

# Corporate Parenting Board

## Modernising Placements Programme

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Steph How – Strategic / Operational Lead ([stephanie.how@hants.gov.uk](mailto:stephanie.how@hants.gov.uk))

**TRANSFORMING  
SOCIAL CARE**  
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



**MODERNISING  
PLACEMENTS**  
PROGRAMME

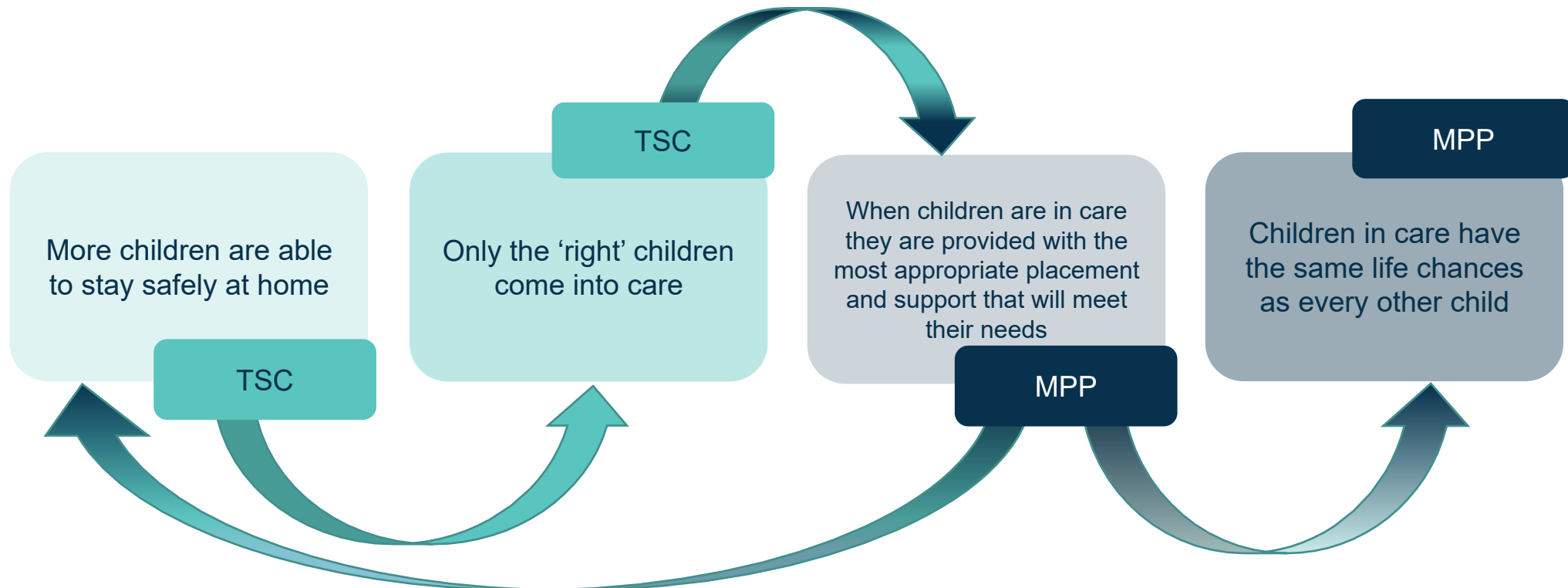




# Our Transformation Journey

TSC and MPP - working together to help make Hampshire County Council's vision for children and young people a reality.

HCC is a transformational Local Authority with an Outstanding Children's Service Department. Over the past 8 years the Children's Service Department has made a significant difference to the social care landscape in the county and the sector in general.

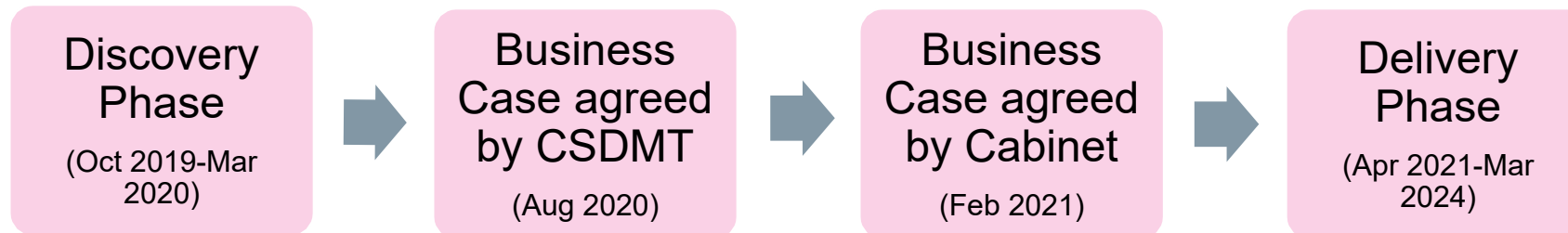




# Modernising Placements Programme

MPP is a transformational programme within Children's Services, which started in October 2019. It builds on the foundations achieved by the TSC programme and serves as a reminder that although, as a Local Authority, we've made significant in-roads, we continue to face many challenges.

## Timeline:



The aim of MPP is to develop a continuum of care which can provide the right accommodation and support at the right time for our children in care in Hampshire.



# 10 issues we've identified that MPP has been designed to address:

1. Increased number of children with complex needs who we are struggling to support

2. A lack of growth in the number of Hampshire County Council foster carers

3. Increased use of IFAs

4. Low bed occupancy in our residential homes

5. Low staff recruitment and retention and high staff sickness absence in our residential homes

6. Increased use of NCPs

7. Increased placement instability

8. A reduction in life chances for children

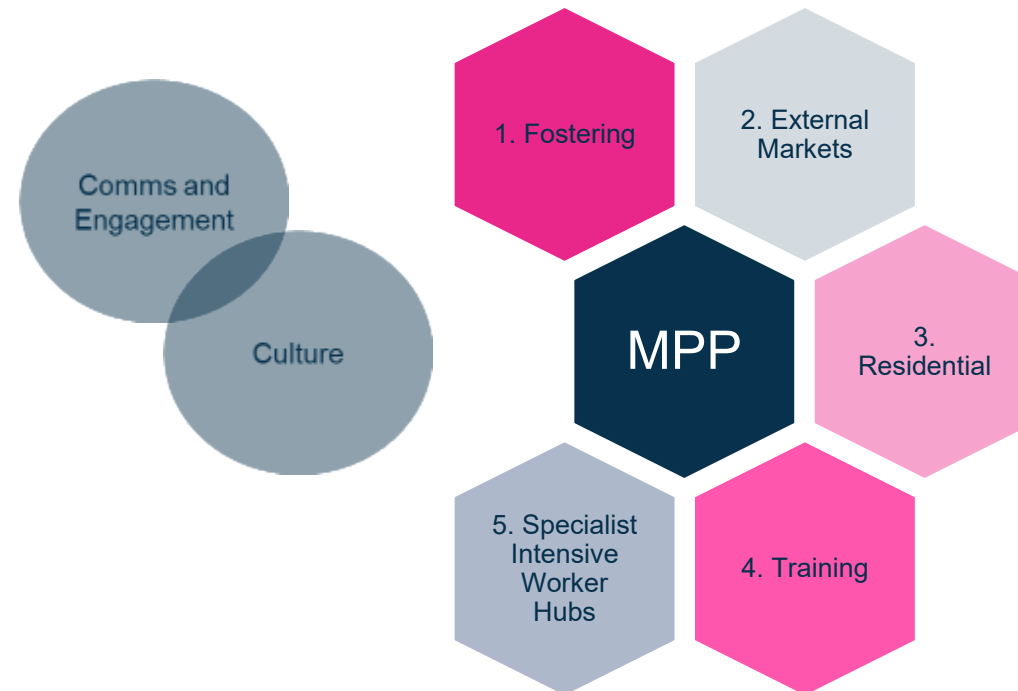
9. Children in need of urgent placements who we struggle to accommodate

10. A lack of equivalency across our placement types



# Active workstreams within MPP

The Modernising Placements Programme brings foster carers, residential staff, social workers and children and families together to explore the best possible care outcomes for young people. The programme has been split into five core workstreams, each of which can be broken down further into project areas. A Communications and Engagement function supports all workstreams, and a consistent focus on our culture helps provide a clear foundation for engaging our staff and achieving our vision.



The following slides provide further detail on each of the workstreams





1. Fostering

# Fostering Recruitment and Assessment Team

**Key aim:** To increase enquiries, and conversion from enquiry to approval, by focussing on 24 areas of service development across marketing, recruitment and assessment including:

- Improving the prospective foster carers' journey and experience
- Enhancing training and support for prospective carers
- Building internal and external partnerships
- Growing brand awareness and delivering new campaigns
- Refreshing internal processes
- Supporting personal and team development as professionals
- Bringing in experts from other sectors (commercial, marketing), recognising the different skillset required to 'run a business'

**Results to date:** 30% increase in enquires and 17% increase in approvals within 6 months by end of 2021/22.



This summer we launched a new TV, radio and social media campaign to find more than 150 foster carers by the end of 2023. The campaign's powerful message - 'When every door is closing on a child...can you open yours?'



# Hampshire Hives

**Key aim:** To establish a community around our foster carers.

- This project started with a one-year pilot in 2021.
- Each Hive has 15-20 fostering families and is led by a Hive Carer Support Worker.
- Children feel part of a wider family, can develop relationships with other children in care and foster carers' birth children as well as other foster carers in their Hive.
- Foster carers' resilience is improved through the flexibility of support from their Hive.
- New carers are being attracted to Fostering Hampshire Children due to the appeal of the Hives.






*"The old saying 'it takes a village to raise a child' has never been more relevant and we're really lucky to have each other to lean on." Ben Chapman HCSW*

**We have recently reviewed the pilot ...**

TRANSFORMING SOCIAL CARE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

MODERNISING PLACEMENTS PROGRAMME

### The impact of Hives, 1 year in...

-  More carers in Hives report feeling valued
-  Carers report feeling more satisfied with support and more confident in caring for Hampshire children since joining Hives
-  Fewer referrals were made to PCT, for placement breakdowns, for Hive families
-  County carer de-registrations are lower in Hives
-  Carers in Hives are more likely to recommend fostering for Hampshire County Council

## We found...

- Hampshire's Hives have been extremely well received and are making a real difference to carers, their families and the children in their care
- Demand to join continues to outstrip capacity, but Hives aren't every carers cup of tea

## We have agreed to...

- Evolve and continuously improve the Hive model
- Organically growing Hives to keep pace with demand
- Maintain an equitable support offer for carers outside Hampshire's Hives



# Foster Carer Retention Plan

In addition to the Hives we are also increasing activity to support foster carer retention

**Aim:** To ensure foster carers feel valued and supported, improve their perception of Fostering Hampshire Children as a service and encourage a sense of community.

... and ultimately to retain more Foster Carers.



Private Facebook Group for peer support



Foster Carers' Newsletter



Small gifts to 'Surprise and Delight' carers



Christmas and Thank You Cards



Family Events



Afternoon tea with the Assistant Director to recognise Foster Carers' commitment





# Foster Carer Vacancy Management App

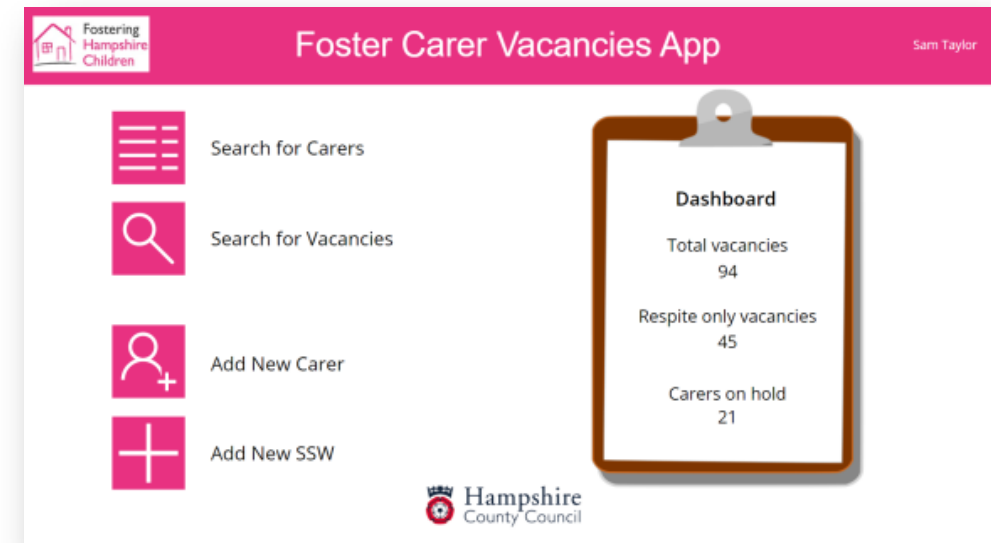
## Key aims:

- To have live visibility of all Hampshire foster carer vacancies so the best matching decisions can be made for children.
- To improve the accessibility for Supervising Social Workers so information is up to date.

The app was launched in August 2021. It's simple to use so changes can be made quickly and easily. These real time updates will help improve the accuracy and timeliness of vacancy information, as well as improving the experience for Social Workers and the Placements Commissioning Team.

## Key outcomes over time:

- Children will be matched with foster carers who have the skills and experience to support them to achieve their best life chances.
- Foster carer skills and experience will be optimised, with fewer vacancies.
- Foster carer retention will increase through timely matching.
- Foster carer profiles will be saved in the app for PCT to share with Children's Social Workers, who in turn will share them with children and young people prior to them going to a new foster carer.





## Skills Fees

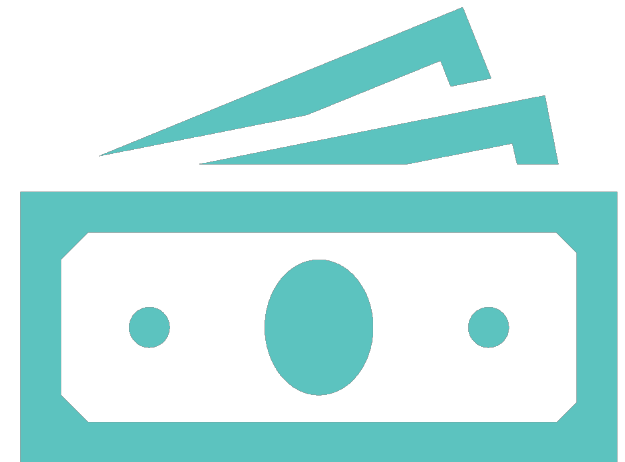
**Key aim:** To increase the number of in-house foster carers and reduce the amount spent on Independent Fostering Agencies.

With input from Foster carers and staff, we reviewed and amended our foster carers' skills criteria to become more child-focused and to ensure we pay foster carers competitively.

- Since January 2022, all new fostering households have entered on a Level 2 (no fostering experience) or Level 3 (fostering experience at another LA or IFA) skills payment.
- Clear 12-month development pathways have been established.
- The criteria have been changed to ensure expectations are clear and we pay our foster carers the skills fee applicable to them.
- A new qualification for Level 3 carers has also been introduced - the Level 3 Diploma in Advanced Fostering Skills. This is being delivered and accredited through ACEducation.

By paying foster carers competitively, we hope potential foster carers will be encouraged to come to foster with us, and existing carers will be motivated to develop their childcare skills and continue fostering with us.

We also intend to improve the way we match children's needs and carers' skills, leading to greater placement stability / fewer placement breakdowns.





## Out of Hours Support

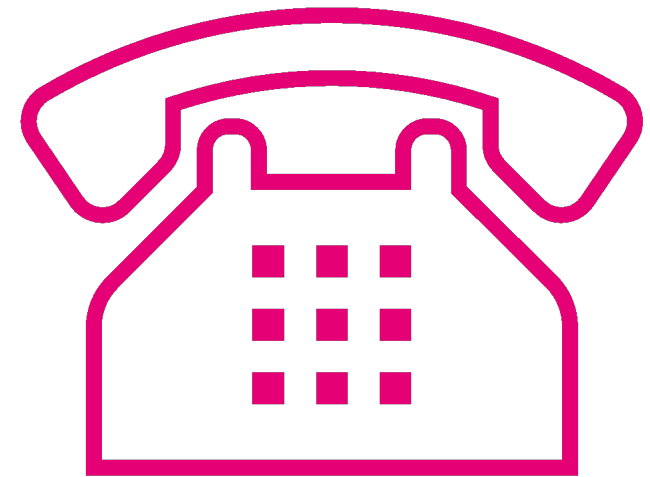
Fostering can be challenging and, at times, difficult for foster carers as they navigate new territory and unfamiliar situations. Occasionally they need someone to talk to and ask for advice on how best to manage what they are going through as a fostering household.

**Key aim:** To better support our foster carers during evenings and at weekends.

We would like to offer a telephone support service staffed by an experienced team of workers. In order to test the success of this kind of service, we are running a pilot project, from September 2022 until March 2023, utilising the wealth of knowledge within the Fostering Service.

The phone number will be available for Foster Carers to call:

- Monday to Friday: 5pm to 11pm
- Weekends: 9am – 11pm





3.  
Residential

## Residential Care

- Residential is a particular challenge as it is an area within the service that has significant recruitment and retention issues.
- And whilst transforming the service will relieve some of those pressures, we need both the capacity and capability to do so.
- Furthermore, we must navigate and balance placing our most complex children in our homes who have no other place to go against the scrutiny of Ofsted inspections, the result of which can be reflected in the grading.

We have identified the below activities to deliver against the priority areas:

### 1 - 3 months

- Marketing/comms to promote the service
- Staff impact

### 12 months

- Rotas and shifts

### 6 - 9 months

- Casual Staff/Bank staff
- Culture work
- Education of children in residential homes

- Induction/ Development
- Technology
- Training
- Use of GETS
- Supervision

### 18 months

- Pay and professionalisation





4. Training

## Training and People

**Key aim:** To ensure every individual caring for a Hampshire child has the training, knowledge and support they need.

- All training and pathways for new foster carers, current foster carers and residential care workers has been reviewed and refreshed to:
  - Equip them with the skill set they will require to support and care for children.
  - Bring training for foster carers and residential care workers together
  - Improve the quality of delivery and level of interaction within courses.
- New training has been explored based on feedback from current foster carers and residential care workers to help fill 'gaps' and further upskill foster carers and workers, including:
  - Self harm, suicide and ligature training which is currently being procured
  - More in-depth training around autism and other neuro diversities is being explored
  - Therapeutic approaches to caring for a Hampshire child are being explored, with a test & learn arranged for the Great Behaviour Breakdown this autumn.
- Work alongside the virtual school has been completed to break down silos between social workers, residential care workers and foster carers to ensure a consistent approach for Hampshire's children.
- The creation of residential admin & management pathways are being explored to ensure that all staff at all levels within children's homes are trained appropriately for their role and to support Hampshire children.





# Specialist Intensive Worker Hubs

The synergies across TSC and MPP have enabled us to build on the success of the Intensive Worker teams and further maximise opportunities. Under MPP the reach of these teams has been extended to support our children in residential homes as well as those with both family and foster carers. Given the further investment to make our Intensive Workers permanent roles, we can continually evaluate the effectiveness of the service to ensure that we evolve to achieve the best outcomes for children and families in an evidence-based way.

## Key aim:

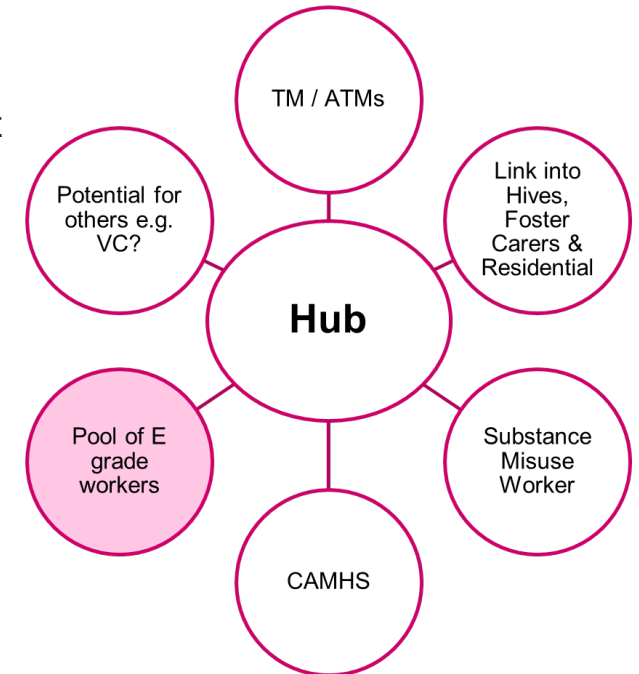
To work with children, their families and carers to...

- Keep and reunify more children to live safely with their families and wider networks.
- Stabilise and strengthen placements for the children we care for.
- Support lower level EMH needs and provide a seamless pathway into and out of Core CAMHS services where this is required which is an ongoing challenge with the long waiting lists and gaps in the CAMHS provision.

## Overview of a Hub:

- Building on the 4 existing IW teams and Specialist Workers to create 4 x geographical '**Hubs**'
- Increasing the number of clinical CAMHS roles which CAMHS will employ
- Having a cohort of E grade workers bringing together current roles who support existing cohorts (**Intensive Workers, Placement Stability Workers and Extended Care Workers**)
- There is potential to add new roles in the future

**By extending and increasing the number of roles these Hubs will be able to reach new cohorts.**





## Our focus for the next year

- Our transformation is continuous as it is this work that has enabled us to not only maintain but deliver an Outstanding service to our Children and Families in Hampshire.
- The programme approach enables us to provide the rigour to constantly deliver, measure, test, learn and adjust to keep up with an ever-changing environment
- The creation and establishment of an evidence base and/or KPIs across all deliverables supports our ability to continue on our transformation journey



# Questions

