

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 22 February 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People & Families

SUBJECT: Inspection Framework

WARD(S) Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To receive a presentation regarding the framework for the Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children Services (ILACS).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board notes the contents of the presentation.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Members will be aware that the last OfSTED inspection, in relation to Children Services, took place between 18 November 2014 and 10 December 2014 under the single inspection framework: Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked after and Care Leavers (SIF). The report was published 3 February 2015. The overall judgement was 'Requires Improvement', which was made up of judgements in several areas shown in the table below.

The overall judgement is that children's services require improvement	
The authority is not yet delivering good protection and help for children, young people and families. It is Ofsted's expectation that, as a minimum, all children and young people receive good help, care and protection. ²	
The judgements on areas of the service that contribute to overall effectiveness are:	
1. Children who need help and protection	Requires Improvement
2. Children looked after and achieving permanence	Good
2.1 Adoption performance	Good
2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Good
3. Leadership, management and governance	Requires Improvement

3.2 Since the inspection a plan has been in place to address the recommendations and

senior managers and Lead member have had systems in place for continual monitoring, review and evaluation of performance.

- 3.3 The SIF cycle has recently ended and local authorities will now be inspected under the new ILACS framework. OfSTED describe this new approach as a system rather than a programme of inspections. The details of this inspection framework are set out in the attached presentation.

Essentially, however, this framework is built around answering three questions:

- What do you know about the quality and impact of social work practice with children and families in your authority?
- How do you know it?
- What are your plans to maintain or improve practice?

To answer these question as a local authority with a 'requires improvement judgement' we can look forward to:

1. A Standard Inspection i.e., a full inspection with several inspectors on site for two weeks with five days-notice;
2. Up to two focused visits, which may focus on an areas of good practice and/or areas for development with five days-notice; and
3. A Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI), which would replace a focused visit. This is an inspection of a theme, e.g., Domestic Abuse in a local area and would include health and police services.

These inspections are supplemented by an 'Annual Conversation' with OfSTED and a shared self-evaluation. Our Annual Conversation took place on 26 January, 2018.

- 3.4 As with the previous framework ILACS operates on a 3 year cycle, with all local authorities subject to the 'system' within that time frame. Our last inspection was published in 2015, and we are, therefore, within the current window for inspection, and would expect at least one or both focused visits.

- 3.5 As part of our service monitoring we have in place the Investing in Children and Young Peoples Board that meets at least monthly to review our systems, performance and practice. A sub-group of this board works with partners to ensure cohesion and coordination in respect of the JTAI framework. Our current self-evaluation places us as fair to good, but we need to maintain momentum and focus on key aspects of the service to ensure that we can answer the three main questions.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None identified.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None identified

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

All issues outlined in this report focus directly on this priority.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

None identified.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None identified

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None identified

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.