

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

DATE: 10 September 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People and Families

SUBJECT: Ofsted Focused Visit July 2018

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To share the findings of the recent Ofsted focused visit to the Integrated Contact and Referral Team (iCART) and its recommendations.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members note the Ofsted letter and the significant improvement in the service since the Single Inspection in 2014.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Ofsted has implemented a new inspection framework for children's social care. Halton, as an authority with a current requiring improvement judgement from its Single Inspection in 2014 will expect over a 3 year period 2 focused visits and a standard 2 week inspection. Ofsted make a judgement on timing and type of inspection based on their intelligence, published data, and their analysis of risk in how a local authority is performing.

3.2 For Members it is worth noting that OfSTED do not make a judgement from a focused inspection rather a narrative letter sets out their findings, outlines the impact the improvement in the service has had for children and families. strengths and areas specifies areas improvement, highlighting specifically any areas for immediate action or priority actions. Overall, the letter outlines a strong service that serves families well and safeguards children appropriately. Significantly, there were no areas for immediate action and only three recommendations. Throughout the inspection the inspection team saw a very competent workforce and feedback to the senior management team was positive. The report notes a lot of strengths particularly the strong and integrated partnership working, and was described by inspectors during the inspection as the "i" in iCART as real, good level of management oversight and the valued support and supervision given to social workers.

3.3 The letter makes 3 recommendations for improving practice which we have already responded to. As part of the new OFSTED framework we will still receive one more focused inspection and a full inspection and the findings

from the letter will be taken into account by OFSTED when planning for our future inspections.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

4.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Having a strong and robust framework for identifying and responding across all the levels of needs of children and families is key to ensuring that children and their families are safe and protected, and partners are clear about their responsibilities and role in working together with the local authority.

4.2 Employment, Learning and Skills

None identified.

4.3 A Healthy Halton

Children whose health needs and level of development is potentially compromised are identified early and multi-agency support is in place to support them and their families

4.4 A Safer Halton

Children who are at risk of harm are identified quickly and services work together to minimise the risk of harm and take action to formally protect children in a timely way

4.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 iCART is key in ensuring that the understanding and application of the Levels of Need framework is robust and consistent across the partnership and that children and families are supported at the right level of need.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 iCART ensures that issues arising from a child's equality and diversity needs inform the decision-making at the point of contact and that the voice of the child is to the forefront.

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

7.1 There are no relevant background documents to this report.