

Executive Summary

Welcome to our **Children's Services Plan 2026-2028**.

The Wirral Children's Services Plan 2026–2028 sets out a clear, ambitious, and shared vision: working together to secure brighter futures for all children, young people, and families. At its heart, the plan reflects a strong commitment to culture, collaboration, and co-design, recognising that meaningful and lasting change happens when children, families, communities, and practitioners shape services together.

This plan builds on a whole-system approach, aligning the Children's Services Business Plan, Workforce Strategy, self-assessment insights, and wider Council priorities. It translates these into a coherent set of objectives and practice expectations that are grounded in Wirral's identity as a relationship-based, child-centred, and learning organisation.

Central to delivery is a deliberate focus on strengthening our people-centred culture. We are committed to creating a supportive, reflective workforce culture, where supervision, learning, growth, and accountability enable our people to do their best work.

This plan is not just a strategy, it is a commitment to how we work. By embedding a strong, values-driven culture and placing co-design at the centre, Wirral Children's Services will continue to evolve as a system that listens, learns, and delivers - ensuring that we secure brighter futures for all.



Working together to secure brighter futures for all

Objective 1

We promote opportunity for all our children and young people

Our expectations

- We believe no one is 'hard to reach'
- Behaviour is a form of communication
- Children's special days are our special days
- We don't give up on children and young people

Our Outcomes

- All children receive good quality education and support in inclusive settings.
- Children get the right help at the right time through effective locality services.

Objective 2

We do the right thing for children and families

Our expectations

- Nothing about me, without me. Don't tell me, ask me
- Consistency creates confidence: trust is a must
- Wherever possible, families stay together

Our Outcomes

- Children are safe inside and outside their homes.
- Children's needs are well understood, and their voices shape plans that they understand and own, resulting in meaningful and lasting improvements in their lives.

Objective 3

We ensure children who need our care are better off because of it

Our expectations

- Be ambitious for me
- Open doors for care leavers
- Help children & young people maintain relationships that are important to them

Our Outcomes

- Children have stable loving homes and maintain strong relationships with those people who are important to them.

Objective 4

We deliver positive outcomes for our children and families - with efficiency, effectiveness and care

Our expectations

- Children and families are at the heart of how we work. Our culture of trust and inclusion helps that happen.
- We work with clarity and pace. Listening and learning to make a real difference for children and families.
- We take ownership with partners; and focus on impact that matters. We are a system working together - delivering for people.

Our Outcomes

- Work with our partners to use and develop resources effectively to deliver high quality services for children, informed by feedback from children and families.
- Build a high-trust, people-centred culture that works collaboratively, acts with purpose, and continuously strives to deliver brighter futures for all.

Wirral Children's Services Plan

Working together to secure brighter futures for all



Our Children's Services plan is to help us all work together to make sure Wirral is the best place for our children, young people, and their families to thrive, to reach their full potential and to always feel safe and supported.

This plan brings together several strands of our previous work to create a coherent strategic plan for the next two years.



Wirral Children's Services Plan



Working together to secure brighter futures for all

How We Do Things in Wirral

At Wirral Children's Services, children are at the heart of everything we do. We are committed to knowing every child, understanding their unique experiences, and making a positive difference in their lives.

We believe that the best outcomes for children are achieved through positive, respectful and trusting relationships. Positive relationship forms the foundation of all our work with children, young people and families. We recognise that meaningful and lasting change happens through connection, consistency, compassion and care.

Our practice is informed by a systemic way of thinking, helping us to understand children within the context of their relationships, families, communities and wider networks. By understanding the connections and influences around a child, we can work collaboratively with families and partners to build on strengths, create safety and support sustainable change.

We use system theory, tools, reflective conversations and shared thinking to ensure our work is purposeful, evidence-informed and focused on what matters most to improving outcomes for children.

Our Big Five | Delivering Great Practice Every Day

Our Big Five sets out the basic principles to deliver practice improvement across our services. Together they form the foundations to do our best work every day with children.



Our Big Five

Child's Daily Lived Experience

We focus on what life is like for the child every day. We use relationships, direct work, observation and multiple lens to understand their lived experience, ensuring that their voice is central to all we do. Our practice keeps children visible, heard and understood, so we can make decisions that improve their day-to-day lives.

Holistic Assessments

We develop a deep, holistic understanding of children and their families and network. With curiosity we explore history, relationships, culture and identity through systemic tools such as genograms, social graces to critical analysis risk, worries and safety. This ensures we understand each child's lived experience and respond with clarity, balance and a strong focus on what will make a difference.

Plans and Planning

Plans are co-produced with children, families and partners, and are understood and owned by those involved. They are clear, meaningful and focused on what needs to change. Through strong partnership working, plans build safety, strengthen relationships and lead to sustainable, lasting change in children's lives.

Management Oversight

Regular, supportive and reflective supervision, alongside visible management oversight, creates a culture of safety, curiosity and accountability. Managers provide support and oversight of key decisions, enabling practitioners to think systemically, strengthen relationships and make informed decisions that improve outcomes for children.

Permanence and Belonging

We think about permanence from day one, using family-led decision-making to help children achieve stability, belonging and lasting relationships. We ensure that when children need our care, they are better off for because of it.