

**Report of: Steve Walker, Deputy Director Safeguarding Specialist and Targeted, Children's Services**

**Report to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)**

**Date:** 21 July 2016

**Subject: Ofsted – Areas for Improvement**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress against the areas for improvement identified by Ofsted and detailed in the March 2015 report.

**Recommendations**

2. Scrutiny Board are asked to note the progress made on the Ofsted areas for improvement.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

2 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress against the areas for improvement identified by Ofsted and detailed in the March 2015 report.

2.1 There has been significant progress in all the areas for improvement, with some areas which are completed and some which have work still in progress.

## **3 Background information**

3.1 Children's services in Leeds have been on a significant and wide-ranging journey of improvement over a number of years. In July 2009 Ofsted carried out an unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements and judged that Leeds' services did not adequately safeguard children. In March 2010 the Government placed an Improvement Notice on Leeds. An improvement Plan was developed and an Independently Chaired Improvement Board was established. In January 2011 Ofsted carried out an unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements and found 'remarkable and impressive improvement' in quality and safety.

3.2 Over the past five years Children's Services in Leeds has undertaken a programme of transformational change, both to services and in its approach to working with vulnerable children and families. The approach has been underpinned by the ambition to make Leeds a child friendly city.

3.3 The changes, which have been actively supported by partners in the Children and Families Trust Board and the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board, include a re-organisation of the service; a focus on 'doing the simple things better'; implementing restorative practices; having timely, quality conversations; and investment in workforce training and development. Children's Social Work has been a particular focus of this work with a conscious effort made to raise the profile of the service, strengthen practice, improve staff retention and reduce caseloads. The approach taken has been one of incremental change built on a strong, objective, evidence-based foundation, to ensure that improvements can be sustained and to create a more confident, secure and forward-thinking service.

3.4 The unannounced Ofsted inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers; and the effectiveness of partnership working, including the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board, was therefore a key test of the progress that this work and investment has made. The inspection took place over four weeks and commenced on 20th January 2015 and concluded on 11th February 2015.

3.5 The outcome of the inspection is that Ofsted has rated services in Leeds as 'Good' overall. There are five key areas that contribute to this overall judgement and on four of these: children who need help and protection; children looked after and achieving permanence; adoption performance; and experience and progress of care leavers, Leeds is rated as 'good'. In the fifth area, 'leadership, management and governance' we are rated as 'outstanding'. Alongside this, the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) was also found to be 'good'.

3.6 In the inspection report Ofsted comment very positively on the Leeds journey of improvement, 'The local authority has taken a thoughtful and methodical approach to improvement and has followed the child's journey. Firm foundations underpin the effectiveness of services. Leeds has placed a considerable emphasis on

creating an environment where good quality social work can flourish.’ Over the course of the four weeks, the inspectors recognised the clear strategic direction being taken across the city, the partnership approach that underpins this and the centrality of children’s services to Leeds’ wider ambitions.

- 3.7 Ofsted has not identified any priority or immediate actions for Leeds to respond to; however, as is the case for all authorities inspected, Ofsted requires Leeds to state how identified areas for improvement will be addressed. The areas for improvement identified by Ofsted are in line with Leeds’ own awareness and our aspirations to take the service forward. The Leeds response to the areas for improvement is set out in the Main issues section of this report.

## **4 Main issues**

The areas for improvement are categorised into specific areas of work and each *area of improvement* is numbered as it appears in the [Ofsted report](#).

### **4.1 Assessment and Care Planning**

*(1) - Extend the reach of the outcomes-based accountability approach, so that outcomes are clearly identified in all children’s written plans to improve children’s and families’ lives and inform service development.*

*(4) - Ensure that assessments, plans and formal meetings consistently give attention to the individual characteristics of children and their families, for example, ethnicity, culture, faith, gender.*

*(10) - Improve the current care planning format to make it easier to understand the long-term goals for children and young people, and enhance their ability to understand what is happening to them.*

*(12) - Ensure that all post-adoption support plans are measurable and outcome based.*

*(14) – Improve Pathway Plans so that they contain the detail needed regarding specific targets and outcomes from young people.*

### **Progress**

- Cross-service working group is established and functioning well;
- Additional support received from expert external consultant (Mike Pinnock), leading researcher (Martin Calder) and wider professionals (e.g. Educational Psychologists);
- Initial work completed to look at research evidence, professional best practice;
- Subgroups established to review and update all key plans pro forma;
- Additional work streams are being established to look at culture change and training and development;

## **What we still need to do**

- Culture change and training programmes to begin from the Summer of 2016.
- Forms and processes to be redesigned from Autumn 2016, once update of Frameworki is complete

### **4.2 Understanding how to use Frameworki reports**

*(2) - Ensure that all frontline managers and staff fully understand the capability of the electronic recording system, in order that they can produce reports that help them to effectively understand their performance and further drive improvements in the quality of services offered to children and their families.*

#### **Progress**

Reporting and analysis to support management and improvement in front line practice continues to develop strongly. Key developments include:

- regular new team and worker level analysis available for all teams and managers;
- improved monthly care leaver and data quality reports;
- newly developed reports to support and inform better supervision by providing summary information on all current cases for worker and manager;
- skills and experience in use of performance information is being strengthened by ongoing training and in addition clear links and regular meetings between performance staff and front line teams;
- a pre-supervision report has been introduced that can be run by the worker or the team manager about the worker's caseload. There has been positive feedback about these reports and their effectiveness in helping workers to prepare for case supervision;

Frameworki development continues, led by a cross-service working group including front line managers and workers. The timescale for the main MOSAIC update has been amended pending completion of key statistical returns.

## **What we still need to do**

There is no additional activity required to meet this area for improvement.

### **4.3 Continuous Professional Development**

*(3) - Further embed the culture of continuous professional development by ensuring that managers agree challenging learning goals with social workers as part of the appraisal cycle, and reinforce this through regular, reflective supervision.*

## **Progress**

- A cross service working group developed a new Supervision policy, procedure and practice guidance plus a range of appendices (forms, templates, and tools to aid reflective supervision etc.).
- The new policy and all supporting documents are available on the online procedures.
- These have been introduced to different layers of social work management through a supervision training programme. This has included holding nine training events for front line practitioners and managers on the new policy.
- Supervision training is embedded in the Training and Development calendar for social workers and induction for new social workers.
- Making the most of supervision is embedded in the Assessed and Supported Year of Employment (ASYE - for newly qualified social workers) framework of Action Learning sets
- A second cross service working group has developed a new Interactive Learning Audit framework. This is predicated on the auditor and the worker sitting side by side to carry out the audit as part of the workers Continuous Professional Development offer.
- Learning from the audits informs supervision and appraisal goals and objectives.

## **What we still need to do**

- We have a specific training session for Children's Service Delivery Managers planned for September 2016 which will focus on supporting managers to improve reflective supervision and use supervision to improve performance.
- We referred back to the last Supervision Survey to ensure that the recommendations are being addressed, and this needs to be communicated to staff (you said, we did etc.);
- We now need to enable the new audit framework to be embedded into the social work service and carry out a review in six months' time and address any learning gained from the review.
- We are adapting the audit to be fit for purpose for other parts of Children's Social Work service including fostering, Duty and Advice and the Integrated Safeguarding Unit

### **4.4 Agency attendance at Child Protection meetings**

*(5) - Improve agency attendance at all initial child protection meetings to improve the identification of risk, and plans to ensure children's safety; in particular, that of police, general practitioners and mainstream midwifery services.*

## **Progress**

- We have introduced a new approach with the police which involves advice provided by the front door police officers in relation to whether police attendance at a future ICPC is required, and which officer should attend. This advice is referred to when ICPC invitations are sent out, and invitations are also much clearer about the purpose of the ICPC.
- Training for the police: In addition to the new approach, the Integrated Safeguarding Unit has provided three awareness raising sessions for the police, in relation to: the child protection process; the strengthening families model; the importance of quality reports; and the importance of the police contribution. This training will continue to be offered as a rolling programme for new officers as required.
- Quarterly meetings: The Service Delivery Manager Child Protection (ISU) has established quarterly meetings with the police to address any issues with the new approach, including raising any issues re: non-attendance when police have been invited.
- This approach has been very effective. In the third quarter of 2014-15, the police attended 52% (9) of 17 ICPCs they were required to attend (as per ACPO guidelines). In the first quarter of 2015-16 (following introduction of the new approach) this had increased to 97.1% (66) of 68 ICPCs they were required to attend (as per ACPO guidelines).

## **What we still need to do**

- It has been agreed through the LSCB Policies and Procedures sub-group that a similar approach is developed to improve attendance of health colleagues - especially GPs and midwifery.

## **4.5 Access to emotional support**

*(6) - Improve access and waiting times for CAMHS for children in need of help and protection.*

## **Progress**

- Leeds partners have developed a Local Transformation Plan (LTP) for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, in line with national requirements.
- Significant additional funding has been made available to implement the plan, with co-commissioning from CCGs, the local authority and schools.
- A key priority for the LTP is to improve access to early support and services, and improving access for vulnerable groups – particularly children looked after and care leavers.

## **What we still need to do**

- The plan's implementation will be managed through a multi-agency board with strong links to both the Health and Wellbeing and Children and Families Trust Boards.

#### **4.6 Children Missing and Child Sexual Exploitation**

*(7) - Ensure that findings from return home interviews are collated and analysed at a strategic level in order to understand the reasons why young people go missing, and any emerging trends and themes that can inform future service planning.*

*(8) - Ensure that all foster carers have access to training in child sexual exploitation.*

#### **Progress**

- The capacity of the CSE team has been expanded to become the Risk and Vulnerabilities Team - to work with children and young people who are vulnerable to various risks has been expanded. Capacity has come from within the Child Protection team due to the reduction in numbers of children subject to a CPP. The team has coordinators who focus on the particular needs of those young people at risk of a range of risk factors such as CSE, Missing, Trafficking, Radicalisation and Harmful Sexual Behaviour;
- The LSCB CSE Sub-group has now also expanded to become the Risk and Vulnerabilities Sub-group;
- The Return Interview service has been brought in house with the Youth Offer providing this to those young people who have been missing, but are not open to CSWS. The next step is to expand this to include those open to CSWS. The intention is to improve the quality of the return interview and the information gained from analysis of them;
- Reports on the numbers of children who have been missing are provided to the monthly strategic Practice Improvement Meeting and to the Risk and Vulnerabilities Sub-group of the LSCB;
- Regarding CSE training for foster carers, a training needs analysis has been carried out and training commissioned from September 2016 which includes sessions aimed specifically at foster carers. There will be three sessions targeted for foster carers between September 2016 and April 2017, with the flexibility to add further sessions if required. The new sessions will be targeted at level four carers who care for young people with the most complex needs.

#### **What we still need to do**

- We need to further develop the reports we have on children who have been missing to include analysis of return interviews;
- We will monitor take-up of the training by foster carers; this is taking place for the courses that are already available through the Performance and Learning

System (PALS) and will be extended for the specific sessions from September 2016 onwards.

#### **4.7 Looked after children Education**

*(9) - Ensure that schools are held to account for their use of the pupil premium in optimising the attainment of children looked after.*

*(11) - Improve Personal Education Plans, ensuring that they contain SMART targets which can be used to drive sustained improvement in pupils' performance.*

#### **Progress**

- Pupil Premium - an online portal has now been introduced to gather and analyse information from schools on the use of Pupil Premium. Three collections of data from schools have taken place. During the next collection of data (summer term), schools will be reminded that Pupil Premium Plus will only be allocated on return of their students' progress information.
- The Virtual School is re-working the PEP documentation, and in training with social workers, IROs and foster carers have advised that the key question for Pupil Premium Plus is 'what difference is it making' not 'what is it being spent on'; conversations should focus on learning outcomes rather than auditing finances.
- The Virtual School is using information from Pupil Premium Plus reviews alongside a national self-evaluation framework to develop a reviewing process for schools as part of their support and challenge role. The Virtual School have also intervened directly in a number of cases where social workers/ carers have raised concerns about how schools have made use of their Pupil Premium Plus funding.
- In September, the Virtual School Head Teacher wrote to all independent and fee-paying schools to advise them they would no longer automatically receive termly Pupil Premium Plus funding, but could apply if they felt it would contribute to a child's progress. No applications have been received, which has enabled us to release that funding for children with more complex needs in Leeds schools, e.g. for therapeutic play sessions.
- PEP Workflow and format - the workflow in Frameworki has been revised so that it is mandatory for the first PEP and first review to be quality assured by the Virtual School team. The team also use a 'top 100' methodology to identify those children who do least well in their learning, and review their PEPs, giving advice on quality in a new QA workflow to ensure that PEPs are contributing to pupil progress and attainment.
- PEP Training - the Virtual School training programme for the academic year has been planned and is currently being uploaded to the Leeds for Learning and PALs platforms to enable schools and LCC staff to register.

#### **What we still need to do**



- Ensure Designated Teachers have the skills and seniority in school to decide how Pupil Premium Plus is spent.

## **4.8 Adoption**

*(13) - Ensure that 'later in life' letters are personal, and that the language used is easily understood.*

### **Progress**

- Guidance has been developed about how to make later in life letters personal to the child and about how to draft a quality letter. Best practice has informed the procedures.
- 'Difficult stories' guidance has also been produced looking at story subject matter such as neglect, DV, substance misuse, learning disability, adoption etc. and these difficult stories have each section drafted in language that is easily understood by children.

### **What we still need to do**

- Include the guidance in the next refresh of the online procedures manual in December 2016.

## **4.9 Care leavers**

*(15) - Ensure that all young people have information in relation to their health history and about their entitlements.*

### **Progress**

- The Care Leaver Health Summary (CLHS) was developed with care leavers through the Care Leaver Council, and the New Belongings MALAP sub-group. Two CLA Specialist Nurses worked with care leavers to obtain their views on what should be included in a health summary, and the format in which it should be delivered. Care leavers told us that they would prefer a letter summarising their healthcare, rather than an App.
- The CLHS is shared with young people as their review Health Needs Assessment is completed at 16 years; this means that between the ages of 16 and 18 we can revisit the summary with young people, seek out any further personal or family health history they may want or need, and help them to think about any implications for their health and wellbeing as they enter adulthood.
- Care leaver entitlements are now available on the Youth Information Hub Care leaver entitlement web page.

### **What we still need to do**

The next step is to establish a Facebook page for care leavers and to use this to publicise the entitlements (amongst many other messages).

## **5 Corporate Considerations**

### **5.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 5.1.1 The Executive Member for Children's Services was consulted on this report on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2016.
- 5.1.2 The development of this report has benefited from staff involvement and Leeds Safeguarding Children Board and partner engagement in providing information for updates on the areas for improvement. Progress has and will continue to be reported to the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board and the Children and Families Trust Board.

### **5.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 5.2.1 Equality and diversity will be supported and promoted through the work to improve care planning, by ensuring that work with the child and family fully considers the child and families' characteristics, e.g. gender, sexuality, ethnicity.

### **5.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

- 5.3.1 By making good progress and addressing the Ofsted areas for improvement, we are contributing to making Leeds a child friendly city.

### **5.4 Resources and value for money**

- 5.4.1 n/a

### **5.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 5.5.1 n/a

### **5.6 Risk Management**

- 5.6.1 The risks involved would be concerned with non-progress against the Ofsted areas for improvement which would impact on Leeds' ambition and progress to become the best city in the UK for children, a child friendly city. However, this risk is not realised due to the progress made to date.

## **6 Conclusions**

- 6.1 Throughout the report, Children's Services have demonstrated the extensive progress made in addressing each of the Ofsted areas for improvement. Where there is still work to do, this is planned for and in progress.

## **7 Recommendations**

Scrutiny Board are asked to note the progress made on the Ofsted areas for improvement.

## **8 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 8.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.