

Update

# Children's social care national framework

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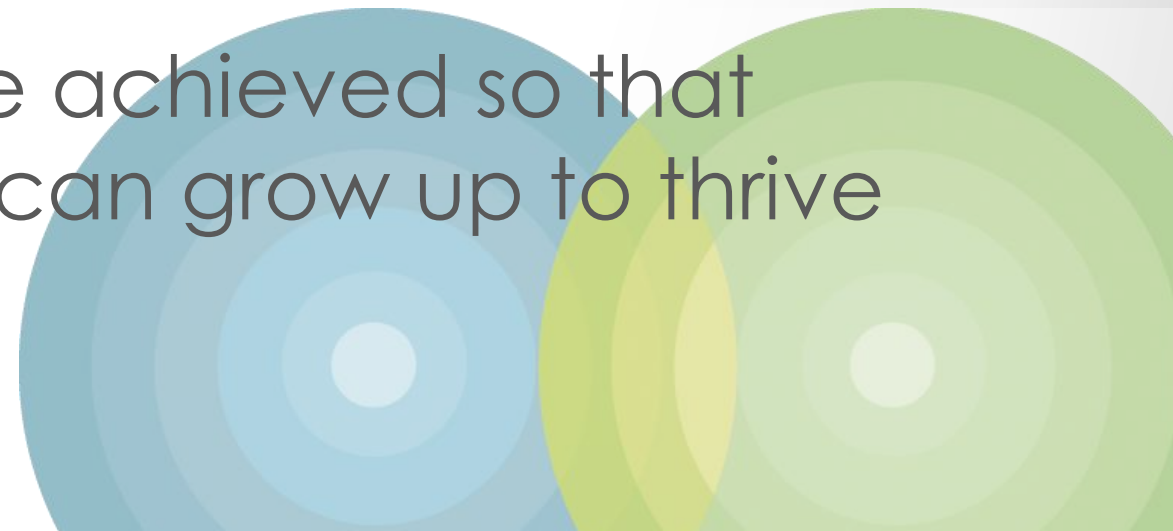


# purpose

The National Framework brings together

- the **purpose** of local authority children's social care,
- the **principles** by which children, young people and families should be supported,
- the **enablers** that should be in place so the system is effective, and
- the **outcomes** that should be achieved so that children and young people can grow up to thrive

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# Young people's **voice**

- Lot of emphasis on **hearing** and **being listened to**



Department  
for Education

*An illustrated guide to the*

## **Children's Social Care National Framework**



**For children and young people**

# How to use the framework...

- Be aware of LA priorities in commissioning processes and plans for young people
- Consider how the standards are affecting how practitioners are working
- Ensure you're supporting the standards
- Hold LAs accountable
- Consider use in supporting complaints or raising issues with practitioners, practice supervisors or leaders
- Where relevant, help young people use the standards
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# Purpose of children's social care

- Children's social care exists to support children, young people and families, to protect them by intervening decisively when they are at risk of harm and to provide care for those who need it so that they grow up and thrive with safety, stability and love.



# enablers

There are 3 enablers:

- Multi-agency working is prioritised and effective
- Leaders drive conditions for effective practice
- The workforce is equipped and effective



# principles

- Children's welfare is paramount
- Children's wishes and feelings are sought, heard, and responded to
- Children's social care works in partnership with whole families
- Children are raised by their families, with their family networks, or in family environments wherever possible
- Local authorities work with other agencies to effectively identify and meet the needs of children, young people, and families
- Local authorities consider the economic and social circumstances which may impact children, young people and families.

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# Outcomes

- **Outcome 1:** children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need
- **Outcome 2:** children and young people are supported by their family network
- **Outcome 3:** children and young people are safe in and outside their homes
- **Outcome 4:** children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes





# Outcome 1: families stay together & get help

- Every area uses a proactive & systematic approach to listen to individual and varied voices of young people
- practice is flexible and adaptive so that the perspectives of children can be heard, including through independent advocacy
- young people share wishes and feelings freely and independently from the views of parents, carers, or other adults in their lives
- Collation of hopes/aspirations of young people to shape individual support and the design of local services

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## Outcome 2: young people supported by family

- Strong emphasis on kinship care
- Every area seeks & hears the views of young people
- Every area seeks & hears views of young people about who can care for them in their family



# Outcome 3: young people are safe

- Strong recognition children in care experience harm
- Young people's views sought freely and independently from the views of parents, carers, or other adults in their lives.
- Views incorporated into assessments, plans and decision making
- Specific duty on leaders to identify harm to children in care and to take rapid action, including in how commissioned services are managed, so children and young people are protected
- Leaders do not blame their workforce when there are serious incidents and focus instead on identifying and sharing learning and adapting systems and practice to improve responses to abuse, neglect, and exploitation



# Recognition of discrimination

“Practice supervisors address barriers to support for children and young people, recognising that **some are perceived, and treated, as older than they are.** Practice supervisors know that the likelihood of **harm outside the home is more acute for some groups of children and young people, and some are more likely to be mistakenly perceived as adults.** They work with practitioners to address barriers to support for these groups” (p46)



# Outcome 4: children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes

- Every area asks children and young people about where they want to live and what is important to them in a home
- Young people receive regular information about the decisions being made about their lives, so they are clear what is happening and why
- Every area gives young people regular opportunities to share hopes, dreams, and aspirations which informs individual support & design & commissioning of local services, including through children in care councils

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# Outcome 4: children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes (2)

- Every area invites young people to be involved in identifying training, development and support needs for foster carers, residential children's home staff & supported accommodation providers
- Every area supports children and young people to articulate their views, including through access to independent advocacy
- Leaders support care leavers to live in safe, suitable accommodation, with a wide range of accommodation options available to young people and appropriate levels of support that meet care leavers' individual needs (priority for housing and rent guarantor schemes)



# Outcome 4: children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes (3)

- Practice supervisors manage effective planning and decision-making young people as they approach and transition to adulthood, allowing sufficient time for plans to be developed and implemented before 18.
- Practice supervisors liaise and partner effectively with adult social care
- Practitioners work with colleagues in residential children's homes & supported accommodation providers to help young people maintain relationships with their family and their networks.

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# Outcome 4: children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes (4)

- Practitioners prioritise helping children in care access independent visitor schemes, family-finding programmes, advocacy services, peer support and mentoring and befriending services.
- Care leavers are supported to access a range of housing options, including Staying Put, Staying Close (where available) and supported lodgings. Every effort is made to avoid care leavers becoming homeless.
- Every area has clear expectations and processes for important insights of residential children's home staff and supported accommodation providers to be used to help inform plans and decisions for young people.





# The Children's Social Care Dashboard

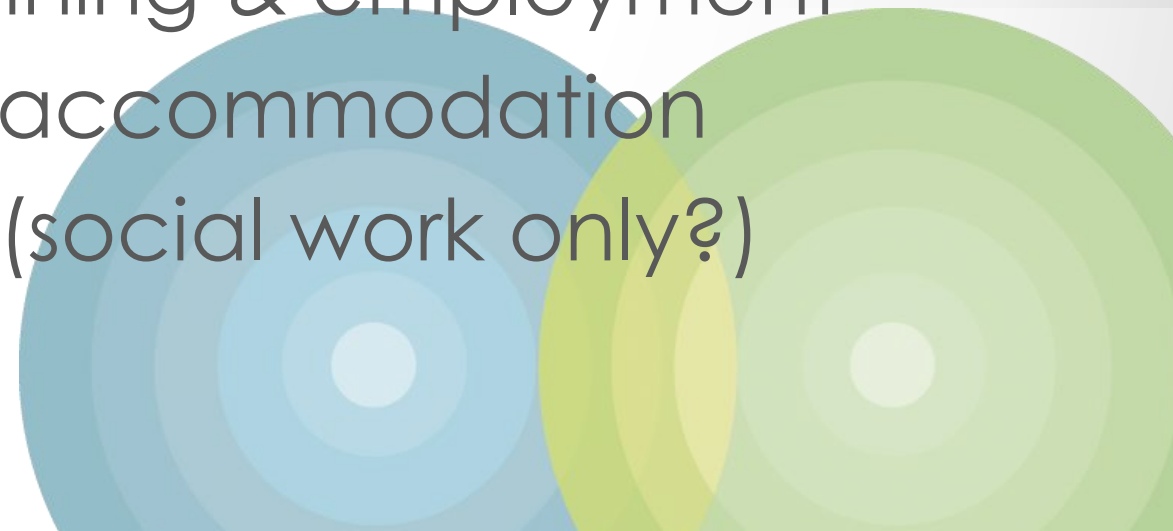
- Underpins the framework
- learning tool for both local and central Government
- clear and consistent set of data indicators
- linked to progress towards the outcomes and enablers set out in the National Framework
- not intended to be a tool to measure local authority performance on children's social care
- Initially based on currently available data but will improve opportunities for comparison

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# Initial metrics

- Number of children in care against population
- Placement changes
- Distance from home
- % in foster, children's homes and secure (supported accommodation not mentioned)
- Care leavers' education, training & employment
- % care leavers in unsuitable accommodation
- Agency and vacancy rates (social work only?)

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# Plans for...

- Children's experience of their home
- percentage of placements that match what was requested
- reason for distance of placement from home
- wellbeing of care leavers
- care leavers rate quality/satisfaction with housing
- experiences of workforce in LA / staff satisfaction

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# What else is coming...?

- **Practice Guides** to design/commission services and interventions based on the best available evidence
- **Learning loops** promoting what is working well
- **Pathfinder programmes** 'test and learn' approach
- **Universal Standards of Care:** overarching standards, for all children who live away from home, regardless of the type of setting they live in. These new standards of care reflect the aspirations of Working Together 2023 and the National Framework at a care setting level.
- **SEND & AP reforms**

