



Haringey Council

Report for:	CSPAC 26/1/2012	Item Number:	
Title:	Unannounced Ofsted Inspection Report		
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Ward(s) affected: all	Report for Key/Non Key Decisions:		

1. To inform elected members of the outcome of the unannounced OFSTED inspection in October 2011 and of the progress made against the areas for development.

2. Cabinet Member introduction:

The OFSTED Annual unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements within the London Borough of Haringey Council Children's Services took place on 11 and 12 October 2011. The inspection outcome will contribute to the annual review of the performance of Children's Services..

2.2 The inspection team looked at the quality and effectiveness of contact, referral and assessment arrangements and their impact on minimising any child abuse and neglect. Inspectors considered a range of evidence, including: electronic case records; supervision files and notes; observation of social workers and senior practitioners undertaking referral and assessment duties; and other information provided by staff and managers. Inspectors also spoke to a range of staff including managers, social workers, other practitioners and administrative staff.

The inspection identified areas of strength and areas of practice that met requirements, with some areas for development. There were no identified areas for



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priority action. The OFSTED letter can be accessed via <http://www.haringey.gov.uk/ofsted-unannounced-inspection.pdf>

- 2.3 Whilst the primary focus was on work in First Response the inspectors also looked at case files for children from the Disabled Children's Team and Unaccompanied minor's team, both of whom complete initial assessments. The inspection looked at work started and completed in the three months prior to the inspection (June to October 2011)
- 2.4 It was pleasing that Ofsted validated the progress made by Front Line services in the last year and identified two strengths – the work of the multi agency screening team and the additional support provided by the UKBA specialist and the Roma/new communities community partnership worker attached to the No Recourse to Public Funds Team. Both demonstrate the ability of the service to respond flexibly to the needs of vulnerable children and young people within these target groups.
- 2.5 The inspection team were satisfied overall with Haringey's response to referrals, our ability to respond to contacts and referrals in a timely manner through a designated multi agency screening team, to offer advice and information as required and to respond promptly with cases where children may be at risk of significant harm
- 2.6 They noted that the majority of assessments are based on consideration of a range of relevant information and children and young people were routinely seen as part of the assessment process with their wishes and feelings taken into account. Assessments were seen as '*comprehensive with a good analysis of risks and protective factors.*'
- 2.7 The inspectors noted that, in most cases, the diverse needs of children and young people are considered as part of assessments and plans, Interpreters were available to help social workers communicate effectively with children and young people and their families where English was not their first language. Children with disabilities were enabled to communicate their needs through a range of non-verbal approaches.
- 2.8 With regard to supervision they stated that '*Staff receive regular supervision that meets their professional needs. A wide range of training opportunities are available including learning from serious case reviews. Newly qualified social workers are well supported to undertake their roles through enhanced supervision and mentoring enabling them to take on new and more complex tasks. High levels of management oversight and scrutiny are clear on all case files. Decisions made in supervision are generally well recorded and show management direction and challenge to ensure that work is properly undertaken.*'
- 2.9 Finally they noted that 'a robust system of performance management and case file audit is in place. All managers understand trends in performance and use this information to improve the services provided by the team.'



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Areas for development

The inspection also identified some areas for development. A range of actions have been put in place to respond to these recommendations.

- 3 The areas for improvement are as follows:
- ii. *'Record keeping is not always up to date and, in some cases, not complete. For example, child in need plans are not always undertaken and some meetings and case discussions are not recorded. As a result, it is not always possible to understand the progress of the case and ensure that all agreed actions have taken place'*. Whilst no national timescales are in place for the completion of child in need plans the inspectors felt that there was unnecessary delay in some cases
 - iii. *'In some cases, where there is no immediate risk of harm, assessments are not started in a timely manner which delays the introduction of services to support these children and young people.'* This related to a period where our overall performance was still 'recovering' in June 2011 which has now been resolved with assessment performance now consistently up above target levels.
 - iv. *'Following the recommendations of the safeguarding and looked after children inspection in January 2011, a protocol was developed to ensure that all assessments are led by suitably qualified social workers. However, this has not been fully implemented and social work assistants are still allocated and undertake initial assessments without a designated social worker to support them.'* Following close scrutiny of a significant number of files inspectors identified a case file where supervision was recorded at the point of allocation and on day 11 of an initial assessment rather than day 9 (ie during the period of assessment.). Inspectors found that the piece of work, undertaken by the experienced social work assistant, to be of a high standard but noted that recorded supervision should have been on the file before the assessment was completed, read and signed off by the manager.
 - v. *'The authority has not implemented the national protocol for allocation of responsibility for court reporting in private law cases. As a result, the service is undertaking additional work in preparing court reports for which it no longer has responsibility'* Inspectors concluded that the service was completing too much work on private law cases and was not sufficiently robust in ensuring the appropriate cases were left with CAFCASS. This area for development is being progressed jointly with the Haringey Legal team in conjunction with CAFCASS and our local judiciary.
 - vi. *'Protocols and assessment tools that are currently used to assess risks to victims of domestic abuse, do not properly consider the differing needs of young*



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people who are direct victims. Consequently, they do not always receive a service that meets their needs.' This related to a 15 year old young person who was assaulted by her boyfriend. Following discussion with her mother it was concluded that her parents had taken the incident very seriously, were working with the police and had a sound action plan in place. The inspectors expressed concern that a piece of work was not completed with the Young Person herself and as a result she was not able to adequately protect herself from further incidents. A new protocol for DV risk assessment with young people has been developed and further training undertaken.

An updated report of progress against areas for development will be presented by Head of Service at Committee; an updated version of the evidence of progress against the areas for development will be tabled.

4. Recommendations

For elected members to consider the contents of this report and note the progress to date.

5. Other options considered

n/a

6 Background information

n/a

7. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

n/a

8. Head of Legal Services and legal implications

Please refer to point 5 of the action plan

9. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

n/a

10. Head of Procurement Comments

n/a

11. Policy Implication

n/a



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12. Use of Appendices

Letter from OFSTED dated October 2011

<http://www.haringey.gov.uk/ofsted-unannounced-inspection.pdf>

13. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985



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