

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 06 MARCH 2019

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICE – OFSTED MONITORING VISIT FEEDBACK

Summary

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families and the Assistant Director Safeguarding Services (Children's Social Care) have been invited to the meeting to provide an update on the outcome of Ofsted's seventh Monitoring Visit of the Council's children's safeguarding services, which took place on 8 and 9 January 2019 and focused on the local authority's arrangements for the protection of children and young people vulnerable to child sexual exploitation and who go missing from home or care.

Background

2. On 24 January 2017, Ofsted published their report entitled 'Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers; and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board'.

3. The overall judgement for Worcestershire was 'inadequate'. Following the Ofsted judgement, an eight-point Service Improvement Plan (SIP) was developed by Children, Families and Communities Leadership Team to cover all of the recommendations made by Ofsted.

4. As a result of this judgement, Ofsted put in place a series of Monitoring Visits to track the Council's progress. To date there have been seven such visits in May 2017, September 2017, January 2018, April 2018, July 2018, October 2018 and January 2019. The result of the first visit was not published but Ofsted concluded that the Local Authority was not making the expected progress to improve services for children and young people. In the following visits, however, Ofsted noted that progress was being made.

Feedback from Ofsted Monitoring Visit – No.7

5. The visit focused on the Local Authority's arrangements for the protection of children and young people vulnerable to child sexual exploitation and who go missing from home or care. Andy Waugh Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) from Ofsted, led the inspection, working alongside fellow Ofsted inspector Alison Smale, (HMI). This was the fifth monitoring visit that Andy Waugh has been involved in in Worcestershire.

6. Ofsted published their letter outlining the results of the visit on 31 January 2019. The purpose of each letter following an Ofsted Monitoring Visit is to outline the outcome of the visit. There are no judgements made, but instead a statement summarising the direction of travel. A copy of the letter is attached at Appendix 1.

Next Steps

7. It has been confirmed that the Monitoring Visit in January was our last and a full inspection can be expected in the spring. Ofsted Inspections are carried out under the ILACS Framework (Inspections of Local Authority Children's Services) and sometimes referred to as ILACS inspections.

8. The Service Improvement Plan (SIP) was refreshed in November 2018 to reflect work completed to date and ensure priorities remain focused. Monitoring of the SIP is done through monthly Children, Families and Communities Leadership Team (CFCLT) meetings chaired by Catherine Driscoll, Director of Children, Families and Communities, as well as in monthly meetings with Service Leads chaired by Emma Brittain, Service Lead for Family Front Door and Partnerships. Bi-annual feedback is also provided to the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) and the Worcestershire Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel. When available, a high level version of the refreshed plan will be reviewed through the SIP governance process.

9. Our Improvement Partnership programme of work with Essex County Council has continued with a specific focus now on preparing for a full re-inspection.

10. The next scheduled activity will be support and review of our Annex A data in March in preparation for inspection, expected in the spring. Annex A is a list of data required by Ofsted during an inspection. We will be required to submit all data in the Annex A list on the day that we are notified of inspection.

11. CFCLT will continue to lead the delivery of the SIP and ensure positive momentum is maintained whilst the implementation phase of Worcestershire Children First is underway in parallel.

Purpose of the Meeting

12. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- note the information in the report and appendix 1,
- determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny, and
- agree whether it would wish to make any comments to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 – Ofsted Monitoring Visit Outcome Letter

Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children, Families and Communities) the following background papers relate to the subject matter of this report:

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)