

REPORT TO: Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 6th September 2010

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children & Young People

SUBJECT: Announced Integrated Inspections of Safeguarding and Looked After Children's Services.

WARDS: All

1.0 Purpose of the report

1.1 To provide information regarding the process and preparation required for the Ofsted announced inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services.

2.0 Recommendations

- (i) The focus of the inspection and the associated timeline are noted.**
- (ii) Appropriate staffing and resources are released when the inspection is notified.**
- (iii) The Lead Member and Chair of the PPB attends the 'set up' meeting with inspectors.**

3.0 Supporting Information

- 3.1 In June 2009 a three-year inspection programme of all 152 Local Authorities Children's services and their partners began. Ofsted have the lead on the inspections and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspectors will work with them using Ofsted's overarching framework.
- 3.2 The inspections examine the arrangements for safeguarding children, and the outcomes for children and young people who are looked after.
- 3.3 In terms of safeguarding the inspection will assess the effectiveness of the Children's trust, the Safeguarding board, local services and assess how well we work together to identify, safeguard and promote the welfare of potentially vulnerable groups of children and young people that live in Halton.
- 3.4 It is important to stress the inspection covers all agencies and services who work with children and young people.
- 3.5 For Children in Care, the inspection will consider what outcomes have been achieved and what impact services can demonstrate.
- 3.6 Ofsted have published an overarching framework which sets out the general

scope and methods, which can be found at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090027>

3.7 The reports from inspections undertaken to date are published on the Ofsted website and I draw your attention to the outcomes for three Local Authorities. Lincolnshire, Knowsley and Salford with excellent, good and poor inspection outcomes.

4.0 The Enormity of the Process!

4.1 In order to highlight the level of preparation required here are some facts from the Knowsley experience.

4.2 In the two weeks inspectors were on site-

- 38 focus groups were held involving 300 people.
- Interviewed children, foster carers, Parents (on visits)
- Visited 2 schools (one primary, one secondary)
- Visited 2 children's centres
- Interviewed 7 people 1 to 1 –Lead member, DCS, Lead in CSC, Chief executive PCT
- Spent 3 days looking at case recording across all agencies.
- Visited all Children's Social Care teams (sat in on duty teams)
- Spent half a day with HR and selected personnel files
- Mystery shopped (in Knowsley it was e safety week so went to a stand posed as a local resident for more info)

5.0 Grading Inspection Findings

5.1 The inspectors will make judgements using a four-point scale:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Adequate
- Inadequate

5.2 Limiting judgements in the inspection

Inspectors will apply a number of considerations before arriving at judgements. These include considering the impact of limiting grades – that is, the impact of individual grades awarded in one part of the evaluation schedule on another judgement, including the overall effectiveness judgement.

5.3 For the safeguarding element of the inspection, the limiting grades are:

- overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate if either of the two safeguarding outcomes (children and young people are safe and children

and young people feel safe) is judged as inadequate

- overall effectiveness is unlikely to be good or better if either of the two safeguarding outcomes (children and young people are safe and children and young people feel safe) is not judged as good
- leadership and management are unlikely to be adequate if the grade awarded for equality and diversity is inadequate.

For the looked after children element of inspection, the limiting grades are:

5.4

- overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate if any outcome judgement is inadequate
- overall effectiveness is unlikely to be good or better if either staying safe or enjoying and achieving is not judged as good
- enjoying and achieving are unlikely to be good if looked after children and young people are not making at least good educational progress overall in relation to their starting points and capability
- leadership and management are likely to be inadequate if the grade awarded for equality and diversity is inadequate.

6.0 The Process / Inspection Activity

6.1 Inspectors will undertake activities that focus on evaluating the outcomes for children and young people and the quality and impact of services in helping to improve outcomes.

6.2 Inspectors will have access to information already held, such as:

- Ofsted performance profile
- Finding from other relevant Ofsted inspections and regulatory activity e.g. Unannounced Contact, referral and assessment inspection. May 2010.
- Fostering and Adoption datasets
- Summary of judgements made in Serious case reviews
- Views of service users, social care staff and voluntary organisations gathered through new questionnaires.
- Summary of substantiated complaints about the council and its partners made to Ofsted that relate to safeguarding and looked after children.

6.3 Maintaining an up to date 'library' of information is vital. Inspectors ask for key documents and reports on the day of notification of the inspection.

6.4 The case file scrutiny will consist of three key elements:

- At least 8 cases (4 Safeguarding and 4 Children in Care) selected before

the fieldwork begins.

- At least a further 12 cases selected by the inspectors at the start of the fieldwork.
- Scrutiny of analysis and evaluation of case files undertaken by the local authority and partners.

Surveys will be given to relevant children.

In addition to reviewing case files and evaluating the documentation, Inspectors will conduct meetings and hold discussions with users, managers, health professionals police, other staff and stakeholders.

7.0 Preparation In Halton

7.1 The Ofsted Children in Care and Safeguarding Inspection Planning Group (now referred to as CSI Planning Group) has been meeting since August 2009. One of the challenges facing CSI is how to plan for an inspection, which happens once every three years, with only 10 days notice. The timeline for the inspection is attached as appendix 1.

7.2 The CSI Planning Group has commissioned task and finish groups to cover the following areas:

- Logistics – identifying virtual inspection team, practical issues concerned with an inspection, IT, accommodation, venues, performance info, focus groups
- Communication – children’s workforce awareness, delivering our story, engagement with children and young people, elected members, schools, etc
- Self awareness - strengthens and areas for development
- Knowing our population - needs assessment, JSNA etc

7.3 A ‘virtual’ team has been identified; this group will come together as soon as the inspection is announced. For all other agencies/services a single point of contact (SPOC) has been identified.

In August 2010 a briefing document will be published for all staff to ensure there is an awareness of the inspection process

A communication pathway has been circulated.

8.0 Policy Implications

8.1 The inspection will take a broad view as to how well practice is supported and underpinned by effective local policy and decision making

9.0 Other Implications

9.1 The fact that 'limiting judgements' are possible means, if such a judgement was made in this inspection, it would impact on the overall rating for the council.

10.0 Implications for the Council's priorities

10.1 Children and Young People in Halton

A positive inspection will endorse the fact that services are taking reasonable steps to ensure Children and young people are safeguarded, feel safe and Children in Care have a positive experience and good outcomes

10.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

A positive inspection will endorse evidence of Children in Care and Care Leavers being supported to achieve economic well being.

10.3 A Healthy Halton

A positive inspection will endorse the fact services are taking reasonable steps to ensure Children and young People can thrive and be healthy.

10.4 A Safer Halton

A positive inspection outcome will support and provide evidence that the services provided are taking reasonable steps to ensure Children and Young People in the Borough are safe.

10.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

11.0 Risk Analysis

11.1 A poor outcome in the inspection will impact on the overall rating for the council.

12.0 List of background papers under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Inspections of Safeguarding and looked after children services (framework for inspection and guidance for local authorities and partners) May 2009	Grosvenor House	Paula StAubyn

Appendix 1 –Timeline for the Inspection



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