

Report for: Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee: 12 July 2023

Item number: 7

Title: Outcome of Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services

Report

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Ward(s) affected: All

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: Non Key decision

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 Haringey Children's Social Care Service was inspected by OFSTED between 13 and 24 February 2023. The inspection, following a five day notice and mobilisation period, focused on the effectiveness of the Council's Children's Social Care Services.

1.2 The inspection took place in accordance with legislation and the new Ofsted inspection framework that became operational in December 2022. The findings from the inspection were published on 11 April 2023 and the inspectors judged that Haringey's Children's Service is now rated for overall effectiveness as Good. The inspection noted significant improvement since the last full inspection, the report for which was published in December 2018.

1.3 The inspection report includes a small number of areas for improvement and to address these areas the Post Inspection Action Plan is presented for Members herewith, as indicated to Cabinet on 13 June 2023.

1.4 The Director of Children's Services and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Schools and Learning and will submit the action plan to OFSTED on 18 July 2023. The delivery of the action plan will be overseen by the Excellence for Children's Board, and the AD for Safeguarding & Social Care will provide progress reports to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee, to Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel, and to the Haringey Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- a) note the findings and outcome of the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care Services, a copy of which is attached as Appendix 1; and

- b) note the approach set out for the development of the areas identified by Ofsted as requiring further improvement in the draft attached action plan at Appendix 2.

3. Background

- 3.1 Children’s Services were subject to a full Ofsted inspection called the [Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services \(ILACS\)](#) by a team of Ofsted inspectors over a three-week period. During the first week of the inspection, inspectors were off site and were provided with data and information in line with the guidance in the ILACS framework. Inspectors were based in Haringey for the last two weeks of the inspection from 13 February to 24 February 2023.
- 3.2 The inspection framework is focused on evidence about improving outcomes for children and young people and evidence of the impact of leaders. There is a strong emphasis on examining frontline practice, talking directly with practitioners, and taking into account the views of children, young people, parents and carers. Our work with partner agencies and in fulfilling responsibilities as Corporate Parents was also an important focus point for the inspectors.
- 3.3 In advance of the inspection, the service produced a self-evaluation that set out the strengths, areas for improvement and actions needed to improve services. Ofsted received a copy of the self-evaluation in advance of the inspection and used this alongside a set of required data and information to form their key lines of enquiry. As part of the inspection process, inspectors look for evidence of progress from previous inspections. The last full inspection of children’s services took place in 2018 [50044253 \(ofsted.gov.uk\)](#) and a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) on neglect took place in December 2017.
- 3.4 The inspection team were on site for nine working days and read case files, observed practice, interviewed a wide arrange of frontline practitioners, and other professionals and safeguarding partners regarding the help and care given to children in Haringey. They also talked directly to children, young people and their families including the Children in Care Council, ASPIRE, young people at Bruce Grove and Rising Green Youth Centres and visited the Maya Angelou Family Centre. Inspectors spent time in Haringey’s Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and met with most designated safeguarding partners including those from Health, Housing leads, Head Teachers and schools, and the Haringey and Enfield BCU – Police Teams.
- 3.5 **The judgement from the inspection is that the effectiveness of Haringey Children’s Social Care Services is Overall Good**

Judgement	Grade
Overall effectiveness	Good
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Good
The experiences of children in care	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children care leavers	Good

3.6 The summary of the findings is taken verbatim from the full report as follows :
'Leaders have supported frontline staff to significantly improve practice since the last inspection. Particular progress has been made for children in need of help and protection. Multi-agency partnership work is effective in identifying children at risk of abuse or neglect and providing the right support at the right time. Children at risk of extra-familial harm benefit from bespoke, timely and targeted support to protect them and to disrupt exploitation. Care leavers continue to receive effective help to take up education and employment opportunities and prepare for adulthood. Personal advisers are tenacious and creative in supporting them as young adults.'

While most children are now supported well, leaders know there is more to do to achieve the same level of progress in developing services for children in care. Children come into care when it is in their best interests and most live in homes which meet their needs. However, practice is not consistently enabling them to achieve the stability and permanence they need for the future. Many do not receive individualised, sensitive life-story work to help them understand their journeys. Leaders have an accurate and realistic view of the service. Stability of senior leadership and good corporate and political support have helped Haringey make considerable progress in a challenging context. The transformation seen is making a positive difference to most children's lives.'

3.7 Ofsted inspectors commented that *'In 2018, inspectors judged Haringey children's services to require improvement to be good. Since then, an ambitious and stable leadership team has made considerable progress and much of the service is now transformed. The senior leadership team has achieved steady improvement in the quality and impact of social work practice for children in need of help and protection and sustained good support for care leavers. Services in these areas are now good, with some examples of excellent child and family-centred practice'*. (Inspection of Haringey local authority children's services report, page 9).

3.8 Ofsted acknowledged that most children are now well supported and *'that leaders know there is more to do to achieve the same level of progress in developing services for children in care'*. Under a heading: *'what needs to improve'*, inspectors noted the following areas for improvement:

- The effectiveness of permanence planning for children in care, including the challenge brought by independent reviewing officers.
- The identification of and response to children in private fostering arrangements.
- The provision and quality of life story work at key developmental stages in children's lives.
- The quality of supervision in ensuring that plans for children make a positive impact.
- The understanding and knowledge of frontline workers about adoption.

3.9 This is consistent with the Service's self-evaluation.

4. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes

- 4.1 The Children and Young People's Service contributes to delivering the following strategic outcomes in our Corporate Delivery Plan:
- **Inclusive public participation**
 - **Best start in life** – the first few years of every child's life will give them the long-term foundation to thrive
 - **Happy childhoods** – all children across the borough will be happy and healthy as they grow up, feeling safe and secure in their family networks and communities
 - **Successful futures** – every young person, whatever their background, has a pathway to success for the future
 - **A safer borough** – a borough where all residents and visitors feel safe and are safe.

5. **Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)**

5.1 Regulation 3 (Publication of a written statement of proposed action) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Inspection of Local Authorities) Regulations 2007 provides that the Council must within 70 working days of receiving the Chief Inspector's report, publish a written statement of action which it proposes to take in light of the report by sending a copy to the Chief Inspector, Secretary of State and persons or bodies to whom a copy of the report of the inspection was sent.

5.2 **Finance**

There are no new financial commitment proposed by this reports with current service costs contained within approved revenue budget provision.

5.3 **Procurement**

Strategic Procurement notes the contents of this report and confirms there are no procurement implications arising from the recommendations in paragraph 2.1 above.

5.4 **Head of Legal & Governance**

The Head of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

The legal framework for Ofsted inspections of Children Services is set out in Section 135-142 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Inspection of Local Authorities) Regulations 2007.

In November 2017, Ofsted introduced a new Framework, evaluation criteria and inspection guidance for the inspections of local authority children's services. The Framework, last updated in April 2023, enables inspectors to be consistent in inspections whilst retaining flexibility to respond to the individual circumstances of each local authority.

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sending a copy to the Chief Inspector, Secretary of State and persons or bodies to whom a copy of the report of the inspection was sent.

5.5 **Equality**

Children's Social Care services are delivered to fulfil the Council's statutory responsibilities towards children in the Borough who are in need of help and protection or are in care or are leaving care. Services are regulated by legislation and by statutory guidance.

6. **Use of Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Inspection of Haringey local authority children's services report 2023
Appendix 2 – Draft Post-Ofsted Action Plan

7. **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

[Inspecting local authority children's services](#) – the inspection framework that Ofsted use to inspect children's services

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