



Background

The Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) introduced its Forward Oversight Framework 2023–27 in June 2023 to provide better clarity about how it undertakes key statutory functions under section 9 of the *Family and Child Commission Act 2014* to review and improve the systems that protect and safeguard Queensland children and their families.

In 2023, the QFCC published the [2023–24 Oversight Forward Workplan](#), which sets out the discrete examination and discovery review projects to be prioritised over the 2023–24 financial year and beyond.

The Oversight Framework commits the QFCC to brief stakeholders on progress, to revisit the relevance of listed reviews, and to seek input and consider emerging issues to add to the workplan. Figure 5 in the Oversight Framework (p.15) outlines that the workplan is to be updated annually in January, with a progress update and outcomes to be reported annually in July.

Process for updating the Forward Oversight Workplan

The 2023-24 Forward Oversight Workplan has been undergoing active review over recent months.






The review has included individual meetings with key agencies, staff input and written feedback from Ministers and Directors-General of key agencies and members of the QFCC Advisory Council on a draft 2024 workplan.










Feedback was received from several agencies. All feedback has been considered, and most has been incorporated.











The rest of this document outlines what has changed between the 2023–24 Forward Oversight Workplan, and the updated 2024 Forward Oversight Workplan.

Projects removed or re-adjusted on the 2024 Forward Oversight Workplan







Listed project	Outcome	Comment
Common trajectories A life story mapping from Child Death Review Board (CDRB) files to identify common points for improved intervention for children.	Removed from the 2024 workplan.	Project completed: Lessons from the life-story timelines of 30 Queensland children who have died published June 2023.

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 Restorative Justice Conferencing A case file review and programmatic comparison of best practice on effective Restorative Justice Conferencing including the performance standards and funding model in place in Queensland.	Removed from the 2024 workplan.	Project completed: <i>Restorative Justice Conferencing in Queensland</i> published June 2023.
 Permanent Care Orders A case review of the incidences of granting Permanent Care Orders in relation to First Nations children and the apparent escalation in use of this type of order.	Removed from the 2024 workplan.	Project completed: <i>System review into the use of Permanent Care Orders for First Nations children</i> published July 2023.
 Blue Card effectiveness A case assessment of Blue Card decision-making with specific focus on negative notice decisions for First Nation applicants.	Removed from the 2024 workplan.	Project completed: <i>A thematic analysis of provisionally approved kinship carers who receive a subsequent Blue Card negative notice</i> published October 2023.
 Use of watchhouses A quantitative review and case file read to identify why Queensland children are experience long stays in Police watchhouses.	Removed from the 2024 workplan.	Project completed: <i>Who's responsible: Understanding why young people are being held longer in Queensland watch houses</i> published November 2023.
 Growing up in Queensland A quantitative review of Queensland's children and families across the life domains, presenting a regional focus with case studies on the lived experience of Queenslanders including with specific focus on out-of-home care and youth justice cohorts.	Removed from the workplan for 2024 but included on the workplan for 2026.	Project completed: <i>Growing up in Queensland: A study of child and family wellbeing</i> published January 2024. Growing up in Queensland dashboard released December 2023. A 2026 edition of the Growing up in Queensland report will replicate and update the 2024 publication.
 Police discretion A quantitative analysis of how police discretion is being applied through the Youth Justice system, for specific cohorts and locations, including a policy review to identify any practice and procedural issues.	Removed from the 2024 workplan.	Consultation with the Queensland Police Service (QPS) identified that QPS and the University of Queensland were undertaking a joint project to evaluate the use of discretion, including how it operates for specific cohorts and locations. The QFCC will liaise with the project partners to understand its findings.

Listed project	Outcome	Comment
 Parenting in out-of-home care A review of the incidence of children in care becoming parents, including the policy, procedures and funding support.	Project replaced by a project with a broadened scope.	 Teenage parenting An analysis of the factors that increase risk of young parenthood in Queensland, identifying and critically examining the services and responses currently in place.
 Families in the child protection system A qualitative interview and survey process to assess how parents are experiencing Child Safety processes and how the charter of rights for parents is being upheld.	Removed from the 2024 workplan as it is now a standard survey project.	The QFCC will work with the Family Inclusion Network to develop and deliver a parent voice survey to follow up on the survey conducted in 2023.
 Supporting parents in the youth justice system A qualitative analysis of the views of parents on their child's experience of the youth justice system.	Project re-focused on examining the adequacy of legal supports for children and families in the youth justice system.	 Legal support for children and families in the youth justice system A qualitative analysis of the views and experiences of children, parents and the sector about a child's access to and experience of legal advice they access in the youth justice system.
 Isolation, use of force and incidents in youth detention A quantitative look at the incidence of negative events in youth detention and a review of the laws, policies and systems that are employed. Review includes statistical jurisdictional comparison benchmarked against standards.	Following the QFCC's oversight role with the residential care review, this project has been refocused to examine how critical incidents are managed in residential care settings.	 Critical incidents in residential care A quantitative look at the incidence of negative events in residential care and a review of the laws, policies and systems that are employed. This review will include jurisdictional comparison.
 Examination of the impact of the cross-Government panels focused on serious repeat offenders A quantitative and case file analysis of how the youth justice taskforce/multi-agency panels and the Serious Repeat Offender Index reporting approach has led to practice and recidivism changes and how young people and families have been impacted.	Removed from the 2024 workplan.	Advice from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has indicated there are two separate evaluations of youth justice multi-agency panels actively underway. The QFCC will review these evaluations, once completed, and decide whether additional review work is required.
 Assessing and addressing criminogenic factors A look at the tools and practice employed in Queensland Youth Justice system with comparison to other jurisdictions with a focus on innovative models and programs.	Removed from the 2024 workplan.	Advice from the Department of Youth Justice has confirmed that significant work has been completed already, and that additional work currently being undertaken by the Queensland Audit Office will enhance the tools and practice employed by the youth justice system. The QFCC has sought access to this work and will reconsider whether this review project might be better postponed to a future time.

Listed project	Outcome	Comment
 Reunification planning and Delegated Authority A case file read aimed at articulating the differences and strengths of the reunification work led by REFOCUS.	Removed from the 2024 workplan.	This project will be absorbed into the ongoing work associated with Principle Focus .
 Foster and Kinship Carer capacity An assessment of the turnover of carer households in Queensland compared to other jurisdictions, with analysis of the carer cohort.	Project is underway in partnership with PeakCare.	 Foster and kinship carer capacity A joint project with PeakCare to assess the turnover of carer households in Queensland compared to other jurisdictions, with analysis of the carer cohort.
 Staffing in child protection A quantitative look at the capacity and trends in the child protection and out-of-home care workforce and analysis of the roles, skills and structures used in child protection systems.  Staffing in Youth Justice A quantitative look at the capacity and trends in the community and detention Youth Justice workforce and analysis of the roles, skills and structures used in Youth Justice systems.	Following feedback from stakeholders, these projects have been combined into one.	 Workforce - Youth Justice and Child Protection A quantitative look at the capacity and trends in the Youth Justice, child protection and out-of-home care workforce and analysis of the roles, skills and structures used in these systems.
 Residential care Cohort analysis of the children in residential care including the age, sibling group status and child protection history.	Following a review of residential care undertaken by the Department of Child Safety in 2023, this project was re-worked to review what impact has been achieved through reforms to the residential care system.	 Residential care A follow-up review of the residential care system. This will include a series of visits to care facilities, assessment of the cohort of the children in residential care (including the age, sibling group status and child protection history), review of service delivery models and care standards.
 Correlation between public and social housing and child protection and youth justice A data analysis to identify how housing services can impact child safety and youth justice outcomes.	This project has been slightly altered in its scope following sector input.	 Housing, child protection and youth justice A data analysis to identify how housing services can impact child safety and youth justice outcomes, and conversely how system involvement can impact a family's access to public and social housing.

New projects added to the 2024 Forward Oversight Workplan

Project	Comment
 Paediatric sepsis mortality An analysis of sepsis related child deaths to better understand the incidence of childhood sepsis and identify opportunities to better identify, treat and prevent it.	As part of the Safer Pathways Through Childhood framework, the Queensland paediatric sepsis mortality study was published in February 2024.
 Growing up in Queensland – voices and stories A compendium of stories by children and families across the life domains with specific focus on out-of-home care and youth justice cohorts.	Based on the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Young People (ARACY) NEST framework, this publication will feature stories collected from Queensland children and families about the six life domains as a companion to the Growing up in Queensland data compilation project.
 Mental health assessments in the youth justice system An exploration and analysis of the fitness to plead, soundness of mind and Mental Health Court process, including mapping the frequency of assessments, impact of delays in the Childrens and Mental Health Courts and mechanisms for ensuring the prioritization of young people in the mental health court.	Following feedback from the Department of Youth Justice about contemporary issues, the QFCC has added these as new projects to the forward workplan for 2025–26.
 Cognitive disability in youth justice cohorts A review of undiagnosed cognitive disability in youth justice populations, its prevalence and role as a risk factor.	
 Re-imagining the response to offending by children and young people An examination of alternative approaches to responding to offending committed by children and young people away from the criminal justice and legal systems. This project will involve an international scan of alternative models and their impacts and outcomes.	Following ongoing and intensive efforts in Queensland to address the offending of children and young people, and the uninterrupted flow of children into the youth justice system, this project aims to re-think the legal response to offending behaviour by young people and investigate the success of alternative responses.
 Responding to children as victims of domestic and family violence A review of interventions specifically designed to respond to children in families where domestic and family violence (DFV) occurs, including an examination of their effectiveness at disrupting the intergenerational nature of DFV and its ongoing impact for individuals.	Following the work of the Women’s Safety and Justice Taskforce which reported in 2022, as well as the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland which reported in 2015, this project aims to assess what impact the response to domestic and family violence in Queensland has had on the experiences of children and young people.