

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Children's Services Self-Assessment 2026
Meeting date	16 June 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The Children's Services Self-Assessment 2026 provides an evidence-based summary of progress since the 'Good' Ofsted ILACS judgement in December 2024. Local authorities produce self-assessments to evaluate service effectiveness, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and support transparent assurance, scrutiny and continuous improvement for children and families. It shows a service with stronger leadership, more embedded quality assurance and effective partnership working, resulting in more consistent practice and better oversight of performance, risk and impact.</p> <p>The report highlights improved timeliness, permanence planning, placement stability, educational outcomes for children in care and progress in SEND.</p> <p>It also identifies key pressures, including rising demand and complexity, high numbers of children in care and child protection plans, and ongoing sufficiency challenges.</p> <p>Priorities for 2026/27 are to deliver Families First and One Team One Approach, strengthen early help and local sufficiency, improve permanence and safety planning, and maintain a strong focus on children at risk of exploitation and older care leavers.</p>
Recommendations	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <p>The committee notes the content of the report.</p>
Reason for recommendations	The report is for information only.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Richard Burton, Portfolio Holder for Children & Young People and Education & Skills
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley, Corporate Director Children's Services
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Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For information only.

## Background

1. The BCP Children's Services Self-Assessment (May 2026) provides a comprehensive and evidence-based overview of service performance, impact and improvement following the 'Good' Ofsted ILACS inspection in December 2024. The report outlines the local context, key challenges and areas of strength across the system, supported by performance data, quality assurance evidence and feedback from children, families and partners. It demonstrates a service that is continuing to transform, with strong leadership, governance and partnership arrangements underpinning a more coordinated, place-based approach to delivering children's services.
2. The report is structured across the full Children's Services system (note SEND and AP have their own detailed SEF), including early help, safeguarding, children in care, care leavers and leadership oversight, and sets out both the impact of current practice and the priorities for further improvement. It highlights progress in areas such as permanence planning, education and safeguarding, while also identifying ongoing challenges including rising demand, increased complexity of need and pressures on sufficiency and resources.
3. The self-assessment is intended to support scrutiny, challenge and shared ownership across partners, and to provide a clear line of sight between strategic priorities, service delivery and outcomes for children and young people.

## Summary of financial implications

4. N/A

## Summary of legal implications

5. N/A

## Summary of human resources implications

6. N/A

## Summary of sustainability impact

7. N/A

**Summary of public health implications**

8. N/A

**Summary of equality implications**

9. N/A

**Summary of risk assessment**

10. N/A

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Children’s Services Self- Assessment 2026