

Report for: C&YP Scrutiny Panel – 13 December 2016

Item number:

Title: Update on recommendations and areas for improvement from the Ofsted Inspection of services for children in need of health and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board – report published July 2014

Report

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Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** N/A

1. Describe the issue under consideration

This report provides members with an update on progress against the Ofsted recommendations and areas for improvement which followed the inspection of Haringey Children’s Services and effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in 2014.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

N/A

4. Reasons for decision

N/A

5. Alternative options considered

N/A

6. Background information

Haringey Children & Young People's Service was judged as 'Requires Improvement' in the last Ofsted inspection (May-June 2014, report published July 2014). The service has undertaken significant improvement work since the last inspection, as part of our aspiration to be judged as 'Good' and then 'Outstanding' in future inspections.

There are robust governance systems in place to manage and monitor the improvement work within CYPS, via the Quality Performance Network (QPN), chaired by the Director of Children's Services. The QPN board focuses on both practice and performance, supported by a robust quality assurance framework to ensure that evidence of improvement is both sustained and embedded.

The Ofsted recommendations are regularly reviewed to ensure that progress is continued and that areas of improvement are sustained and embedded. The last review was undertaken in November 2016.

The inspection was the first to be carried out under Ofsted's single inspection framework and included a review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) at the same time as the inspection the local authority. The review is conducted under 15(A) of the Children Act 2004. The judgement of the effectiveness of the LSCB in Haringey was 'requires improvement' and the report identified four key areas of improvement, progress on which is reported on here.

The report has been themed in alignment with the Ofsted framework key judgement areas for children's services:

Key Judgement Area: The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection

Key Judgement Area: The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence

Key Judgement Area: Leadership, management and governance

Ofsted Recommendation Review of Progress for Children's Services

Key Judgement Area: The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection

Recommendation 1

Accelerate plans to provide a comprehensive and well coordinated multi-agency early help offer which builds on the principles of integrated working. This should include shared commissioning arrangements which maximise resources, so that the needs of children and young people across the borough are met.

The Early Help service was formally launched in October 2015 and has now been operating effectively for just over 12 months. Effective relationships have been established with a significant number of schools and all the children's

centres within the borough and health visiting teams are now also aligned to the Network Learning Communities (NCLs) to support integrated working and collaboration.

The early help service has also been embedded within the Single Point of Access in children's social care to ensure that cases access the appropriate service. In addition, the workflow process now enables cases to be appropriately stepped down as part of decisions around thresholds into the service, from social care.

Practice tools have been developed (Conversations 4 Change) which has strengthened the approach to working in partnership with families and these have also supported the improvement of practice, through speedier direct contact with families, purposeful engagement and practical support.

The work underpinning the early help offer is held within a robust governance arrangement, reporting directly to Priority 1 Transformation board and also the Early Help Partnership Board.

Performance monitoring across early help has been strengthened through the implementation of a performance framework and performance data, based around the Troubled Families measures.

Since its inception, the Early Help service has provided support to over 700 families, with many being referred directly to the service following a contact to the Single Point of Access (SPA) or as part of appropriate 'step down' from social care. This equates to service provision for approximately 1670 children.

A strengthened approach to working with schools has meant that the service is working with children across all Haringey secondary schools and approx 75% of primary schools.

Work is now underway to develop an Early Help Commissioning Plan which will identify the priorities and commissioning activity for 2017/18.

In addition and as part of the quality assurance framework, a self evaluation of the service is planned in the next quarter which will help to assess progress of the service in line with this recommendation, which will identify any additional and challenges.

Recommendation 2

Ensure that strategy discussions include all relevant agencies

Recording on strategy discussion invites – based on the last two quarters and attendance data evidences that more partners are being invited to strategy discussions and these are on an improving trajectory.

The introduction of conference calling within strategy discussions has also contributed to this improvement, as well as communications to partners and staff around the importance of ensuring that all relevant agencies are included.

Recommendation 3

Ensure that all children in need receive a timely assessment and the support that they need at an early stage to safely reduce risk

Assessments are undertaken in a timely way and performance is monitored on a daily basis, as well as being a part of the monthly performance scorecard. Most assessments are completed within the statutory 45 days timescale (this is challenging with very complex cases) and the service is working hard towards completing assessments with 35 days as part improved assessment practices and a stable workforce, which will lead to children receiving the support they need in a timely way.

In addition, the implementation of the evidence-based practice tool Signs of Safety will support the timeliness of assessments, identification of support needs and service provision. The approach will enable consistency of practice and enable practitioners to work in a more family focussed way.

Recommendation 4

Improve the quality of assessments for children who are referred to children's social care where concerns relate to chronic neglect, so that they fully consider historical concerns, particularly where these include concerns relating to domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse and adult mental ill health.

The introduction of the Signs of Safety (SoS) tool and approach has supported the improvement in the quality of assessments across the service. Five day training for SoS is already underway and the processes that sit behind assessments (i.e. Mosaic workflows and forms) will all be reconfigured to reflect this practice change. This means that social workers will be supported by the systems and processes to implement and embed the approach in a consistent and sustained way.

Signs of Safety being implementation will provide a strong basis to focus on what really is concerning the professional network about a child, including the historical concerns in the context of the present situation.

Alongside this, there are plans to introduce a tool to assess a range of vulnerabilities for children referred to children's social care. This will support the identification of referral concerns at the earliest point .

The most recent audits (October) have evidenced some areas of good practice around assessments, specifically in terms of identifying and understanding risks and concerns.

Recommendation 5

Ensure that adequate steps are taken to promote awareness of privately fostered children in the borough, and that children who are privately fostered receive a timely, high quality assessment and the support that they need.

Following the inspection there was significant progress around Private Fostering, including communications across the partnership (particularly schools) to raise awareness about these arrangements, as well as updated advice and guidance provided on the Council web pages.

Children are recorded as privately fostered on the system and assessments and planning take pLooked After Childrene as part of the process once they have been identified. The issue remains that there are low number of referrals and the challenge is ensuring that awareness is maintained across the partnership and community so that referrals are consistently made where appropriate.

In addition the service will provide a nominated practitioner to take the lead on Private Fostering, ensuring that there is sufficient focus and oversight within the service and ensuring awareness raising and communications are continuous activities.

Recommendation 6

Consolidate recent improvements made in the number of timely completions of initial child protection conferences held within 15 working days, so that children do not experience delay in receiving co-ordinated support to address risk and needs through the use of a child protection plan.

Despite seeing a 26% increase in ICPCs, performance around the 15 day timescales remains above our statistical neighbours and our target. The latest figures evidence this improvement, with 98% of ICPCs occurring within the 15day timescale.

The next challenge for the service relates to the conversion of ICPCs to children on a CP plan, which is around 75% and should be higher. Work to ensure thresholds remain understood will address this.

Recommendation 7

Ensure that all agencies know and understand the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer, and know what to do if they have any concerns.

The LADO is well established and monitored within the service and her details are circulated to all partner agencies to ensure awareness about the LADO role and process. There has also been specific focus on raising awareness of the LADO role across Harinngey schools and following the inspection a full session for Keeping children safe in education event for all Headteacher's was delivered by the LSCB and AD Safeguarding.

The DCS receives a quarterly report of the LADO casework which includes data about referrals. LSCB does also receive quarterly reporting from the LADO via the Practice and Performance Outcomes Sub-group, as well as the annual report

Key Judgement Area: The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence

Recommendation 8

Ensure that sufficient in-house and local foster carers are recruited, so that more Looked After Children and young people can live nearer to their communities, if appropriate.

Much work has been undertaken to ensure sufficiency of appropriate foster carers since the inspection. Interim arrangements have been negotiated with a provider, whilst a procurement/tendering exercise will commence in January to identify a new contractor to recruit, train and assess prospective in house foster carers.

A weekly meeting between Fostering managers and the council communications team have been set up to roll out a communications strategy aimed at recruiting more new foster carers. The in house fostering service maintains a high level of occupancy, which ensures that wherever possible, Looked After Children are placed within the community.

Recommendation 9

Ensure that all looked after young people have a pathway plan which is produced jointly with them, so that they know and understand their plan and recognise its relevance in supporting their progression into independence and adulthood.

There is now consistent good performance evidenced on both care and pathway plans being up to date. Most recently, 90% of care plans up to date and 89% of Looked After Children aged over 16 have a pathway plan less than 6 months old. 80% PEPs for Looked After Children are up to date. This is a significant improvement since the last Ofsted inspection.

In addition the timeliness of Looked After Children reviews has improved (currently 92%), ensuring that pathway plans are regularly reviewed and progressed.

Recommendation 10

Ensure that life story work is completed at the first opportunity, so that Looked After Children understand their life journey in the care system

Following the inspection, the Children in Care service provided a Social Work post to ensure that older Looked After Children had a up to date Life Story book. The court teams ensure that life story work is undertaken for all cases within the court team. One Social Worker post has dedicated time set aside to ensure completion of this task. A monthly tracker report will start shortly to ensure consistent oversight.

All adoption cases have Life Story Work in place.

Recommendation 11

Ensure that risks posed to Looked After Children and young people are comprehensively assessed, documented and reviewed, taking into account the changing age and stage of their lives, and that managers and social workers consider the life histories of children and relevant research when making medium- and long-term plans for children.

As part of the Looked After Children review process, changes in age and stages in their lives are consistently taken into account. Performance around the timeliness of these review points has been on an upward trajectory, with 92% of reviews occurring within timescale.

Via the Missing Panel, the monitoring of Children Missing is consistent both within the service and at leadership level. Numbers of children missing from care and home are demonstrating increasing trend and frequency of incidents. The service can identify the most vulnerable children missing and those with repeated incidents.

An interim solution to develop a vulnerable children's matrix which assesses risk across a number of criteria is being supported with intelligence around children missing from care, home and education pending a longer term IT solution.

The Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation Panel considers children affected by CSE that may also have been missing a monthly list is compiled of children by the special points of contact SPOCs in each agency. These children may then be reviewed at the MASE if the case is of particularly high profile or where plans to protect are not being achieved.

In addition there is a good level of leadership oversight, with the DCS and Lead Member for Children's Services meeting weekly to review missing cases and following up on progress.

Recommendation 12

Ensure that the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) is enhanced so that they properly challenge drift and delay in plans and escalate concerns about the quality of service provision, so that risks posed to specific groups of children and young people are known and understood and action is taken.

The IRO service has been strengthened through the introduction of the Dispute Resolution Procedure (DRP) and now produces an annual report on the performance of the service, which informs the service plan – ensuring continuous improvement.

The report is approved by the AD/DCS and is then presented to the Corporate parenting panel for review and comment. The 2015/16 report is complete. IROs are encouraged and supported to escalate concerns about drift, delay and other matters that impinge on good care planning. A monthly report on escalations (DRP) will be produced by the service so that resolution can be monitored and this will be presented to the QPN on a quarterly basis.

In addition, the timeliness of reviews has been improved (92%) through the strengthening of administration processes and monitoring, which further

enables IROs to ensure that there is no drift and delay in both reviewing and progressing plans for Looked After Children.

Recommendation 13

Review the way services to 'hard to engage' young people are delivered, including to those involved in the criminal justice system, so that risk can be better assessed and well-targeted services provided to support them to improve their life chances.

Haringey Youth Justice Service introduced the YJB National assessment tool, Asset plus, in June 2016. This tool increases the ability for case managers to assess both risk of serious harm and safety and well being concerns in relation to young people. The Explanations and conclusions section links into pathways and planning, focusing intervention targets at areas of risk.

Young person and parent/ carer self assessments are integral to the assessment framework ensuring that service user views are taken account of. The focus on desistance factors and use of the good lives model give the assessment a more holistic focus on improving life chances. All staff have been trained in the framework and regular 'effective practice' workshops take place to enhance skills and share good practice.

The YJS is about to launch a 'young person friendly' intervention planning document that will increase young person and family involvement in the intervention planning process.

The YJS Risk management Panel terms of reference have been updated to ensure that both ROSH and S&W cases are discussed with a wider range of agencies present. The YJS Service Manager chairs the RMP and now attends the Missing Children and CSE Operational Panel and MASE to ensure YJ oversight of cases where young people are vulnerable due to these two areas of need. Latest Youth Justice Performance.

There is a reduction in First Time Entrants (currently 62%) since 2011/12. The custody rate currently stands at its lowest ever rate of 0.73 or 18 young people in custody in 2015/16. However the re-offending rate is currently 43.3% almost 5% higher than last year and there is a disproportionate representation of BAME which the service is looking to address in its partnership work.

Recommendation 14

Consolidate performance in areas that were previously good, such as employment, education and training, suitable accommodation for care leavers and dental health checks for all Looked After Children so that the recent dip in performance is quickly rectified.

There has been good performance sustained on health assessments for Looked After Children (94% in the year to September). In addition, there is also improved performance on dental checks with 84% up to date at the end of Sept.

However although this is an improvement on the end of year position of 79%, our aspiration is high and therefore it is still below our 90% target.

Employment, Education and Training for care leavers and suitable accommodation has proved difficult to capture on a routine basis throughout the year. Currently 34% of care leavers of all relevant age groups are in ETE and 52% in suitable accommodation but these are below levels achieved at the end of 2015/16 (45% and 69%) respectively.

There is a challenge in terms of keeping in touch with Care Leavers, so figures only represent those that remain in contact, rather than a total cohort. This represents approximately 32% and is in line with the national picture. Where we are in touch, particularly around suitable accommodation, this is positive (156 from 175 in suitable accommodation).

Recommendation 15

Ensure that all looked after children and care leavers know and understand their rights and entitlements and know how to make a complaint, to ensure that their needs are fully understood and acted on.

As part of core social work within the Young Adults Service, the service ensure that ensuring the LAC and Care Leavers understand their rights and entitlements and work is underway to provided an up to date Care Leavers Handbook.

Embedded within the pathway plan document there is a section which describes how a young person can make a complaint. Aspire, the Children in Care Council recently produced a video using the voices of Haringey LAC to explain the process & who is involved in care proceedings.

Recommendation 16

Ensure that care leavers are informed about their health histories and that they know and understand the arrangements to access their health records should they need to in later life.

As at the end of August 2016, 83% of 18 year olds leaving care received their health history. This is an improvement on previous periods and in line with our performance for 2015/16.

As part of core service provision via social workers and personal advisors, those practitioners working with Care Leavers ensure that they understand how they can access their records should they wish to do so.

Key Judgement Area: Leadership, management and governance

Recommendation 17

Ensure performance management and data collection and retrieval systems are robust, and that quantitative data and qualitative data are used to better inform management decisions and drive improvement.

Daily, weekly and monthly performance reporting is in place and embedded within a strong governance arrangement, as part of the monthly Quality Performance Network meeting.

Monthly performance scorecard aligned with structure including EH, incorporates exception reporting, deep dive analysis and has resulted in performance improvement in focused areas. Priority 1 reporting is also aligned and the Best Start in Life Dashboard updated quarterly, discussed at P1 Board and published on website accessible by Members and residents to ensure increased transparency and accountability around progress on outcomes.

Work undertaken by the Corporate Delivery Unit supports the deep dive analysis further and ensures that the service uses the data to better inform improvement activities and management decisions.

Thematic audits and the regular evaluations also ensure that both quantitative and qualitative data are triangulated and analysed to assist in the development of service improvements.

Performance screens are in operation across the service locations to ensure that all staff are aware of the performance data and areas for focus on a weekly basis.

LSCB – Areas for improvement

Schools

Ensure that schools are more fully involved at Board level so that their representations are known, understood and considered and their contribution fully harnessed to influence the shape of services.

Our engagement with schools has improved considerably with established representation on our Board from both primary and secondary schools. The Chair has attended meetings with all head teachers to consider safeguarding priorities. Schools representatives including headteachers, welfare officers and the lead improvement officer for safeguarding and designated safeguarding leads, sit on a number of LSCB sub-groups and other groups including the CSE and Vulnerable Children Sub-group and the Multi-agency Sexual Exploitation group that reports to it, Training, Learning and Development Sub-group, Practice and Performance Sub-group and the recently established Joint Targeted Area Inspection Group. Additionally the Designated Safeguarding Lead Forum has been re-established and there are good links with the Board. Most recently we have identified a CSE Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for schools and we are developing the role alongside the existing SPOCs for children's social care, police and health agencies.

At the end of 2014, the Section 11 audit included schools and the school improvement officer has provided an ongoing safeguarding audit tool for schools to use to review their compliance and address improvements.

During the summer of 2014 the Chair undertook a review of the procedures for handling cases of historical abuse within schools, following a high-profile case dating back to the 1980's which resulted in the conviction of the perpetrator for a 12 year sentence. The review identified examples of effective practice by the police, the school, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the council, but also identified several learning points for all agencies. A small number of other allegations have surfaced relating to historical abuse within Haringey schools from up to forty years ago, and the new procedures are now being followed.

This review provided an opportunity for schools to revisit their existing child protection policies, in particular their policies relating to whistle-blowing, disclosure, and Sex and Relationship Education, and a programme of work has been initiated with all schools in the borough in order to revise, improve and update policies. The board also reviewed all the most recent Ofsted reports of schools, receiving assurance that Ofsted ratings of safeguarding practice were consistently high, and that where any issues had been identified, appropriate action had been taken.

Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children and Young People

Review Haringey's CSE multi-agency guidance and consider whether the involvement or association with gangs by young women should be included as

a risk factor to strengthen arrangements to provide a co-ordinated response to this vulnerable group of young people.

Accelerate plans to formally agree the draft CSE strategy and ensure it is clearly linked to the gang action plan. Make clear how the strategy will link to front-line practice, and what success criteria will be used to measure and evaluate progress.

Ensure that the Board receives an annual report on children missing from home, missing from care and missing from education to assure itself that appropriate processes and practice are in place to safeguard this vulnerable group of children and young people. Strengthen the existing Board's annual report arrangements to include an evaluation of service responses for missing children, to support multi-agency actions and reduce risks posed to children.

There has been significant progress and activity in this area and tackling child sexual exploitation remains a priority for the Board. In March 2015 the Board agreed a CSE Strategy and Action Plan which the CSE & Vulnerable Children sub-group is accountable to the Board for and reports on progress quarterly. Since the Ofsted review we have updated and re-issued and further reviewed the CSE guidance as suggested and it is compliant with the Pan-London CSE Protocol and the London Child Protection Procedures Part B CSE Guidance. At the end of 2015, we undertook a significant multi-agency auditing exercise in this area. Additionally we undertook work with neighbouring borough Enfield on our Bi-borough CSE & Vulnerable Children Project funded by the DfE LSCB Innovation Fund.

We have made good progress in this area underpinned by the following:

- Bi-borough CSE & Vulnerable Children Project funded by the DfE LSCB Innovation Fund in partnership with our neighbouring borough Enfield;
- a multi-agency diagnostic on CSE, recommendations and partnership action plan;
- review of progress against CSE strategy and development of an integrated refreshed action plan with clear accountability;
- developed our reporting cycle to ensure that we received regular reports on CSE, gangs and missing children;
- developed our performance monitoring with a focus on these issues;
- commissioned a Serious Case Review which considered gang association and harmful sexual behaviour to be published in 2016 with learning about approach;
- completed engagement in the MsUnderstood Project looking at CSE, serious youth violence and harmful sexual behaviour;
- represented on the London Safeguarding Children Board CSE Task & Finish Group;
- strengthened representation of Violence Against Women & Girls (Lead in Public Health) and Gangs and Offender Management (Lead in Community Safety);
- developed both CSE and Children who run away or go missing from home, care or education pathways and local protocols. Missing Children and Young People protocols;

- developed integrated approaches to considering the links between gangs, missing children and young people and CSE through the Multi-agency Child Sexual Exploitation (MASE) meetings co-chaired by the Borough Police and Children's Social Care.

The sub-group has responded to developments with clear governance and accountability structure and agreed strategy and action plan, which includes connections and routes into the Violence Against Women and Girls Board, Gang Action Group Strategy and oversight of our work on Missing Children & Young People. It has embedded learning about the wider connections to additional vulnerabilities through revision of its remit and role for 2016-17. There is an integrated action plan, with agreed accountabilities and reporting into the Board, which encompasses the recommendations and learning from the multi-agency CSE Diagnostic Report.

The quarterly reporting to the Board includes reporting on the borough profile. We now know that the profile of CSE that emerges within Haringey is somewhat different to the high-profile cases in some English towns. Here much of CSE appears to be connected to gang activity within the borough, so Ofsted's recommendation was appropriate. We are implementing the strategy, and are bringing together all agencies on a regular basis to ensure we tackle and bear down upon the incidence of CSE. Our data processes now enable us to monitor changes in the occurrence of suspected CSE, and monitor rates of disruption and prosecution. Work is ongoing both a borough level and across London to improve recording and reporting on CSE. One key area is disruption and prosecution of perpetrators. There is work developing to integrate our data analysis across CSE, gangs and missing children and young people.

We have strengthened reviewed how all agencies respond to missing children, in order to ensure that all children are properly interviewed on their return, and that we learn any necessary lessons. A Task & Finish Group was chaired by the Metropolitan Police Borough Commander in 2015 to undertake a thorough review of the multi-agency response to Missing Children & Young People, and developing our local protocol.

Our Section 11 Audit in 2014 included five additional strategic priorities to help achieve a better understanding of how services were responding, including a focus on working with children and young people affected by gangs and CSE.

The Disabled Children's Sub-group undertook a review with the Gang Action Group of the engagement of disabled children and reported to the Board in May 2015 with the findings to be fed into the Gang Action Group Strategy. There is work ongoing to make our performance data in this area more robust and to consider the impact of the Early Help offer on gang engagement.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

Work described within this report contributes to Priority 1: Best Start in Life

8. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

There are no financial, procurement, legal and equalities implications for this report

9. Use of Appendices

N/A

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

a) Ofsted Single Inspection Framework 2014 (SIF)