



To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

29th June 2017

Subject: Re-inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) of the re-inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:
- 1) Consider the recommendations highlighted in the inspection report
 - 2) Identify any items to look at in more detail on the work programme 2017-18
 - 3) Receive the finalised Children's Services Improvement Plan at a future meeting in response to the Inspection report
 - 4) Identify any recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member.

3 Ofsted re-inspection of Children's Services

- 3.1 Children's Services were re-inspected by Ofsted 6-30 March 2017.
- 3.2 The focus on inspection was on practice, evidence and impact and did not include a review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The scope included:
- Children and young people who are receiving or who need early help
 - Children and young people who are referred to the local authority and are assessed (or not)
 - Children and young people who become the subject of a child protection plan or have been the subject of a plan and need continuing support
 - Children who receiving support through a child in need plan
 - Children looked after (with a plan for adoption, to return home, special guardianship or residence order, living with a foster family) and children accommodated
 - Care Leavers

3.3 The purpose of the inspection was to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers
- Ascertain the extent to which the help, care and protection given to children and young people does not protect them
- Whether services support families and improve the quality of lives and futures of children and young people
- Assess the quality of work to support children looked after and care leavers to meet their potential
- Examine the quality and impact of supervision and management oversight

3.4 The Ofsted re-inspection of services report was published on **13th June 2017**, judged overall Children's Services in Coventry "**requires improvement to be good**." Services for Children are no longer inadequate, this marks a key point in the improvement journey and demonstrates the improvements made. The Ofsted judgements received are as follows:

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| • Children who need help and protection | Requires improvement |
| • Children looked after and achieving permanence | Requires improvement |
| - Adoption performance | Requires improvement |
| - Experience and progress of care leavers | Good |
| • Leadership, management and governance | Requires improvement |

3.5 The Department for Education DfE removed Children's Services from intervention on the 13 June 2017, this means the service are no longer subject to an improvement notice. Supervision and support will be provided by the DfE for the next 12 months, which will include two six month reviews.

3.6 The inspection report attached in **Appendix 1** identifies nine recommendations for improvement:

1. Continue to monitor and develop services through the work of the improvement board so that all children in Coventry receive the help and support that they need and their outcomes improve.
2. Ensure that the Local Safeguarding Children Board supports partners to understand and consistently apply appropriate thresholds to levels of need at every stage of the child's journey, including the early help pathway.
3. Ensure that the introduction of risk management methodology across the authority includes partners and the authority at all stages.
4. Improve the quality of chronologies to ensure that they provide relevant detail relating to children's histories and the impact of previous interventions.
5. Improve the quality of children's assessments and the focus of plans, so that all children at every stage of their journeys have their needs fully recognised and met.
6. Ensure that managers, independent chairs of child protection conferences and IROs improve their practice, by robustly chairing children's meetings and challenging any delays in their plans being progressed.
7. Review the authority's arrangements for privately fostered children and ensure that those arrangements and associated practice comply with statutory guidance.

8. Strengthen arrangements to ensure that the management of allegations of professional abuse is robust and effectively safeguards children.
9. Ensure that the progress of prospective adopters is tracked effectively so that the potential for children to be placed without delay is minimised.

4 Next steps

- 4.1 A Children's Services Improvement Plan has been developed in response to the Ofsted recommendations and areas for development.
- 4.2 The report identifies a number of issues for partners including the application of thresholds and the appetite for risk across the strategic safeguarding partnership. The Improvement Board will work to strengthen and provide assurance and governance role of partners and the LSCB. The LSCB will report on progress made in respect of the required areas of improvement that relate to partners.
- 4.3 The final Improvement Plan will be presented to a future Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) and submitted to Ofsted and the DfE by 20 September 2017.
- 4.4 The report and revised Improvement plan will be shared with staff and partners and progress against the plan reported on a regular basis.

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