

Achieving for Children's **BUSINESS PLAN** 2020/24

Achieving *more* for Children

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01

INTRODUCTION

We are delighted to introduce Achieving more for Children - our business plan for 2020/24.

This is an ambitious plan that builds on our success over our first five years of operating, and explains how we will achieve even more for children and young people so that they have the best start in life and are able to have safe, happy, healthy and successful childhoods.

It sets out the projects that the company will deliver over the next four years to meet these aims. A number of these projects will be delivered across Kingston, Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead because they meet a common need. However, some have been designed to meet specific local challenges and circumstances or to reflect the priorities of each individual council. The business plan does not include our day-to-day business, but we will continue to maintain our attention on providing those early help, education, health and social care services that many families rely on every day.

The programmes in the business plan are based on our conviction that, in order to maintain the quality of our services and achieve the best possible outcomes for children, young people and families within the resources we have available, we must truly focus our work on six important priorities: building resilience in families, creating inclusive local provision to meet increasing need, investing in a skilled and flexible workforce, taking a more commercial approach to service development and innovation, implementing smarter and more agile working practices, and ensuring we deliver excellent value for money in all that we do.



Our plan builds on our achievements over the last five years where we have:

- achieved an Ofsted 'Outstanding' judgement for our children's social care support services in Kingston and a 'Good' judgement in Richmond and in Windsor and Maidenhead
- developed our own local residential provision, including supported accommodation for care leavers, short break care for children and young people with disabilities, and a new residential children's home
- secured over £7 million from the Department for Education as part of the Partners in Practice initiative to develop innovative ways of supporting children and young people on the edge of care
- implemented the Signs of Safety model across all our services which has enabled practitioners to better work in partnership with children and families, building on their family strengths to promote their safety and wellbeing
- become a national leader in the delivery of the Troubled Families programme with over 650 vulnerable families being given the additional support they need to improve the care and support they provide to their children
- established a Staff Council in Kingston and Richmond and Staff Voices in Windsor and Maidenhead to provide staff with a means of influencing the direction of the company and working with senior leaders to make Achieving for Children an employer of choice

All three of our owning councils face challenging financial settlements which means that the company must operate within its budget, including the delivery of planned efficiency savings. At the same time the need for our services is increasing, predominantly in relation to our need to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and to deliver our responsibilities for children in care and those leaving care.

Our business plan must focus on ensuring the company is able to better manage demand, meet needs, deliver required efficiency savings and achieve longer-term financial sustainability, balanced with a drive to maintain the quality of those services and support innovation and creative solutions to our challenges.

Since the business plan was developed, we have faced the COVID-19 pandemic which has had a significant impact on our service delivery. This impact is likely to continue for some time and may result in future changes to our priority projects. Our response to the pandemic and the impact on our organisation and the children, young people and families we support is set out in section 3.



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ABOUT ACHIEVING FOR CHILDREN

Achieving for Children was created as a community interest company in 2014 by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames to deliver all their children's services. In 2017, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead became an owner of the company. We now deliver services to more than 120,000 children and young people. We work closely with our local authority owners and local strategic partners, such as schools, the police, health services and voluntary sector organisations, to ensure that the services we provide are relevant and responsive to the differing needs of children and young people in the three local areas, and support the delivery of each council's local strategic priorities. Where it makes sense to scale-up and deliver services across all three areas, we do that in order to achieve better outcomes for children and young people and deliver better value for money.

Our initial seven year contract with Kingston and Richmond councils comes to an end in March 2021. We are delighted that the councils have jointly agreed to extend our contract for a further five years until March 2026. We also have a seven-year contract with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead which ends in 2024 with an option to extend for a further five years.

We deliver the full range of children's services for the three councils. Our service offer is based on strong universal provision delivered through our children's centres and youth centres, alongside a targeted early help offer that provides support to families at the earliest opportunity to prevent children's and young people's needs escalating and facilitate family resilience. We expanded our universal services with the addition of health visiting and school nursing when Windsor and Maidenhead joined the company. These public health services complement our specialist nursing and therapy services for children with disabilities and complex health needs. Our statutory offer includes child protection, support for children in care and leaving care, youth justice and services for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Our final service area is the support we provide to early years settings and schools to deliver high quality teaching and learning. This includes planning school places, school admissions, advice on school improvement and targeted support for vulnerable pupils.

To support the delivery of these services, we employ just over 1,100 professionals from a wide variety of disciplines, including social work, teaching, nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and clinical psychology. Our performance and the quality of our early help, health and social care services are good and this has been recognised by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission in their service and regulatory inspections. Inspection outcomes for special educational needs services are less positive and are an area for continued improvement.

Service benefits

Achieving for Children has a single organisational focus on services for children, young people and their families. A single organisation working across three local authorities brings operational efficiency and service resilience through a flexible workforce that is skilled and able to manage peaks in demands for services.

Our larger scale means that specialist expertise, which may have been lost or unaffordable in a single local authority, can be retained and developed.

The joint company model provides increased opportunities for employee engagement and empowerment, enabling cost-efficient decisions to be taken by practitioners working directly with families and reducing the need for more intensive work and interventions further down the line.

The service benefits for Achieving for Children are best seen in three areas.

First, our investment in systemic family therapy to complement social work interventions when working with families with the most complex needs.

Second, our Virtual School where our larger scale has enabled us to retain specialist practitioners focused on improving educational outcomes and destinations for children in care.

Third, the development of a company-wide independent fostering agency (IFA) to lead on the recruitment and retention of a highly-skilled pool of local foster carers. The agency was graded as good by Ofsted at its initial regulatory inspection in 2019.

The large majority of our funding comes from contracts with the local authorities that own us and commission us to deliver their children's services. The annual value of these contracts is £148 million. In addition, the company manages the allocation of £413 million in Dedicated Schools Grant to early years providers and schools.

Since 2015, there has been a significant financial pressure on the high needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant in Kingston and Richmond due to increasing need and complexity of need and the associated costs of school placements for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

This is a national trend, although not yet mirrored in Windsor and Maidenhead. There has similarly been an increase in children in need of social care support and becoming looked after. Again, this follows a national trend and is placing significant financial pressure on the three local authorities.

One contributing factor to this increased cost has been a lack of local provision to meet the increasing numbers of children needing support and to meet their complexity of needs, leading to a reliance on external and independent provision which is often at a much higher cost.

Financial benefits

Our company model is designed to be flexible enough to respond to the individual priorities of each of our owning councils, but also to deliver jointly across the two or three partners where this improves outcomes and increases efficiency, resilience and cost effectiveness.

We have a shared corporate management structure and operating model which delivers efficiencies from a single approach to financial management and business services.

This model has reduced central costs by just over £3 million since the company was established.

There have also been financial efficiencies from a more stable workforce and a reduced reliance on more expensive locum and agency workers. This has been achieved through improved recruitment and retention schemes and the increased opportunities for career development and progression available in a larger organisation.

In addition, we have increased our purchasing power for placements for children in care, care leavers and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and we have invested in developing our own residential provision for children in care and supported accommodation for care leavers to help meet their needs locally at a lower cost. We opened a 17-bed unit offering 24 hours supported accommodation in Kingston in 2017 and are due to open our first children's home in March 2020. Overall we have reduced the costs of delivering services for the councils by £12 million since 2014.

One of the reasons Achieving for Children was established as a community interest company was to benefit from increasing our commercial and income-generation opportunities whilst maintaining our social focus on giving children the best start and improving their life chances. In our first five years we have successfully diversified our income by providing a consultancy offer to local authorities who are considering alternative delivery models, or who require support to improve the effectiveness and impact of their children's services.

We have provided in-depth support to eight local authorities in England since 2014 and, as a result of this success, we were named as a Partner in Practice by the Department for Education in 2018 and have successfully provided improvement support to a further five local authorities. Since 2014, we have also generated income from traded services, trusts and foundations, fundraising and corporate partnerships. This has enabled us to innovate our service offer and implement creative solutions to meet families' needs. Over the next four years, we intend to focus our commercial efforts on this activity and reduce our consultancy offer as this is considered a more sustainable approach for the company.

Commercial benefits

As a community interest company, Achieving for Children is able to trade its services to other local authorities and public bodies, through management consultancy and the provision of services under contract, in order to create a surplus for reinvestment in frontline services for children, young people and their families.

It also has the potential to expand the range of services provided by the company and to access funding opportunities that are not open to local authorities, such as charitable trusts and foundations and corporate sponsorship that can be used to fund or supplement funding for non-statutory services. Since 2014, Achieving for Children has generated £5 million in traded services with schools and from our improvement consultancy offer to twelve local authorities.

We have secured more than £10 million in grant funding to develop our services, including substantial funding from the Department for Education to develop innovative solutions for children experiencing domestic violence, substance misuse and parental mental health issues. This has resulted in the development of a nationally-recognised service which provides a multi-disciplinary approach to building family resilience to prevent children requiring child protection interventions or needing to come into care

Children's social care services in Kingston were inspected by Ofsted in October 2019 and judged to be '**Outstanding**' in terms of the effectiveness of the support we provide to children in need of help and protection, children in care and young people leaving care.

91% of families have improved the care they provide to their children following intensive support from the Strengthening Families service. The service has provided support to **265** families experiencing domestic violence, substance misuse and parental mental health concerns.

More than **1,000** children with disabilities receive short break care, including overnight respite care, from Achieving for Children. **96%** of parents and carers rate the care and activities that their children receive as good or better.

More than **10,000** young people regularly use our youth services to take part in positive activities that develop their interests and talents. More than **1,500** young people complete their Duke of Edinburgh's award each year delivering over **45,000** hours of volunteering to their local communities with a social value of more than **£475,000**.

We have delivered **9,074** additional school places including expanding SEND provision in mainstream schools and co-developing five new free schools. This means that more of our children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are now educated within their local communities.

98% of education, health and care plans (EHCPs) are completed within the statutory timescale of 20 weeks from the request for assessment. This places our services among the best in the country for the timeliness of assessments and plans for children with SEND.

We support **165** schools to deliver high quality teaching and learning. **91%** of schools in our three boroughs are judged to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and are at the top of the school league tables for progress and attainment at all key stages.

89% of children and young people report improved mental health and emotional wellbeing following support from our emotional health services. Our services include art therapy, clinical psychology and systemic family therapy.

More than **13,000** families attend one of our children's centres each year for health appointments, to access local childcare, and to attend activities that help their children get ready for school. **77%** of children achieve a good level of development in their first year at school which is well above the national average at **72%**.

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OUR BUSINESS PLAN

What is the business plan?

Achieving 'more' for Children - the business plan for Achieving for Children for 2020 to 2024 is the company's most important strategic document. It articulates our vision for the company together with the most important outcomes that we want to achieve for children in partnership with our owning councils and local strategic partners. It also sets out our objectives for what we want the company to be and how we will change and develop in order to deliver these outcomes. Against each of our strategic outcomes, the business plan sets out priority activities that we will focus on delivering over the next four years. These are the key priorities that will enable us to deliver our vision. Each priority includes targets and milestones so that the three councils, our partners and stakeholders and children and young people can hold us to account. The intention of our business plan is not to capture everything we do as a company. It is a high-level strategic document which provides a clear framework for decision-making about our services and how we prioritise and allocate our resources.

How we have developed our business plan

The priorities in our business plan are based on a sound understanding of the local needs in each of the three local authority areas. We have developed a strong evidence base for our plan using demographic trends, performance data and the needs analyses produced by the councils in their joint strategic needs assessments to better understand local needs, alongside more qualitative feedback about the effectiveness and impact of our services.

To make sense of all of this information we held a 'Big Conversation' in 2019. This involved a series of listening events with children, young people, parents, carers, partner organisations in the statutory and voluntary sectors, the councils and our own employees. These conversations enabled us to hear about those issues that are most pressing and that should be our highest priority, as well as identifying creative solutions and potential areas for innovation. The 'big conversations' also enabled us to ensure that our plan is aligned with the strategic priorities of our owning councils in their corporate plans and with our strategic partners, including the local health and care plans developed by the clinical commissioning groups.

How we will measure our progress

We will monitor progress in two ways. Firstly, by being clear about our priority activities, when we expect these to be delivered and monitoring our progress against those delivery plans. Secondly, through a set of key performance indicators and quality measures. These have been set by the councils as part of our contracts with them and by our Board of Directors to ensure the continual development of the company and the services it delivers. There is regular monitoring and scrutiny of our performance by councils and the Board of Directors, with progress against the key performance indicators reported publicly to each of the owning councils. All the success measures that we have used in this plan are reported to the councils and published as part of our quarterly contract monitoring.

Annual review

Each year the business plan priority areas will be reviewed and updated. The annual review will be reported to the councils in public meetings. The annual review will provide a self-assessment of our progress at implementing our priorities in the previous year, as well as refreshing our priorities and activities for the year ahead.

COVID-19

It should be noted that the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic will have an impact on our business plan. The pandemic has provided the opportunity to be innovative and creative to develop new ways of delivering our services, for example, through the increased use of digital solutions. Going forward, as part of our recovery planning we will be reviewing the lessons learnt and will apply best practice to our service delivery so we can continue to effectively meet the needs of our children, young people and families. In addition, some projects set out in this plan may be delayed because our response to COVID-19 has required a major programme of work and resources have been diverted to enable us to continue to provide high quality services.

Our commitment to equality and diversity

Along with so many others both here in the UK and across the globe, all of us at Achieving for Children have been deeply affected by the tragic death of George Floyd. We recognise that discrimination has a destructive impact on many people's lives. The recent events have highlighted the continued racial disparity, structural inequalities and systemic injustices experienced by many Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities across the world, and given us all the opportunity to reflect on ourselves, our society and our organisation. The powerful and collective response of the Black Lives Matter movement and the feedback we are seeking from colleagues within Achieving for Children will help us to better understand where we are as an organisation and where we would like to be. A plan will be developed over the coming months and as an organisation we are committed to taking action to address any areas of concern within Achieving for Children and for the children, young people and families we support. We will report on the impact of this work as part of our business plan reporting arrangements.

04

OUR VISION AND VALUES

Our vision

Our vision is to provide children and their families with the support and services they need to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives.

Our values

Trust:

We are reliable, others can count on us to undertake tasks and deliver on what was agreed – we will do what we said we would do. We will encourage open and honest communication, and model clear and fair professional boundaries.

Respect:

We will listen to and value other people's perspectives and differences. We will show empathy and humility in the way we communicate.

Empower:

We help others to realise their ability and potential, and show emotional intelligence in our approach. We show appropriate and respectful use of the power given to us in our jobs or positions and we use this to encourage and enable others.



Who we are

At Achieving for Children, we champion children and families, putting their wellbeing and education first. As a social enterprise, we take the values of public service and combine them with a business approach to deliver our social aims. We have the independence and flexibility to tailor innovative solutions to the needs of children and their families, whilst maintaining our focus on delivering priorities for each of the councils that owns the company.

How we work

We put children and young people first:

We are passionate about ensuring the best possible outcomes for children and young people and this drives everything that we do.

We embrace diversity and champion inclusion:

We are committed to valuing difference and diversity in our workforce and in the children and families we work with, so that their identities are promoted and their individual needs are met.

We are resourceful, adaptable and dependable:

We find and create solutions that work well for children and their families. We build our reputation based on our professionalism, our dedication, our flexibility, and by always delivering what we promise.

We nurture strong, responsive and caring relationships:

We build strong and productive partnerships with children, young people, parents, carers and communities so that we can listen and learn from one another.

We lead and support partnerships to meet the needs of children and families:

We build strong and effective partnerships with our owning councils, other statutory services, schools, education providers, local businesses, as well as organisations in the voluntary and community sector.

We value and invest in our staff to deliver innovative and quality services:

We know that our employees are our most important asset – they make our ambitions a reality. We recruit and retain the best people, value their experience and expertise, and support their professional development and personal growth.

We will work with our own councils to deliver the most effective solutions for them:

We understand the requirements of each council that commissions us to deliver their children's services, and work closely with elected members and corporate leaders to help deliver their plans and priorities.

05

OUR AMBITION

By 2024, Achieving for Children will be a strong and financially stable organisation. Children's services throughout England are facing unprecedented financial challenges, predominantly because of the need to support more children and an increase in the complexity and longevity of their needs.

This relates to services for children in need of help and protection, children in care and leaving care, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, and children with special educational needs and disabilities. It is placing significant pressure on the three councils' revenue budgets and, in the case of support for children with special educational needs and disabilities in Kingston and Richmond, is building a substantial in-year and cumulative financial deficit because the allocated government grant is insufficient to meet the increasing need.

We will meet this challenge by having a relentless focus on outcomes for children and young people based on local needs and priorities. Delivering our vision to give children the best start in life and improve their life chances is not just a job for Achieving for Children, but is a shared responsibility with the wider public and voluntary sector. By 2024, Achieving for Children will be characterised by its strong and meaningful relationships with our partner organisations and our whole-system approach to improving services and outcomes for children and young people.

We will have strengthened relationships with parents and carers, and our service offer will be shaped by them and by the direct involvement of children and young people. The co-production of effective solutions to local priorities, including financial challenges, will be evident in our successful delivery of this business plan, as well as our response to emerging issues. We will have invested in integrated services and joint commissioning with our partners, bringing together our collective ideas, talent and resources to better meet the needs of children and young people, especially those with the most complex needs. This will most be evident in our delivery of children's health services where we will have strengthened our integrated health services for children with disabilities, and we will have expanded our offer to include health visiting and public health nursing in schools.

We will focus our early help services on building resilience in families so that they are better able to help, support and protect their children without the need for statutory interventions. Our services will consistently use reflective, collaborative and strengths-based approaches to working with the whole family so that parents are able to make positive and lasting changes to the care they provide to their children. This means maintaining strong universal services, such as youth services, and investing in targeted early help services based on evidence-based interventions that are proven to work in supporting sustained change in families.

Our services will be high quality. By 2024, our social care services will be judged to be outstanding by Ofsted in their inspection of local authority children's services or the subsequent inspection framework. Local area inspections of services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and for youth justice services will also have positive outcomes, as will inspections of our health services by the Care Quality Commission. Most importantly, satisfaction with our services by children, young people and parents will also be high.

We will consistently get the basics right for families in terms of good quality assessments, plans, interventions and support packages that are regularly reviewed, and use evidence of what works coupled with effective risk management that supports children and young people to remain at home with their families as much as possible.

By 2024, we will have successfully invested in local provision so that children and young people can stay closer to their families and support networks, and benefit from our local offer of integrated education, health and care services. We will have met the increasing demand for school places and have maintained local choice for children and young people by working with government to create more free schools and by having permanently expanded good and outstanding local schools.

We will have invested in inclusive education so that more children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities can be educated in local mainstream schools. We will have also opened more local special schools with a specific focus on autistic spectrum conditions, speech, language and communication needs, and social, emotional and mental health needs. In the next four years, we will also have increased the number of foster care families, opened our own residential children's homes and increased our range of supported accommodation for care leavers, and we will have joined-up this support to provide holistic support to children in care and on the edge of care. All our services will be focused on promoting independence and developing the skills that young people will need in adulthood.

Achieving our vision for children and young people is reliant on a skilled, motivated and stable workforce. So, by 2024, we will be recognised as an employer of choice for professionals working with children and young people. We will have reduced the number of vacant posts and agency workers in our organisation, reduce our annual voluntary turnover, and increased our employee satisfaction rates to above 90%.

Our frontline employees will be able to spend the large majority of their time working directly with children and families because we have lean, streamlined business process and have invested in new technology and digital solutions that enables more agile and smarter working. This will include bringing in-house those support services that will enable us to provide better and more cost-efficient services for children and their families. We will also be more commercial in our approach.

We will have strengthened our commissioning practices to foster innovation and achieve higher quality services at a lower cost, and we will have developed our residential care provision on a commercial basis enabling us to offer these services to the market and reinvest any surplus in our early intervention services to prevent children needing to come into care. This will be the focus for our commercial activity over the next four years, meaning that we will significantly scale-back our improvement consultancy offer to other local authorities and reduce our original plans to expand the company to five local authority members. However, we will remain open to opportunities to bring on-board a partner local authority to work alongside our services in Windsor and Maidenhead.

06

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES TO 2024

Based on our vision and ambitions, we have identified six strategic priorities for our business plan for the next four years

Strategic priority	What we will achieve for children and young people?	Why is this important?
Stronger families	We will have a relentless focus on safeguarding children and young people across all our services. The services we deliver will be high-quality and will protect and promote the wellbeing of children and young people by promoting family resilience.	Ensuring children and young people are safe from harm is our core business. We want to build resilience in our families and communities so that they are better able to help, support and protect children without the need for statutory intervention.
Positive futures	We will invest and work collaboratively to improve our local education, health and care offer to children and young people so that they have access to high quality services, are able to stay close to their families and friends, achieve well, and develop their skills for independence.	It is crucial that we provide the right support at the right time, this will enable us to help children and young people to develop their independence and prepare for adulthood. Putting in place local provision means children and young people can stay close to their families and essential support networks and they can benefit from our integrated services giving them the best chance for a positive future.

Strategic priority	What we will achieve for children and young people?	Why is this important?
Excellent workforce	Our workforce will be experienced, talented, empowered and motivated to deliver the best possible services and outcomes for children and young people; we will invest in the recruitment, retention and development of our workforce and reward their achievements.	Feedback from children, young people and families always emphasises the importance of a consistent, skilled and motivated workforce. We want to make Achieving for Children a place where people want to come and work and a company that they are proud to tell their family and friends that they work for.
Financial stability	The services we deliver will provide excellent value for money and we are trusted by our commissioning councils to deliver the best possible services within the agreed contract price, including the efficient delivery of our financial savings plans.	Given the financial context, both nationally and locally, it is essential that we are focused on delivering efficient, cost-effective and financially sustainable services so we are able to support those most in need.
Commercial success	We will secure the sustainability of the community interest company through contract renewal, business development, fundraising and good growth, so that we are able to reinvest in the services we deliver directly to children and their families.	Greater commercial success will enable us to generate a profit to reinvest in our services thereby benefiting the children and young people that we support.
Smarter working	Our business processes will be efficient, cost-effective and supportive to frontline practitioners so that they are able to spend as much time as possible working directly with children, young people and their families to improve outcomes for them.	Better business processes, and effective use of new digital technologies, will allow our workforce to reduce the amount of time they spend on unnecessary paperwork and bureaucracy, freeing them up to spend more time with the children, young people and families we support.

07

DELIVERING OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN 2020/21

Achieving *more* for children across our whole organisation

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Positive futures	Continue to develop as a provider of residential support for children and young people in care and as a provider of supported accommodation for young people leaving care so that more young people are able to stay local and closer to their support networks.	Associate Director for Provider Services	90% of children and young people will be living locally in high quality care placements close to their friends and family and will be effectively support to full independence and adulthood.	We will have opened a new residential children's home and will have completed business cases for two new supported accommodation units for care leavers leading to 60% of children in care and young people leaving care being in local care placements.
	Strengthen compliance and the quality of services delivered by the independent fostering agency, so that it supports the recruitment, training, development and retention of foster carers, enables more children and young people to benefit from in-house family-based care.	Associate Director for Provider Services	Our IFA will be judged as outstanding by Ofsted. We will have increased our number of foster carers by 100 families so that more children and young people are able to benefit from family-based care.	Our IFA will be judged as good by Ofsted. We will have increased our total number of foster carers by 25 families.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Excellent workforce	Strengthen the approach to recruitment and retention to attract experienced and well-qualified practitioners and managers, retain a permanent workforce, and reduce employee turnover and reliance on a higher-cost agency workforce.	Associate Director for Workforce	We will have a strong and stable workforce with a voluntary turnover rate below 15% and an agency staff rate below 10%. There will be clear career development pathways with more than 75% of our employees saying that Achieving for Children is a good place to work.	Our voluntary turnover rate will be 18% and our agency staff rate will be 16%. 60% of our employees say that Achieving for Children is a good place to work.
	Develop the organisational culture of the company, including redefining and embedding values, behaviours and ways of working that are focused on achieving the best possible support and services for children and young people.	Associate Director for Workforce	75% of employees say that they consistently experience our organisational values of trust, respect and empowerment from their senior leaders to their frontline colleagues. This has a positive impact on the children, young people and families that we support.	60% of employees say that they consistently experience trust, respect and empowerment within Achieving for Children.
Financial stability	Review and strengthen capacity and arrangements for commissioning, procurement and contract management, including the joint commissioning of services with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), to achieve quality, value and improved outcomes for children, young people and their families.	Director of Commissioning and Partnerships	We will have a robust and comprehensive commissioning arrangements including effective joint commissioning with the CCG. Procurement and contract management has been strengthened across the organisation.	A new commissioning framework has been agreed with a focus on joint commissioning, supported by a skilled commissioning team.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Commercial success	Develop and implement a commercial strategy for residential care that enables the company to provide additional placement capacity to the market with any income generated reinvested into local services for children in care and on the edge of care.	Associate Director for Provider Services	£600,000 is reinvested each year into local services for children in care and on the edge of care from the income generated from the commercial strategy for residential care.	£150,000 is reinvested into local services for children in care and on the edge of care from the income generated from the commercial strategy for residential care.
	Develop and implement a revised fundraising strategy that brings in grants and other income to support the delivery of innovative new services that promote positive outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people.	Head of New Business	The company generates £1 million annually through fundraising for investment in prevention and early intervention activities for the most vulnerable children and young people.	The company generates £250,000 through fundraising for investment in prevention and early intervention activities for the most vulnerable children and young people.
	Take opportunities to expand the company by finding a children's services partner for Windsor and Maidenhead that would enable service effectiveness, operational efficiency and resilience, and longer-term financial sustainability.	Chief Operating Officer	There is an integrated delivery model in Windsor and Maidenhead with services delivered in partnership with another local authority, delivering financial and operational efficiencies for both partners.	Potential partners have been identified and approached to ascertain their interest in exploring an integrated delivery model with services in Windsor and Maidenhead.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Smarter working	Review and put in place strengthened arrangements for corporate support services so that the company has the services it needs to be efficient, effective and deliver excellent value for money.	Chief Operating Officer	The company benefits from effective and cost-efficient corporate support services. Employee satisfaction rates with support services are high because 98% of issues and incidents are successfully resolved within agreed timescales.	The service level agreements for ICT, legal services and health and safety have been revised and HR services have been brought in-house delivering £350,000 in efficiency savings. 94% of issues and incidents are successfully resolved within agreed timescales.
	Implement digital strategies and solutions to improve the operational efficiency of frontline and corporate support services, maximising the time available to practitioners for working directly with children and young people.	Head of Business Support and Digital Transformation	Achieving for Children is a lean and efficient organisation; 100% of routine tasks, such as booking appointments, have been digitised.	The digital transformation strategy has been implemented leading to the digitisation of at least 60% of routine business support tasks.

Achieving *more* for children in Kingston

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Stronger families	Define and implement a consistent practice framework for early help and children's social care services, including embedding Signs of Safety and the systemic family therapy model to promote a strengths-based approach that better supports families to make sustainable change and reduce risks to children and young people.	Director of Children's Social Care	A strength-based practice framework will be established across all our services. External reviews and inspections of our services will consistently demonstrate the success of our practice in promoting resilience in families so that children are safe and well cared for. Ofsted will judge our children's services to be outstanding in their overall effectiveness.	The practice framework will be in place and implemented across all services. Internal reviews of practice will evidence that Signs of Safety and systemic approaches are embedded. Ofsted will judge services in Kingston to be 'Outstanding'.
	Implement a strengthened approach to the quality assurance of frontline services so that they continue to effectively safeguard children and young people and promote their wellbeing and achievement. This will include strengthening the multi-agency focus on quality assuring EHCPs for children and young people with SEND.	Associate Director for Quality Assurance & Review	Quality assurance practice informs the continual development of our services so that they are relevant and responsive to changing local needs. 90% of casework is judged to be good or better as part of our quality assurance of practice in early help, children's social care, health services and support for children with SEND. Quality assurance processes identify that the education, health and social care contributions to the plans for children with SEND are completed within statutory timescales and to a high standard. Positive feedback from parents, children and young people reflects this multi-agency approach.	Permanent appointments have been made to increase capacity for quality assurance in both operational areas. A revised quality assurance framework is in place following feedback from recent inspections. 75% of casework is judged to be 'Good' or better. The strengthened multi-agency focus on EHCPs results in an improvement in the quality as evidenced through audits.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Stronger families	Complete a review of early help services and implement a revised strategy, partnership offer and operating model that supports and strengthens families at the earliest opportunity, so that they can protect and meet the needs of their children without the need for higher-tier services or social work interventions.	Associate Director for Early Help	We have a strong partnership-focused early help offer that provides coherent and coordinated support to families from the right service at the earliest opportunity. Universal services and targeted early help services are effective at reducing the need for statutory interventions meaning that there has been a 20% reduction in child protection planning and the number of children coming in to care.	The recommendations of the early help review have been implemented leading to strengthened partnership involvement in the early help offer leaving Achieving for Children to focus on more targeted support for families with more complex needs. There has been a 5% reduction in child protection planning and the number of children in care.
	Implement the best model for safeguarding adolescents, particularly from extra-familial risks, and for supporting those young people who are on the edge of care.	Associate Director for Early Help	We intervene early to safeguard adolescents who are on the edge of care. Through the intensive support we have provided, we have supported more young people to safely remain at home.	We have reviewed and redesigned our Youth Resilience Service to ensure it best meets the needs of adolescents on the edge of care. The new service model has been successfully implemented and continues to support more young people to safely remain at home.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Positive futures	Review and reconfigure the future delivery of health services, establishing an operating model that promotes high quality and integrated services that support children and young people to maximise their independence, resilience and health outcomes.	Associate Director for Health Services	Public health nursing services are integrated with other children's services providing effective universal child health services and improved support for children and young people with more complex health and wellbeing needs, thereby reducing the need for more intensive interventions such as EHC planning.	A First 1,000 Days service has been implemented, bringing together public sector and voluntary sector organisations to improve outcomes of young children aged 0 to 3 years and reduce the longer-term need for statutory services and support.
	Deliver the SEND Futures Plan to transform the experience of children and young people with SEND and their families, so that local, high-quality education, health and social care provision meets needs and promotes independence for all children and young people with SEND within the resources available in the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and pooled budgets with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). This will include ensuring intervention activity in mainstream provision effectively supports children and young people who are on the SEN support register.	SEND Programme Director	The needs of most children and young people with SEND are met at the earliest stage in mainstream schools without the need for an EHCP. 75% of children and young people with a plan are educated in local mainstream and special schools with much reduced reliance on independent and non-maintained school provision outside of the borough. The educational needs of children and young people with SEND are met within the funding provided in the Dedicated Schools Grant.	There are fewer than 1,275 EHCPs. 60% of children and young people with a plan are educated in local mainstream and special schools. The plan leads to cost avoidance and mitigations of £2.5m per plan year.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Positive futures	Work with the CCG and other partners to implement the Written Statement of Action for SEND so that services are high quality and respond better to the needs, views and ambitions of children, young people and their families.	Associate Director for SEND	Services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are consistently high quality with 75% of parents and carers rating services as 'Good' or better.	The re-inspection of local area SEND services by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission judges that sufficient progress has been made in implementing the Written Statement of Action and that the overall quality of services has improved. 60% of parents and carers rate services as good or better.
	Improve the provision of occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, and physiotherapy through the implementation of recommendations identified in the review of therapies across Achieving for Children, the CCG and key partners.	Associate Director for SEND	There is an enhanced local therapies offer which is more accessible and more responsive to growing demand. 75% of parents and carers rate therapies as 'Good' or better. The revised staffing model impacts positively on the recruitment and retention of therapists and develops wider expertise across the whole SEND workforce.	25% of recommendations identified in the therapies review are implemented.
	Work with adult care and housing providers to improve pathway and transition planning for young people with SEND so that services and support are in place to meet their needs, promote independence and enable a positive experience of early adulthood.	Associate Director for SEND	All young people with SEND have an effective transition plan in place by age 15 that plans for their independence and maximises their opportunities for a positive experience of early adulthood, including planning for their transition to adult social care services where needed.	A revised transitions protocol has been agreed between Achieving for Children and adult social care services and is embedded across SEND and leaving care services.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Positive futures	Expand vocational learning opportunities for young people through the development of work experience, traineeships and apprenticeships (particularly for those leaving care or with SEND) to support them to gain meaningful employment.	Associate Director for Workforce	98% of young people are in meaningful education, employment and training due to the availability of more vocational learning opportunities. There has been a 100% increase in the number of young people completing traineeships or apprenticeships.	92% of young people are in education, employment and training. There has been a 25% increase in the number of young people completing traineeships or apprenticeships.
	Develop and implement a mental health strategy that outlines responsibilities for Achieving for Children, CCG and partner organisations, with clear pathways and thresholds that are easily understood by families and that effectively meet the mental health needs of children and young people in universal and more targeted provision.	Associate Director for Emotional Health	Children and young people are easily able to access high quality mental health services that have a strong focus on early intervention and prevent issues escalating to higher levels of need. 75% of families will rate mental health services as good or better.	The review of current mental health provision at the universal level and tier 2 and tier 3 is complete with a clear action plan in place for implementing identified recommendations.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Smarter working	Develop and implement a local engagement strategy and service that strengthens relationships with children, young people and families so that their views, wishes and ambitions shape the delivery of high quality, relevant and responsive services that offer the best value for money.	Director of Commissioning and Partnerships	Collaboration and involvement is the organisational culture within Achieving for Children. Our whole workforce (supported by a specialist participation team) routinely engages with parents, carers, children and young people to ensure that our services are relevant, responsive, focused on local needs and deliver maximum value for money.	A new engagement strategy is developed in collaboration with parents, carers, children and young people. A central participation function is in place to create capacity to improve involvement and collaboration. Five collaborative activities have been completed in significant service areas agreed with parents, carers, children and young people.
	Develop and implement a new approach to partnership working that marshalls the skills, capacity, resources and creativity of the whole community to better identify and meet the changing needs of children and young people.	Director of Commissioning and Partnerships	Achieving for Children is recognised as an excellent partner that champions the needs of children, young people and families as part of local strategic partnerships and by actively contributing to the wider corporate priorities of the council.	Achieving for Children makes a positive contribution to local strategic partnerships through active involvement and leadership.

The priorities in our plan for Kingston are aligned with the Corporate Plan for 2019 to 2023: Making Kingston better, together - in particular strategic outcome 3: Healthy, independent and resilient residents, with effective support to those who need it most.

Achieving *more* for children in Richmond

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Stronger families	Define and implement a consistent practice framework for early help and children's social care services, including embedding Signs of Safety and the systemic family therapy model to promote a strengths-based approach that better supports families to make sustainable change and reduce risks to children and young people.	Director of Children's Social Care	A strength-based practice framework will be established across all our services. External reviews and inspections of our services will consistently demonstrate the success of our practice in promoting resilience in families so that children are safe and well cared for. Ofsted will judge our children's services to be outstanding in their overall effectiveness.	The practice framework will be in place and implemented across all services. Internal reviews of practice will evidence that Signs of Safety and systemic approaches are embedded. Ofsted will judge services in Kingston to be 'Outstanding'.
	Implement a strengthened approach to the quality assurance of frontline services so that they continue to effectively safeguard children and young people and promote their wellbeing and achievement. This will include strengthening the multi-agency focus on quality assuring EHCPs for children and young people with SEND.	Associate Director for Quality Assurance and Review	Quality assurance practice informs the continual development of our services so that they are relevant and responsive to changing local needs. 90% of casework is judged to be good or better as part of our quality assurance of practice in early help, children's social care, health services and support for children with SEND. Quality assurance processes identify that the education, health and social care contributions to the plans for children with SEND are completed within statutory timescales and to a high standard. Positive feedback from parents, children and young people reflects this multi-agency approach.	Permanent appointments have been made to increase capacity for quality assurance in both operational areas. A revised quality assurance framework is in place following feedback from recent inspections. 75% of casework is judged to be 'Good' or better. The strengthened multi-agency focus on EHCPs results in an improvement in the quality as evidenced through audits.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Stronger families	Complete a review of early help services and implement a revised strategy, partnership offer and operating model that supports and strengthens families at the earliest opportunity, so that they can protect and meet the needs of their children without the need for higher-tier services or social work interventions.	Associate Director for Early Help	We have a strong partnership-focused early help offer that provides coherent and coordinated support to families from the right service at the earliest opportunity. Universal services and targeted early help services are effective at reducing the need for statutory interventions meaning that there has been a 20% reduction in child protection planning and the number of children coming in to care.	The recommendations of the early help review have been implemented leading to strengthened partnership involvement in the early help offer leaving Achieving for Children to focus on more targeted support for families with more complex needs. There has been a 5% reduction in child protection planning and the number of children in care.
	Implement the best model for safeguarding adolescents, particularly from extra-familial risks, and for supporting those young people who are on the edge of care.	Associate Director for Early Help	We intervene early to safeguard adolescents who are on the edge of care. Through the intensive support we have provided, we have supported more young people to safely remain at home.	We have reviewed and redesigned our Youth Resilience Service to ensure it best meets the needs of adolescents on the edge of care. The new service model has been successfully implemented and continues to support more young people to safely remain at home.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Positive futures	Review and reconfigure the future delivery of health services, establishing an operating model that promotes high quality and integrated services that support children and young people to maximise their independence, resilience and health outcomes.	Associate Director for Health Services	There is an integrated health service for children with disabilities in Richmond that complements the service in Kingston. Public health nursing services are integrated with other children’s services providing effective universal child health services and improved support for children and young people with more complex health and wellbeing needs, thereby reducing the need for more intensive interventions such as EHC planning.	Business cases have been developed for an integrated health service for children with disabilities and a First 1,000 Days service to bring together public sector and voluntary sector organisations to improve outcomes of young children aged 0 to 3 years and reduce the longer-term need for statutory services and support.
	Deliver the SEND Futures Plan to transform the experience of children and young people with SEND and their families, so that local, high-quality education, health and social care provision meets needs and promotes independence for all children and young people with SEND, whilst also delivering good value for money.	SEND Programme Director	The needs of most children and young people with SEND are met at the earliest stage in mainstream schools without the need for an education, health and care plan. 75% of children and young people with a plan are educated in local mainstream and special schools with much reduced reliance on independent and non-maintained school provision outside of the borough. The educational needs of children and young people with SEND are met within the funding provided in the Dedicated Schools Grant.	There are fewer than 1,646 education, health and care plans. 60% of children and young people with a plan are educated in local mainstream and special schools. The plan leaves to cost avoidance and mitigations of £2m per year.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Positive futures	Develop a self-evaluation of SEND services and an accompanying action plan to ensure that services are high quality and respond to the needs, views and ambitions of children, young people and their families, and that this is recognised in the local area SEND inspection.	Associate Director for SEND	Services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are consistently high quality with 75% of parents and carers rating services as 'Good' or better.	The inspection of local area SEND services by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission judges them to be effective. 60% of parents and carers rate services as 'Good' or better.
	Improve the provision of occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, and physiotherapy through the implementation of recommendations identified in the review of therapies across Achieving for Children, the CCG and key partners.	Associate Director for SEND	There is an enhanced local therapies offer which is more accessible and more responsive to growing demand. 75% of parents and carers rate therapies as good or better. The revised staffing model impacts positively on the recruitment and retention of therapists and develops wider expertise across the whole SEND workforce.	25% of recommendations identified in the therapies review are implemented.
	Work with adult care and housing providers to improve pathway and transition planning for young people with SEND so that services and support are in place to meet their needs, promote independence and enable a positive experience of early adulthood.	Associate Director for SEND	All young people with SEND have an effective transition plan in place by age 15 that plans for their independence and maximises their opportunities for a positive experience of early adulthood, including planning for their transition to adult social care services where needed.	A revised transitions protocol has been agreed between Achieving for Children and adult social care services and is embedded across SEND and leaving care services.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Positive futures	Develop a high quality, in-borough alternative education provision for children and young people who find it difficult to access mainstream education to enable them to reach their potential in the education environment most suited to their needs.	Director for Education Services	Children and young people who find it difficult to access mainstream education are provided with a safe, supportive and stimulating environment where they are encouraged to have high expectations and to take responsibility for their learning and their school community. Success will be measured not just through academic performance but through the children and young people developing positive relationships, self-confidence, resilience, and creativity.	A model of alternative provision has been agreed with schools, and a long term site considered for development by September 2020.
	Expand vocational learning opportunities for young people through the development of work experience, traineeships and apprenticeships (particularly for those leaving care or with SEND) to support them to gain meaningful employment.	Associate Director for Workforce	98% of young people are in meaningful education, employment and training due to the availability of more vocational learning opportunities. There has been a 100% increase in the number of young people completing traineeships or apprenticeships.	92% of young people are in education, employment and training. There has been a 25% increase in the number of young people completing traineeships or apprenticeships.
	Develop and implement a mental health strategy that outlines responsibilities for Achieving for Children, CCG and partner organisations with clear pathways and thresholds that are easily understood by families and that effectively meet the mental health needs of children and young people in universal and more targeted provision.	Associate Director for Emotional Health	Children and young people are easily able to access high quality mental health services that have a strong focus on early intervention and prevent issues escalating to the higher levels of need. 75% of families will rate mental health services as good or better.	The review of current mental health provision at the universal level and tier 2 and tier 3 is complete with a clear action plan in place for implementing identified recommendations.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Smarter working	Review and reconfigure the future delivery of health services, establishing an operating model that promotes high quality and integrated services that support children and young people to maximise their independence, resilience and health outcomes.	Associate Director for Health Services	There is an integrated health service for children with disabilities in Richmond that complements the service in Kingston. Public health nursing services are integrated with other children's services providing effective universal child health services and improved support for children and young people with more complex health and wellbeing needs, thereby reducing the need for more intensive interventions such as EHC planning.	Business cases have been developed for an integrated health service for children with disabilities and a First 1,000 Days service to bring together public sector and voluntary sector organisations to improve outcomes of young children aged 0 to 3 years and reduce the longer-term need for statutory services and support.
	Develop and implement a local engagement strategy and service that strengthens relationships with children, young people and families so that their views, wishes and ambitions shape the delivery of high quality, relevant and responsive services that offer the best value for money.	Director of Commissioning and Partnerships	Collaboration and involvement is the organisational culture within Achieving for Children. Our whole workforce (supported by a specialist participation team) routinely engages with parents, carers, children and young people to ensure that our services are relevant, responsive, focused on local needs and deliver maximum value for money.	A new engagement strategy is developed in collaboration with parents, carers, children and young people. A central participation function is in place to create capacity to improve involvement and collaboration. Five collaborative activities have been completed in significant service areas agreed with parents, carers, children and young people.

The priorities in our plan for Richmond are aligned with the Corporate Plan for 2018 to 2022: Standing up for Richmond residents - in particular the strategic outcome 4: a borough for everyone.

Achieving *more* for children in Windsor and Maidenhead

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Stronger families	Define and implement a consistent practice framework for early help and children's social care services, including embedding Signs of Safety and the systemic family therapy model to promote a strengths-based approach that better supports families to make sustainable change and reduce risks to children and young people.	Director of Children's Social Care	A strength-based practice framework will be established across all our services. External reviews and inspections of our services will consistently demonstrate the success of our practice in promoting resilience in families so that children are safe and well cared for. Ofsted will judge our children's services to be outstanding in their overall effectiveness.	The practice framework will be in place and implemented across all services. Internal reviews of practice will evidence that Signs of Safety and systemic approaches are embedded. Ofsted will judge services in Windsor and Maidenhead to be 'Good'.
	Implement a strengthened approach to the quality assurance of frontline services to improve the consistency of early help and social care practice, so that children and young people are safe and experience high quality support and care.	Head of Quality Assurance and Principal Social Worker	Quality assurance practice informs the continual development of our services so that they are relevant and responsive to changing local needs. 90% of casework is judged to be good or better as part of our quality assurance of practice in early help, children's social care, health services and support for children with SEND.	Permanent appointments have been made to increase capacity for quality assurance in both operational areas. A revised quality assurance framework is in place following feedback from recent inspections. 75% of casework is judged to be 'Good' or better.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Positive futures	Develop resources to support assessment and early intervention in mainstream early years settings, schools and colleges so that they are equipped to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND who are below the threshold for an education, health and care plan.	Service Leader - Education and School	All mainstream early years settings, schools and colleges are observed to confidently and effectively support children and young people with SEND who are below the threshold for an EHCP.	Resources to support assessment and early intervention have been developed and put in place. 80% of mainstream early years settings, schools and colleges are observed to confidently and effectively support children and young people with SEND who are below the threshold for an EHCP.
	Work with the clinical commissioning group and other partners to implement the Written Statement of Action for SEND so that services are high quality and respond better to the needs, views and ambitions of children, young people and their families.	Service Leader - Education and School	Services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are consistently high quality with 75% of parents and carers rating services as 'Good' or better.	Monitoring of local area SEND services by the Department for Education judge that services are effective and continue to improve. 60% of parents and carers rate services as 'Good' or better.
	Develop alternative education provision to better support the educational progress, achievement and wellbeing of children and young people with challenging behaviours who have been permanently excluded or are at risk of exclusion from school.	Service Leader - Education and School	New alternative education provision has been developed to support the needs of 36 children and young people with challenging behaviours leading to improved educational progress, attainment and outcomes (no young people are currently excluded from primary school).	The local service is judged 'Good' or better by Ofsted. 12 alternative education places are available. The permanent exclusion rate has reduced by 10%.

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Positive futures	Work with adult care and housing providers to improve pathway and transition planning for young people with SEND so that services and support are in place to meet their needs, promote independence and enable a positive experience of early adulthood.	Service Leader - Education and School	All young people with SEND have an effective transition plan in place by age 15 that plans for their independence and maximises their opportunities for a positive experience of early adulthood, including planning for their transition to adult social care services where needed.	A revised transitions protocol has been agreed between Achieving for Children and adult social care services and is embedded across SEND and leaving care services.
	Expand vocational learning opportunities for young people through the development of work experience, traineeships and apprenticeships (particularly for those leaving care or with SEND) to support them to gain meaningful employment.	Associate Director for Workforce	98% of young people are in meaningful education, employment and training due to the availability of more vocational learning opportunities. There has been a 100% increase in the number of young people completing traineeships or apprenticeships.	92% of young people are in education, employment and training. There has been a 25% increase in the number of young people completing traineeships or apprenticeships.
	Work to reduce gaps in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics between children in receipt of the Pupil Premium grant and their peers to provide the foundation for all children to achieve well and have positive choices for their future learning.	Service Leader - Education and School	The attainment for reading, writing and mathematics (combined) at the end of Key Stage 2 for pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant is better than the results of the statistical neighbour peer group (summer 2024 results).	The attainment for reading, writing and mathematics (combined) at the end of Key Stage 2 for pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium grant and their peers is better than the national average (summer 2021 results).

Strategic priority	Priority project	Lead	How will know we have been successful in 2024?	What will we achieve by March 2021?
Smarter working	Develop and implement a local engagement strategy and service that strengthens relationships with children, young people and families so that their views, wishes and ambitions shape the delivery of high quality, relevant and responsive services that offer the best value for money.	Service Leader - Education and School	All mainstream early years settings, schools and colleges are observed to confidently and effectively support children and young people with SEND who are below the threshold for an EHCP.	Resources to support assessment and early intervention have been developed and put in place. 80% of mainstream early years settings, schools and colleges are observed to confidently and effectively support children and young people with SEND who are below the threshold for an EHCP.
	Develop and implement a new approach to partnership working that marshalls the skills, capacity, resources and creativity of the whole community to better identify and meet the changing needs of children and young people.	Director of Children's Services	Collaboration and involvement is the organisational culture within Achieving for Children. Our whole workforce (supported by a specialist participation team) routinely engages with parents, carers, children and young people to ensure that our services are relevant, responsive, focused on local needs and deliver maximum value for money.	A new engagement strategy is developed in collaboration with parents, carers, children and young people. A central participation function is in place to create capacity to improve involvement and collaboration. Five collaborative activities have been completed in significant service areas agreed with parents, carers, children and young people.

The priorities in our plan for Windsor and Maidenhead are aligned with the Corporate Plan for 2017 to 2021: Building a borough for everyone.

08

OUR FINANCIAL PLAN

Achieving for Children's medium term financial plan focuses on achieving financial sustainability over the business plan period and explains how the business plan programmes align with financial priorities. In setting the medium term budget, we have focused on making informed recommendations that align with our commissioning councils' affordability objectives as well as making best use of available funds to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people.

The six business plan principles align with the organisation's financial objectives through the promotion of family resilience, maximising independence into adulthood through supporting young people to meet their full potential, investment in local borough resources and focusing on efficient business processes and commissioning.

The organisation will be following three overarching financial principles over the coming years.

Achieving value for money

All three of Achieving for Children's commissioning councils have historically received relatively low levels of funding for council services and as a result, services must be delivered at a lower than average cost. Achieving for Children delivers good quality services for a relatively low cost across general fund services. Education services that are funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant are delivered at average cost and the organisation is working proactively towards improving services in line with inspection findings. The programmes detailed in this programme facilitate the improved use of resources.

Maximise resources available to frontline services

Achieving for Children regularly reviews budgets to ensure that resources available to frontline services are maximised and there is a sufficient balance to ensure that frontline services have the infrastructure to ensure they can continue to support children and families.

The following four aspects are important in achieving this objective.

- Adequate needs-led budget growth and achievement of savings
- Maximise income generation
- Periodic review of emerging priority areas
- Business plan programmes must facilitate the effective use of resources

Shared budget responsibility

Achieving for Children operates a culture of shared budget responsibility with all staff being responsible for ensuring that every pound spent is maximising positive outcomes for children and young people and is in line with budget control processes. Each of the programmes identified in this business plan will have a project sponsor as well as project management and finance support. Progress against the plan and on the associated spend and savings implications will be monitored on an ongoing basis with the relevant leadership team having overarching oversight.

The financial implications, in terms of spend and savings will be carefully monitored over the plan period. It is clear that the coming years will be financially challenging for Achieving for Children given the ongoing pressure on wider public sector budgets and national increases in levels of need for children's services. It is of paramount importance that the organisation continues to work with commissioning partners to ensure a mutual understanding of existing and emerging pressures and reaches agreement on the level of funding available and how that funding should be prioritised to achieve the best possible outcomes for the children and young people we support.





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