



Warwickshire's Sector Led Improvement Offer 2025/26





What is Sector Led Improvement?

- **Sector-led improvement (SLI)** is a **collaborative approach** where **local authorities support each other to enhance the quality and effectiveness of their services**. This initiative harnesses the strengths and expertise of some authorities to support those in need of development support, promoting a culture of continuous learning and development.
- The SLI programme is **designed to provide tailored support in various areas**, including performance management, digital transformation, workforce development, social care policy, financial management, and commissioning. Local authorities rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted serve as sector-led improvement partners, offering their knowledge and resources to help other councils improve their services.
- Access to this support is available to local authorities rated as 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' by Ofsted. Additionally, authorities rated 'good' can seek assistance if there is evidence of declining performance or specific areas needing enhancement. This **inclusive approach** ensures that all local authorities have the opportunity to benefit from sector-led improvement, ultimately **leading to better outcomes for children, young people, and families**.



About Warwickshire and our areas of expertise





About Warwickshire

- Warwickshire County Council received an **Ofsted rating of "Good" in all areas in 2021**. The inspection highlighted
 - **Leadership impact:** the impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families. It notes that leaders have successfully worked with partners and children to support development, ensuring that social workers listen to children's views and involve them in decisions that affect their lives.
 - **Quality assurance and performance learning:** a comprehensive Quality Assurance and Performance Learning strategy. This strategy supports continuous improvement by accurately reflecting areas for improvement identified during the inspection and ensuring that actions are taken to address these areas.
 - **Support for children in care:** that children in care are supported to live stable lives and make good progress. It also notes that care leavers receive appropriate support, which is a testament to the effective leadership and quality assurance processes in place. During our focused visit in 2023, Ofsted commended our effective work on enhancing services for care-experienced young people.
 - **Collaborative efforts:** The role of leaders in building trusting relationships with children, young people, and families was emphasised. This collaborative approach helps keep families together where possible and ensures that children in care are placed with their wider family if appropriate.
- As one of the ten Local Areas in the Families First for Children Pathfinder programme, we have played a key role in testing and implementing reforms now part of the national rollout. We will continue to support the National Families First Programme and engage in all national reference groups, outlining the support we can offer to local areas as part of sector-led improvement.
- We offer support at three levels, depending on local authority needs. Our comprehensive support includes a multi-agency perspective, with active participation from Health, Education, and Police. Our success in implementing large-scale change through the DfE Strengthening Families, Protecting Children Programme is due to cultural changes achieved through our restorative and relational practice approach, early help investment, and applying a safe uncertainty model.



Our offer

We offer support across at **three levels**, depending on local authority needs.

High level support	Medium level packages of support	Low level packages of support
<div>Examples could include</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborate with staff on key developments• Complete on-site audits, observe meetings• Elements of medium and low-level packages of support	<div>Examples could include</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support with on-site workshops and a series of training• Diagnostic work	<div>Examples could include</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing guidance and information• Facilitate virtual webinars, workshops, consultations or coaching



Areas of expertise

- The Early Support (previously known as Early Help) offer, including the Family Information Service
- Multi-agency decision-making through integrated 'front door' arrangements
- Strong extra-familial harm service, supported by our dedicated Family and Adolescent Support Team.
- Child protection, including:
 - Reducing the number of children in child protection
 - Developing a service that is confident in 'safe uncertainty'
- Strong pre-proceedings and reducing-care proceedings, including:
 - Streamlined processes
 - A single children's decision-making meeting with legal representation and a restorative approach, chaired by a senior social worker manager
- Establishing a Systemic Practice and Family Therapy Team
- Developing strong UASC and care leaver services, focused on:
 - Restorative practice and key initiatives for example our brothers and sisters in care project, which won the Best Project Award from the national Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Social opportunities
- Establishing an effective leadership and workforce strategy, including:
 - 'Grow your own practitioners' initiatives
 - A workforce wellbeing offer
 - Utilising AI and technology to assist with administrative tasks and streamline services.
- Developing a child-friendly initiative and bringing together resources to help communities and individuals be safe, healthy and independent, including:
 - Improving the voice of the child
 - Influencing and changing the approach with children, young people, and parents and carers



Areas of expertise - Families First programme

- **Programme Structure**
 - Support to develop programme structure, roles required, governance arrangements, and corporate impacts to be considered.
- **MASA (Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements)**
 - Support with establishing education as the fourth safeguarding partner.
- **Relational Framework**
 - Supporting in embedding and implementation of a relational practice framework model aligning with the Families First approach.
 - Training and workforce development will focus on relationship-based principles, including restorative practice, trauma and attachment-aware practice. This will be done within a context of safe uncertainty and by utilising the families' strengths.
 - Support with implementing & embedding principles of good practice, tailored to the individual local authority
- **Family Help**
 - Support with developing a partnership practice model
 - Support with a multi-agency workforce plan
 - Implementing the new Family Help Lead Practitioner Role, aligning with the Department for Education specification.
 - Support with integrating Targeted Early Help and Children in Need aligning with the Families First model
- **MACPT (Multi Agency Child Protection Team)**
 - Support with establishing a multi-agency child protection team helping the local authority with effective multi agency working.
- **Family Network Meetings**
 - Support with the implementation of Family network meetings, including Child-centred, family-led decision-making.
 - Expanding the mandatory family group conferencing offer to include parenting apart, mediation and the lifelong links programme.





**Detailed focus on the
children social care
reforms and our
Warwickshire
Families First
approach**





What is our Warwickshire Families First Approach?

Locality Working

Supporting families in their communities. Building strong partnerships with local services, including the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Multi-Disciplinary Teams

Supporting the whole family with the services they need. These include services from Health, Police and Education.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

Clear and shared arrangements for safeguarding children and young people between Children's Services, Health, Police, Education and other key agencies and organisations.

Multi Agency Group Supervision

Multi-agency group supervision engages all professionals to collaboratively develop a clear understanding of needs and share accountability in decision-making.

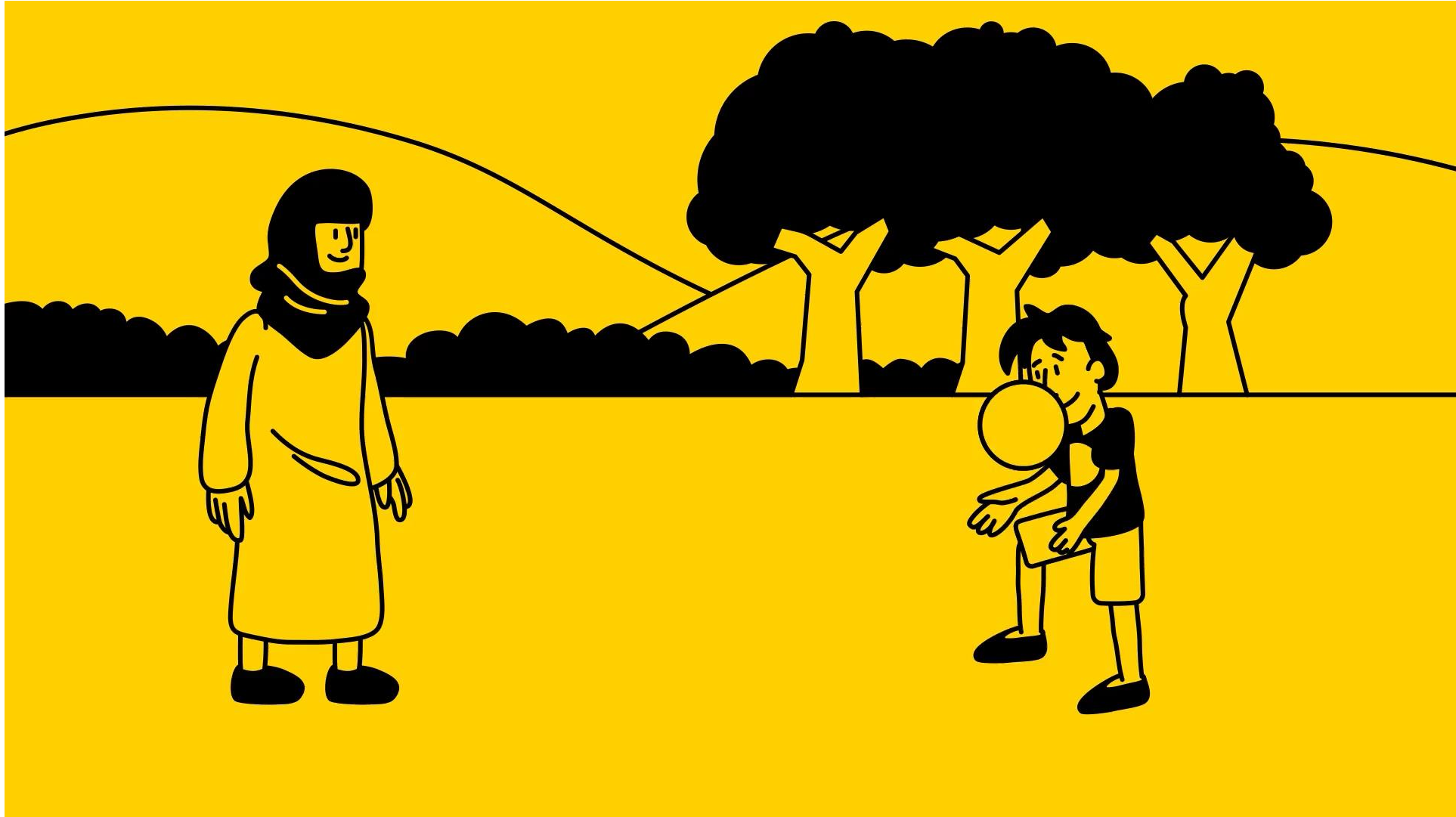
Outcomes Framework

Reflecting the Children's social care national framework, outlining aspirations and outcomes for children, young people and families.

Warwickshire's Relational Practice Framework

A relational framework, used across the partnership to support children and families and to ensure that every child and young person is happy, healthy, heard, safe and skilled.







Programme structure and relational framework areas of support

- **Developing a Partnership Practice Model**

- Collaborative approach: Foster a collaborative environment where practitioners and families work together to identify needs and set goals.
- Shared understanding: Develop a shared understanding of family needs and priorities, combining knowledge and skills to achieve realistic goals.
- Building resilience: Use the model to build family resilience and cope with adversity, ensuring the best outcomes for children.

- **Multi-Agency Workforce Plan**

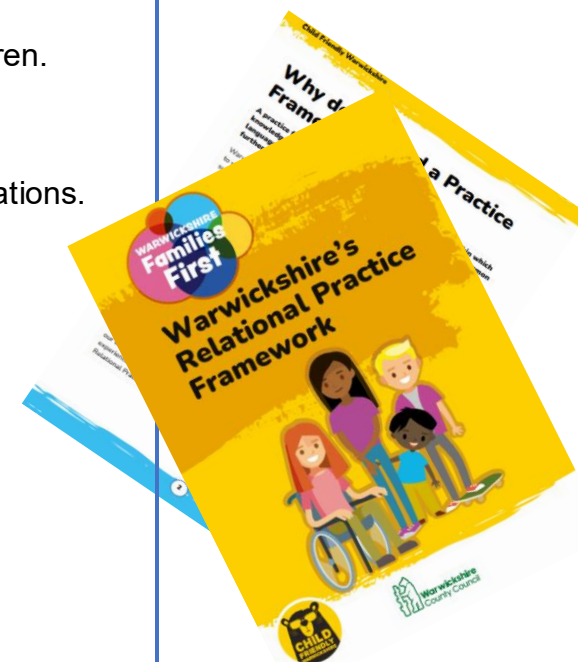
- Integrated teams: Develop multi-agency teams that include health providers, children's services, and community organisations.
- Workforce development: Invest in upskilling the workforce through training and professional development.
- Cultural change: Promote a culture of collaboration and integrated working among different agencies

- **Induction Training**

- Structured programmes: Develop structured induction programmes for new staff, including trauma-informed practice and communication skills.
- Ongoing learning: Provide opportunities for continuous learning and professional development.
- Supportive environment: Create a supportive environment that encourages new staff to engage and learn effectively.

- **Commissioning Intentions**

- Strategic planning: Develop a clear commissioning strategy that outlines the services to be provided and the outcomes to be achieved.
- Stakeholder engagement: Engage with stakeholders, including families, to ensure services meet their needs.
- Value for Money: Ensure that commissioned services provide value for money and achieve desired outcomes.





MASA areas of support

Implementation of the new arrangements and cross agency support

- Implementation : Embedding a partnership that is underpinned by strong cross agency support to deliver Working Together 2023
- Assurance and governance : Establish long-term assurance and governance of arrangements
- Partnership meetings : Provide insight around partnership meetings, groups and subgroups

Implementing the role of Education Lead Safeguarding Partner Representative

- Roles and responsibilities : Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Lead Safeguarding Partners, specifically the greater responsibility of Education at a strategic level
- Engaging Education : Develop strong mechanisms for engaging education in the safeguarding arrangements, who under Working Together 2023, will play a greater part in Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements to be the fourth safeguarding partner.

Implementing and embedding the role of the Independent Scrutineer

- Role clarity: Define the role of the Independent Scrutineer and establish an overarching partnership approach to independent scrutiny to drive continuous improvement in safeguarding

Utilising the voice of children and young people

- Engagement and co-production: Provide support around engaging and coproduction with children and young people around partnership Vision, Values and Priorities
- Seeking views: Seek views of different children and young people from different groups





Family Networks areas of support

- **Family based decision making**
 - Culture : Develop a culture where families are recognised as the experts in their own problems and are often best placed to find long lasting, sustainable solutions.
 - Empowerment in decision making : Empower families to make decisions around care and protection of their children through collaborative Family Network Meetings. Enable families to develop strategies to manage any future problems in a safe way themselves.
- **Implementation of Family Network Meetings, including child-centred, family-led decision-making.**
 - Implementation : Offer Family Network Meeting to all families at various stages, including family help, child protection, pre-proceedings, child protection. Aim to avoid children entering care, to help children return home or maintain relationships when they are in care or are care experienced.
 - Support network : Bringing together a network of support which includes all the important people in the children's lives.
 - Restorative work : Work restoratively with families to create safe, realistic and robust family plans that are integral to other central plans.
 - Referral process : Develop efficient and effective referral pathways and processes
 - Collaboration : Foster strong links between the Family Network Service, locality teams and Family Connect (Front Door)
- **Expanding the mandatory family network offer to include Parenting Apart, Mediation and the Lifelong Links programme.**
 - Medication : Mediation is a confidential, short process where a neutral third party assists two disputing parties to resolve conflict around child focused issues.
 - Parenting apart : Parenting Apart Programme is a bespoke 4–5-week program for conflicted separated parents to develop healthy co-parenting and positive child relationships.
 - Lifelong links : Lifelong Links is a service for young people in care and care experienced young people, dedicated to supporting them to rebuild and maintain connections with support networks they identify, to ensure that they remain fully supported into adulthood.





MACPT areas of support

- **Establishing a Multi-Agency Child Protection Team to enhance collaboration across agencies.**
- **Comprehensive Multi-Agency Offer**
 - Embedded roles: Integrated roles from Police, Education, Health, and Children's Social Care within the team.
 - Paediatrician consultation: Ensure strong links with paediatricians who provide consultation, guidance, and advice on health needs of children, addressing urgent, neglect, or long-term health concerns.
 - Cross-service training: Paediatricians offer training and upskilling across services.
- **Quality Assurance Framework**
 - Robust framework: Embed a quality assurance framework to ensure consistent and effective child protection practices.
- **Lead Child Protection Practitioner Role**
 - Role implementation: Develop and implement the role of Lead Child Protection Practitioner to oversee and lead child protection processes from the Strategy Discussion onwards.
 - Pivotal role: The Lead Child Protection Practitioner ensures consistent application of child protection thresholds and leads assessments of significant harm.
 - Collaborative de-escalation: Work with the Family Help Lead Practitioner and other professionals to de-escalate concern and safeguard children.
- **Parental Representation and Advocacy**
 - Advocacy offer: Implement an offer of parental representation or advocacy throughout all child protection processes, ensuring families have support during meetings.





Family Help areas of support

Family Practitioner Role (Alternatively Qualified undertaking CIN support) and Training Offer

- Comprehensive training: Provide training for family practitioners that support them to lead support for families at this level.

Implementing the Family Help Lead Practitioner Role

- Role clarity: Define clear responsibilities for lead practitioners in coordinating family help services.
- Support systems: Provide ongoing support and supervision to lead practitioners to ensure effective service delivery.
- Outcome focused: Align the role with achieving positive outcomes for families and children.

Integrating Targeted Early Help (THE) and Children in Need (CIN)

- Seamless services: Create a continuum of support that integrates early help and statutory services.
- Collaborative interventions: Use family interventions to address both individual and systemic needs within the family.
- Holistic support: Ensure that support addresses support for the whole family.

Family Help Assessment

- Integrated approach: Develop an assessment that combines the needs at both the TEH and CIN levels.
- Multi-agency collaboration: Ensure the assessment can be conducted by Family Help lead practitioners within Children's Social Care, and by Lead Practitioners from other agencies
- Strengths-based: Focus on identifying family strengths and resources to support positive outcomes.
- Continuous support: Provide ongoing support and supervision to practitioners conducting the assessments to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

Relational Front Door

- Welcoming environment: Create a welcoming and accessible front door for families seeking help.
- Relationship building: Focus on building positive relationships with families from the first point of contact.
- Integrated services: Ensure that the front door integrates with other services to provide seamless support.





Contact Details

For more information please see: [website link]

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