

Framework for Multi-Agency Strategies Vision and Statement of Intent

1. Our vision

We want Oxfordshire to be a great place to grow up and have the opportunity for children and young people to become everything they want to be.

To achieve this vision for children and young people, we have four areas of focus:

- be successful
- be healthy
- be safe
- be supported

2. Statement of Intent

**We will work in partnership together with you, your family and all the agencies who are here to support you in Oxfordshire
If you need our help to be and feel safe, we will...**

- Ask, not assume, what is happening in your life and what would help
- Act by seeking to understand your lived experiences, and work with you
- Discuss with you your choices and how you can safely feel in control
- Respect and value you and the people who care about you
- Work as a team – with you, your family and with each other as professionals – so that everyone’s ideas and knowledge are used
- Be honest with you and communicate clearly in a way that you can understand
- Focus on who and what helps you to feel safer, and where you feel safer
- Work with you at your pace wherever possible – but if things aren’t improving fast enough for you, or if we need to immediately protect you, we will act quickly and decisively.

3. Strategy (for relevant theme)

4. Action Plan (for relevant theme)

Appendices

Appendix 1: What could help to equip people to work in this way?

This is an exemplar for CE which can be adapted for other key strategic themes e.g. neglect, children we care for.

Multi-agency practitioners	Middle managers	Strategic leaders	Examples of how we might do this
<i>Permission to think and act creatively, to consider innovative approaches, to take measured risks</i>	<i>Permission to allow practitioners to think and act creatively and innovatively, permission to take measured risks</i>	<i>Pan-partnership understanding and agreement re need for non-traditional responses, and shared tolerance of risk</i>	<i>Have we thought about and challenged ourselves about every available option? Who do we need to ask for help?</i>
<i>Clear understanding of the difference between defensive and defensible practice</i>	<i>Clear understanding of the difference between defensive and defensible practice (inc management practice)</i>	<i>Clear understanding of the difference between defensive and defensible leadership practice</i>	<i>Articulate clearly your decision making and record the agreement for this.</i>
<i>Having a plan B, and knowing when that needs to be enacted</i>	<i>Permission, agility and authority to act swiftly and enact plan B when necessary</i>	<i>Confidence and agility to change tack / course correct at a strategic level too, if necessary</i>	<i>Identify your contingency plans with your manager early on and record this.</i>
<i>Explicit permission to not always know the right answer</i>	<i>Explicit permission to not always know the right answer</i>	<i>Explicit permission to not always know the right answer</i>	<i>Solutions do not have to be immediate – getting the right people together can help solve the problem.</i>
<i>High quality CPD : the space to learn new knowledge, develop/hone skills and share expertise with peers</i>	<i>High quality CPD : the space to learn new knowledge, develop/hone skills and share expertise with peers</i>	<i>Pan-partnership understanding of what constitutes high quality CPD and shared recognition of its importance</i>	<i>‘Trauma informed systems principles and practices support reflection in place of reaction, curiosity instead of numbing, self-care instead of self-sacrifice and working as a collective instead of silos.’ Ken Epstein 2014 www.traumainformed.org</i>
<i>A mechanism for ‘rethinking’ or</i>	<i>A mechanism for ‘rethinking’ or</i>	<i>Pan-partnership approach to</i>	<i>Work together to tackle wicked issues by pooling</i>

<i>'unsticking' practice challenges (not traditional 'escalation')</i>	<i>'unsticking' management challenges</i>	<i>collective problem-solving (not problem displacement)</i>	<i>resources, deploying our expertise in the right place at the right time and being agile and flexible.</i>
<i>A mechanism for sharing ideas, tips, promising practice and 'success stories'</i>	<i>A mechanism for harnessing practice wisdom to inform management decision-making</i>	<i>Pan-partnership mechanism for drawing on practice expertise to inform strategy (eg Learning Hubs)</i>	<i>Promote and make better use of our multi-agency websites and offer high quality practitioner workshops.</i>
<i>Support to process the emotional impact of this work for professional and family</i>	<i>Support to process the emotional impact of this work for professional and family</i>	<i>Support to process the emotional impact of this work for professional and family</i>	<i>Offer high quality reflective supervision that allows the practitioner to reflect on their own lived experiences.</i>
<i>Protected time to think – e.g. to consider potential unintended consequences</i>	<i>Protected time to think – e.g. to consider potential unintended consequences</i>	<i>Protected time to think – e.g. to consider potential unintended consequences</i>	<i>Prioritise time to consider the full impact of our decision-making.</i>

Appendix 2: How might we try to capture progress and impact?

- Need to make best use of existing data – e.g. administrative data, performance management data etc
- BUT need to recognise that most data, especially quantitative data, helps us ask better questions... it doesn't offer definitive answers
- Using data intelligently for dialogue (as opposed to narrow performance management) is important (see reading list below)
- Beware unintended consequences... if 'what gets measured is what gets done' then how will we make sure we are measuring what matters (and not just what is easy to measure)?
- Qualitative measures are therefore vital: children's and parents views; practitioner feedback and insights; introducing 'soft' measures (eg staff wellbeing, participation opportunities, quality of professional relationships); 'annual conversations' between partners to honestly reflect on how we have lived our values... all of these help to give you a richer picture.
- Never let a process do the work of professional practice and creative leadership. A RAG rating gives you a useful visual aid, but it does not replace your curiosity; KPIs can be an important measurement tool, but they don't make you honour your accountability to each other; a strategy can keep you on track, but it cannot substitute for adaptive creative leadership behaviours; tools can be helpful but we need to know why we are using them and what is the purpose of the intervention.

Appendix 3: Further reading

General

- Systems leadership: <https://thestaffcollege.uk/staff-college-research/systems-leadership-research/>
- 'That Difficult Age' developing a more effective response to adolescents: <https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/children/publications/2014/november/th-at-difficult-age-developing-a-more-effective-response-to-risks-in-adolescence-evidence-scope-2014/>
- Some info on Herts 'Learning Hubs': <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Adult-social-services/Report-a-concern-about-an-adult/Hertfordshire-Safeguarding-Adults-Board/HSAB-and-HSCP-training-and-resources.aspx>
- For the radicals amongst you looking to avoid New Public Managerialism (!), this website all about 'Human Learning Systems' is a treat: <https://www.humanlearning.systems/>

Exploitation

- Safeguarding and exploitation - complex, contextual and holistic approaches (NB – Oxfordshire LA colleagues can log into RiP and download this free) <https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/children/publications/2019/may/safeguarding-and-exploitation-complex-contextual-and-holistic-approaches-strategic-briefing-2019/>
- Some information from the Tackling Child Exploitation programme about a framework for leaders called 'Joining the Dots': <https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/joining-the-dots/>
- Seven short pieces focused on using data intelligently in child exploitation: <https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/using-data-intelligently-to-understand-child-exploitation-part-1-of-7/>

Neglect

- NICE guidance on tackling child abuse and neglect <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng76>
- Multi-agency response to working with older children living with neglect <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/growing-up-neglected-a-multi-agency-response-to-older-children>

Appendix 4: Homework

Exercise 1

Given how we aspire to work...

- What *quantitative* measures or targets could we use to track our progress?
- What *qualitative* measures or targets could we use to track our progress?
- What qualitative and quantitative measures could we use to reinforce our *accountability*, to each other and to the families and communities we serve?
- What *unintended consequences* will we need to watch out for, as we establish these measures?

Exercise 2

In terms of our collective efforts to continuously improve and learn together...

- What can you personally contribute / offer?
- What can your agency contribute / offer?

These might be 'hard' (eg I have technical expertise in xxxx, or access to a tangible resource) or 'soft' (I am good at thinking creatively, or I enjoy developing others)