	8,228
<b>Efficiency saving target</b>	<b>-149</b>		<b>-149</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>46,314</b>	<b>2,045</b>	<b>48,358</b>
<b>Outturn</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## Risks

We believe our key risks are:

- Avoidable harm to children and young people.
- Progress made against our planned improvements and performance indicators.
- The ability to attract and retain high-quality staff.
- The ability to reduce overheads and provide good infrastructure to our front line services.
- The financial sustainability of the Trust reflecting the contractual arrangements with Doncaster Council and economic pressures.

## Workforce

	<b>Doncaster Council</b>	<b>FTE Department for Education</b>	<b>Total</b>
Operational	428.4		428.4
Support	110	27.5	137.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>538.4</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>565.9</b>

## Our partners

We want all children in Doncaster to stay safe, well and reach their full potential. We know that excellent children's services cannot be delivered in isolation and so we work with a range of organisations such as the council, health services, the police, probation, voluntary sector, and schools on a daily basis to make sure our services are relevant and responsive to the needs of children and young people in the borough.



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of office hours, please call **01302 796000**

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