

Transformation Scoping Paper

Lead Contact:	Sophie Wales
Directorate:	Children's Services
Service Area:	Investment in 'Bright Spots' anonymous online surveys for Children in Care and Care Leavers

1. TRANSFORMATION OVERVIEW

Background

Barnsley last full inspection was in 2018. Since then, the national context has changed, There is a significant workforce crisis, a slow recovery from a global pandemic and a cost-of-living crisis, all of which is having an impact on Barnsley's ability to deliver services to children safely and effectively. These changing circumstances are resulting in many more adults parenting in adverse circumstances.

With this context in mind, the newly formed leadership team and a new Executive Director, with the full support of Organisational and Political leaders, commissioned a full review of children's services including external case sampling using Ofsted Methodology, obtaining feedback from frontline staff and managers about how it feels to work for Barnsley, a review of data not currently included within the Children's social care performance framework, findings from the recent JTAI Inspection and finding from the recent Childrens Home inspection.

The findings provided a full and thorough understanding of how staff were feeling, the pressures of their workloads and the current quality of practice and how well the service is performing.

Summary of Proposal

It's clear from the findings that there was variable evidence of the 'child's voice' recorded about their lives and in their plans for their future, as a result of too little time for direct work with children and young people.

Improvements in this area are now a key part of the development plan and should improve as capacity across the workforce increases, and performance improves.

Unfortunately our data locally and national only provide a partial picture of the lives of children in care and care leavers, as it focuses on adult perspectives, objective outcome measures and education. None of this tells us about young peoples' own viewpoints e.g. are they happy, do they feel safe and feel they are doing well?

Our proposal is to commission 'Bright Spots' as it will help the service to address these gaps and to help us systematically listen to children in care and care leavers about the things that are important to them.

Bright Spots:-

- Is delivered in partnership with Coram Voice and Oxford University.
- Is an anonymous online survey delivered twice per year to children in care (aged 4 to 18) and care leavers (age 16 to 25).
- Is co-produced with children and young people and based on what children say is important to them.
- Is evidenced-based, developed over 9 years of research.
- Is a platform that enables us to understand our children and young people and compare them with others their age across the county and to the general population.
- Is a conduit that helps us improve our practice from children's feedback evidencing clearly that we listen to them.
- Will help us evidence our commitment to listening to children with our corporate parenting board and Ofsted during external reviews.
- Provide full report and summary of all findings.
- Will enable Barnsley children services to understand the experience of our children and young people in care and care leavers, compared with the general population.

All findings will be shared across the organisation and with partners and will enable the service to introduce changes to practice but more importantly let our children and young people know that we listened to them

Alternative Options

- Do not commission 'Bright Spots': this option would not give us a fully anonymous view of what our children and young people really feel about the care we provide or feedback that can drive practice improvements.

Links to Corporate Priorities

- Healthy Barnsley - People can access all the care and support they need, at the right time and in the right place.
- Enabling Barnsley - Our Council is modern, inclusive, efficient, productive and high performing

Anticipated Objectives & Benefits

- Improved services to children, young people and families
- Improved outcomes for children
- Improved quality and compliance of practice.
- Improved line of sight to practice.
- Recognised evidenced based feedback that can be shared with Staff, Organisation, Partners, Ofsted etc.
- Developed culture of encouraging, challenging and reflective.

Implications

- Cost of £15,000 for two years.
- Commitment and time of managers and staff.

2. PROJECT SCHEDULE

What are the provisional milestones / timescales?

Key Milestone	Start Date	Completion Date
Preparation 1 st survey	Nov 22	March 23
First Survey	April 23	May 23
Prep 2 nd Survey	Jun 23	August 23
2 nd Survey	Sept 23	Oct 24
Feedback	Jan 24	March 24

3. RESOURCES

Provide details of any anticipated resources required (IT support, office space, Project Manager, Project Team, specific skills, investment etc.)

Resources	Why Required	When Required
Current existing staff and mananager support	To ensure all children and young people accessible and notified	Commencement of survey prep Nov 22
Additional £15,000 funding	To pay for the surveys	Nov 22

4. EFFICIENCIES

What efficiency with the transformation deliver – minimum expected is 10%

Efficiency	Estimates (£)	
N/A		

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Provide any further summary information regarding urgency, dependencies, constraints, enablers, assumptions.

- Direct work with children is essential to ensure that they build relationships with worker and are encourage to talk about how they feel, any concerns they may have and what they want for the future.
- Bright Spots is an additional framework to help us to understand how our children and young people feel about their care and what they want, it cannot be done independently and the service and workers need to ensure they continue to talk and listen to the children and young people when they are undertaking assessments, visiting and developing plans for their future.
- Children services must have the correct staffing capacity in place across the service to ensure caseloads are manageable and so that workers can spend time working directly with children and their families. Without this, limited and sustainable improvements cannot be made.