



# Corporate Parenting Committee

February 2023



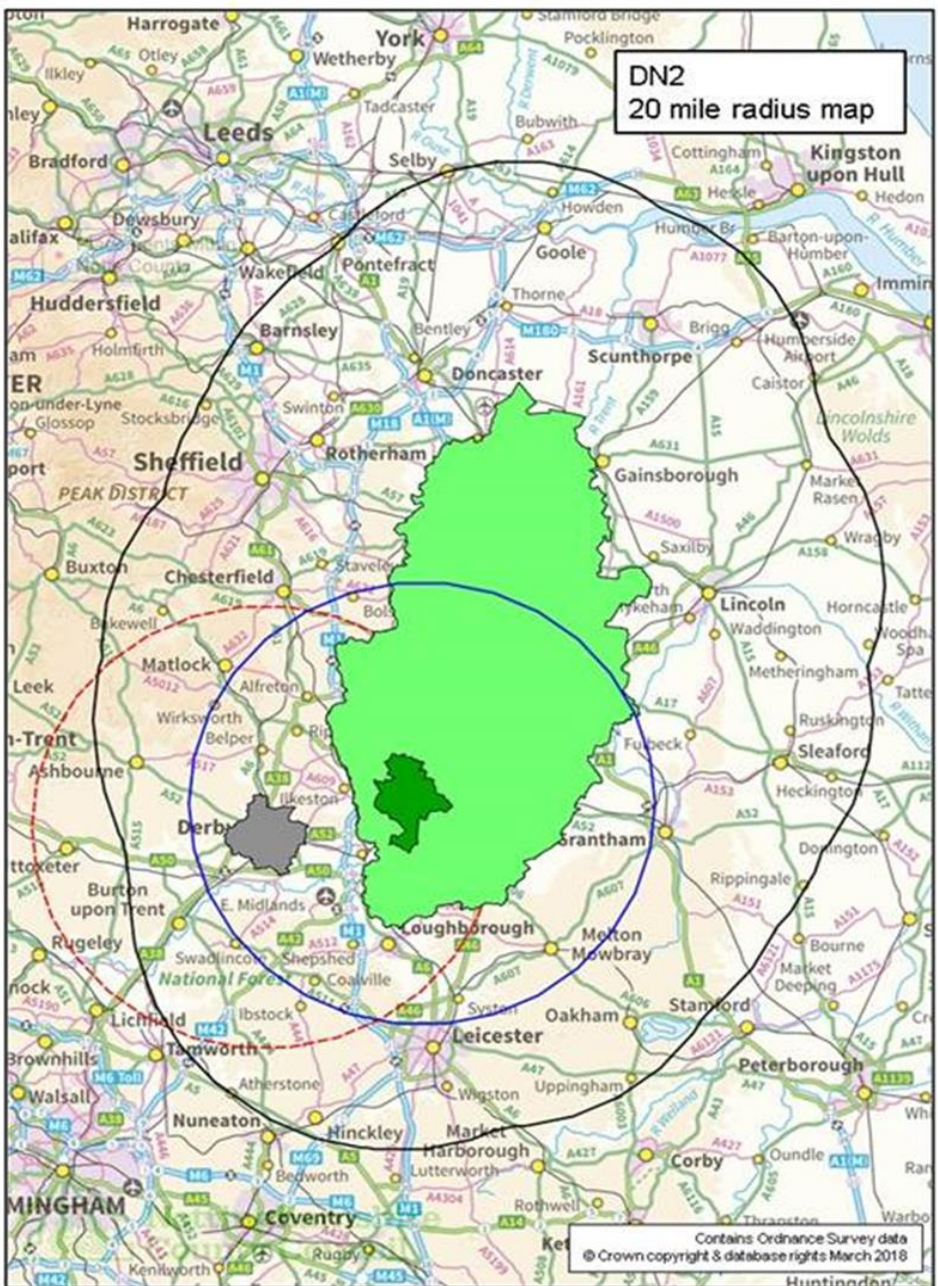
Supporting Children and  
Young People To  
Achieve Resilience and  
Success



# Contents

- Introduction
- Mission
- STARS Funding Model
- What Children are Supported
- Referral Route and Engagement
- Case Study
- Outcome Monitoring
- Cost Benefit to Derby City Council
- Fostering Sufficiency
- Key Learning





# Introduction to STARS

- Derby City, Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire (DN2) in partnership with Outcomes for Children have developed an innovative new service, funded through a Social Impact Bond
- STARS is delivered by Polaris Children's Services on behalf of Outcomes for Children
- STARS will deliver services across the three Local Authority boundary areas for a four – five year period
- STARS will provide intensive support to four cohorts of children and young people who have challenged services and who are at risk of entering care
- STARS provide the service within 20 miles of each local authority's boundary giving a larger footprint for DCC, as each LA is able to place children to the perimeter of the other LA's boundary and receive the service

# STARS' Mission

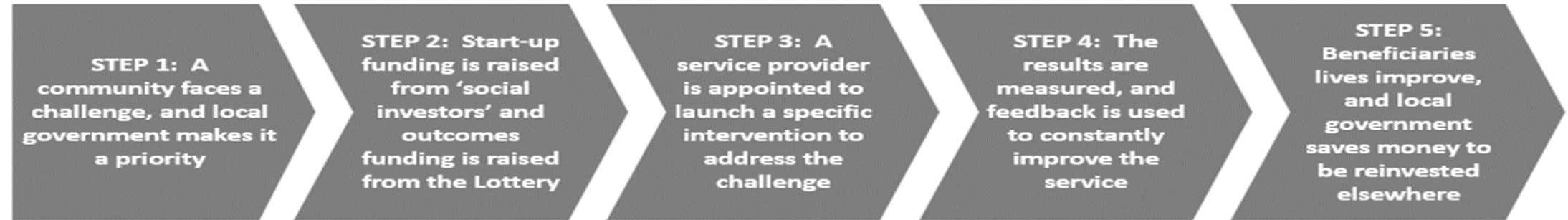
- The primary aim of **STARS** is to **support children and young people to achieve resilience and success** through working in partnership with them, their families and professionals to provide tailored, intensive, and focused support that achieves positive and demonstrable outcomes, which are significant and sustained

## Aims

- Outcomes for children and young people are improved regarding their educational achievements, life opportunities, physical and emotional well-being, and in forming positive relationships
- Families will feel empowered to identify and use their own solutions to the difficulties they face
- Children and young people are in stable home environments, whether in substitute care or in their birth family environments



# STARS funding model



- As well as better social outcomes DN2 expects cashable efficiency savings to be delivered by commissioning services through the Social Impact Bond (SIB)
- Socially motivated investors (**Futures**) fund the upfront cost for the provider (**Polaris Children's Services on behalf of Outcomes 4 Children**) to deliver the STARS programme
- Each individual LA within DN2 make payment to the investor-provider consortium on the basis of achievement of agreed successful outcomes
- **Futures** funds **Polaris** to deliver the STARS programme regardless of the achievement of these outcomes
- DN2 is required to make a minimum number of referrals, and penalties will be enforced where the minimum is not met
- Meeting referral targets enables DCC to receive a percentage of the central government support via the Life Chances Fund (total £3,000,000 over Contract for DN2)
- The service is expected to work with up to 92 cases per annum
- Contractual minimum 55 referrals in Years 1&2 and 51 in Years 3&4

# What Children are Supported

## Referral Criteria

- Safeguarding including missing episodes
- Multiple placement breakdowns
- Parental domestic abuse
- Poor school attendance
- Special education needs
- Substance abuse (including alcohol)
- Additional needs such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Offending and anti-social behaviour
- Social integration difficulties Volatile, unpredictable and potentially manipulative behaviour
- Gang involvement
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Sexualised behaviour
- Arson and risk of causing arson
- Risk of poverty
- Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Poor parent/carers or child/young person mental health

Cohort	Description	Age Eligibility Criteria
<b>Cohort A</b>	Children stepping down from residential provision in to specialist fostering placements	10 years to 16 years
<b>Cohort B</b>	Children needing additional support in a fostering placement to maintain placement stability, where the placement is in danger of being disrupted/unplanned ending and to support the move to a new foster placement should this be required	10 years to 16 years
<b>Cohort C</b>	Children reunifying to the family home after a period in care	8 years to 16 years
<b>Cohort D</b>	Children at edge of care, currently living in their family home, where family functioning and conflict is an identified issue. The intervention attempts to avoid the child coming into care.	8 years to 16 years



# Referral Route and Engagement

- Identification of children for STARS can come from anyone associated with the young person however all referrals need to be from the SPOC only
- Routes of identification include but not limited to:-
  - Allocated Social Worker
  - Supervising Social Worker
  - Team manager
  - DHOS/HOS
  - Placements team
  - Parents
  - School
  - IRO
- Allocated Social worker will work with the SPOC to provide information to the enquiry meeting
- Criteria needs to be met and consent gained from primary carers to commit to the 2 year programme
- SPOC attends residential panel, placement meetings, team meetings, stability and disruption meetings, network meetings





# Referral Route and Engagement

- Once identified the SPOC supports the creation of the referral with information from LCS
- SPOC contacts relevant allocated social worker via email and telephone
  - Risks to referrals:-
    - Delayed through lack of response from Social workers
    - Young person doesn't meet criteria
    - Timing of referral is too late and placement is already in crisis
    - Lack of consent from primary carers
    - Changes of social worker
    - Changes in long term care plan for the young person
    - Fostering sufficiency
    - Withdrawn by social care
    - Criteria not met
    - Escalation to a higher cohort

# Case Study

- See additional handout



Adobe Acrobat  
Document

# Outcome Monitoring

- In addition to maintaining a secure family environment triggering the outcomes payments the programme will monitor additional outcomes such as health, emotional wellbeing, education.
- Intended to demonstrate that a holistic improvement is being made in the young person's outcomes equating to real-life change for each individual, enabling stability and sustaining of the placement.

## **Education Attendance**

Research shows attendance and days excluded from school are key proxy measures of education attainment and EETs trajectories.

## **Offences/Cautions**

For all cohorts it will be important to track any engagement with the justice system and, through the support of the team around the child/family, reduce high risk behaviours.

## **Educational Attainment**

A strong indicator of EETs trajectory. It is proposed that the Level progression of the pupil over the school year is tracked.

## **Absent/Missing from Home**

For cohorts A and B this should already be captured and it will be important to capture in the narrative the high-risk behaviours that might be behind the absence, for example substance misuse or Child Sexual Exploitation.

## **Health Outcomes**

Including mental health will be addressed through the My Star.

## **Positive Activities**

Though this measure is difficult to compare between different activities, the capture of new and increased positive activities by the young person, whether social, sports or interest related, provides a narrative that gives more context to other outcome proxy measures.

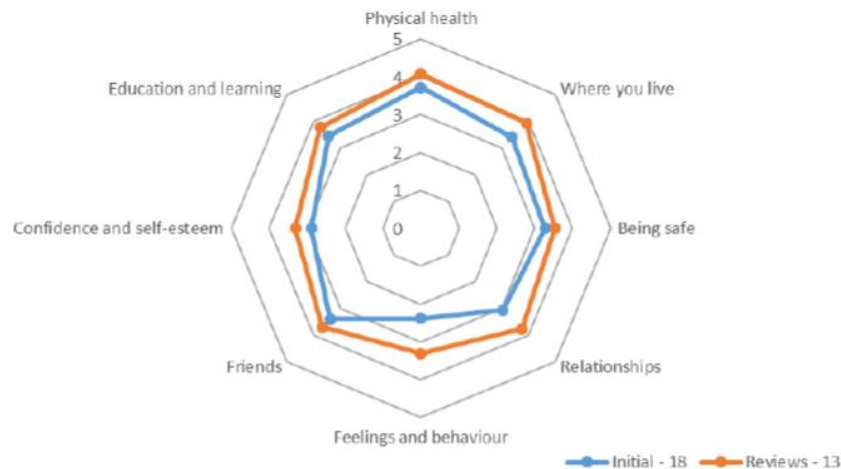
# Outcome Monitoring

**STARS - DN2 - Family Star Plus**  
All Cohorts - Derby City



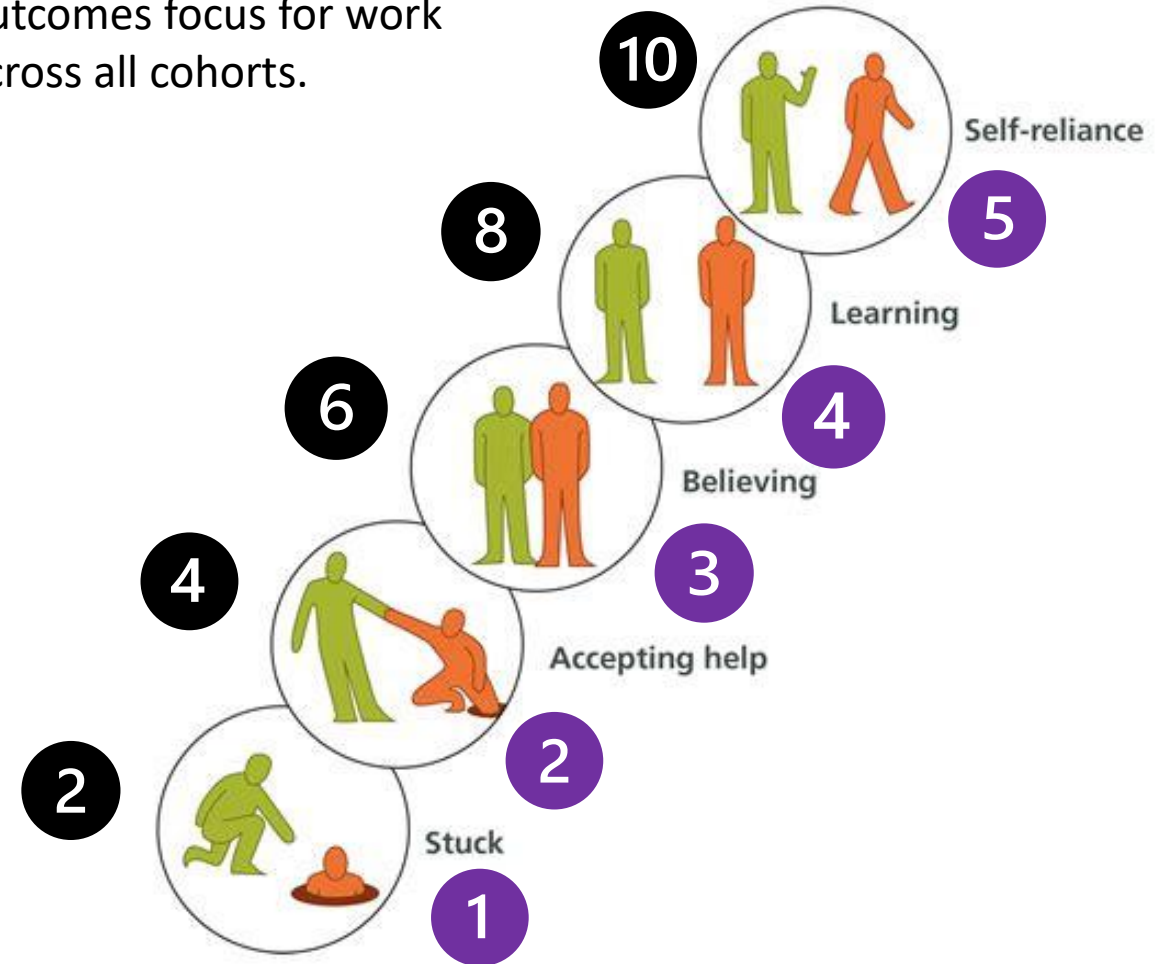
**Family Star Plus:**  
Reasonable improvement across 6 of the 8 scales  
• Main distance travelled in relation to 'physical health'

**STARS - DN2 - My Star**  
All Cohorts - Derby City



**My Star**  
Distance travelled in 4 of the 8 scales  
• Limited distance travelled in relation to 'education and learning'  
• Lowest distance travelled of all the local authority cohorts

The Outcomes Star provides an evidence based tool for measuring and supporting change against a range of criteria. It has been integrated into case planning and recording for the STARS service, providing an outcomes focus for work across all cohorts.





# Cost Benefit to Derby City Council

- As well as better social outcomes DN2 expects cashable efficiency savings to be delivered by commissioning services through the Social Impact Bond (SIB)
- With the existing 12 live cases and DCC financial year end 31/03/2023 the following expectations:
  - Payments to Outcomes 4 Children £232,860 against cohorts A & C
  - Cashable savings £632,955 after payment to O4C
  - Payments to Outcomes 4 Children £36,015 against cohorts B & D
  - Avoided cost, savings £850,909 after payment to O4C
- No further savings would register for DCC financial year due to outcomes trigger point on cohort A & C
- Cost avoidance would be effected if referrals made to cohorts B & D before financial year end
- Uplift to independent service providers shows an estimated inflation shortfall of £800,000 could potentially be accounted for by ensuring the existing 3 referrals for stepdown are found foster placements

# Fostering Sufficiency

- Fostering sufficiency continues to impact the conversion of enquiries to referrals due to the identification of suitable matches for both step down and planned foster placement moves
- We have seen young people referred in Cohort B escalate into Cohort A before any intervention support provided by STARS
- This highlights the importance of early intervention to protect and stabilise existing foster placements as these cases have returned under cohort A having escalated issues for young people with additional placement moves and then not identifying suitable foster placements
- SPOC is working with internal fostering to identify upcoming foster placements
- SPOC has supported engagement events for special foster carer scheme with the view to accommodate children stepping down from residential settings

# Key learning points from STARS Programme

- Fostering sufficiency continues to
- A range of work has been undertaken with Polaris Community to prioritise availability of foster carers for cohorts A B but no substantial progress on successful matches has been made to date.
- Fostering Exchange Days will continue to be facilitated to identify matches in cohort A and for planned placement transition in cohort B
- Animated profiles for young people used to bring the young person's personality out of standard placement referral text
- Cohort C referrals remain nearly half the anticipated amount across DN2, despite these cases generating cashable savings. The STARS Service Manager has engaged with relevant local authority teams but with mixed results. The comms undertaken with Derby City has not generated increased enquiries to the service.
- A meeting is scheduled on the 15/02/2023 to discuss a number of reunification cases under Placement with Parents' Regulations.
- Feedback that the bonus with STARS is the longevity of involvement
- Over time foster carers can become overwhelmed with the intensity of the work
- Peer mentors have been a really useful element within the service
- Regular communication is needed
- IFA placement managers will generally start exploring matching 2 months in advance of a vacancy going live. Vacancy boards will include current and upcoming vacancies
- Children's profiles shared via power point were felt to be more positive and would appeal to foster carers

# Most valued and most challenging aspects of STARS

Most Valued	Most Challenging
Flexibility of the programme to work to individual families needs	Referral Form is very lengthy SW not taking time to make referrals
Great relationship building, partnership working	Some families won't commit to 2yrs but would clearly benefit from STARS
Support to Foster Carers has delivered stability and longevity to placements	Social Impact Bond funding model means that some families in crisis can't access STARS
The length of STARS involvement, it is very reassuring for parents to have 2yrs of support	Experienced delay when highlighted by IFA to LASW for placement stability
STARS Outcome tools are really clear and useful for tracking progress for assessments and reviews	Carers feeling overwhelmed due to the intensive programme
Communication and attendance at statutory reviews; SW's have felt supported that they are not the only one undertaking tasks etc.	Communicating to parents and carers what the programme can (and can't) deliver
Peer Mentors are key to support young people especially when they are going through difficult times	Timing of the support, sometimes foster carers have already 'given up'
STARS workers are very knowledgeable and supportive to families; additional oversight	Direct work with children e.g. therapy is not available as part of the programme
The success in being able to support children in their placement	
An outside perspective of what is happening in the family home both positive strengths and aspects of concern	