

Item No. 9.	Classification: Open	Date: 9 July 2018	Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee
Report title:		Ofsted Inspection of 'Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers' - Post Inspection Action Plan	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director, Children and Family Services	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Corporate Parenting Committee notes the update on the Southwark Ofsted Single Inspection Framework Action Plan that was endorsed by Cabinet on 19 September 2017 at Appendix 1, and the progress made to date.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Ofsted single inspection framework (SIF) is the national framework for inspecting services for children in need of help and protection, looked after children and care leavers.
3. The SIF focuses on
 - The effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements to help and protect children as well as the experiences and progress of looked after children – including adoption, fostering, the use of residential care and children who return home.
 - The arrangements for permanence for children who are looked after and the experiences and progress of care leavers.
 - The leadership, management and governance judgement addresses the effectiveness of leaders and managers and the impact they have on the lives of children and young people and the quality of professional practice locally.
4. Southwark's inspection took place between 6 March and 30 March 2017 and the report was published on 13 June 2017.
5. The report to Corporate Parenting Committee of 10 July 2017 set out key findings from the inspection and the committee noted that a post inspection action plan would be presented to cabinet in September prior to its submission to Ofsted.
6. A briefing meeting for members of the Corporate Parenting Committee was held on 7 September 2017 where the draft post inspection action plan was discussed prior to it being presented to Cabinet. On 19 September 2017 the Cabinet endorsed the post inspection action plan.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

7. The judgements for Southwark were as follows

Overall grading	Good
Children in Need of help and protection	Requires improvement
Children Looked After and Achieving Permanence	Requires improvement
Adoption performance	Outstanding
Experience and progress of Care leavers	Requires improvement
Leadership, Management and Governance	Good

8. The post inspection action plans are in response to the 11 recommendations for the local authority as follows:

- i. Ensure that prompt decisions are made to safeguard children affected by long-term, cumulative neglect, so that they are not left in adverse home circumstances for long periods.
- ii. Work with partner agencies to ensure that referrals contain sufficient information and that parental consent has been obtained if necessary, so that management decisions on the required action are timely and families receive help quickly.
- iii. Ensure that strategy discussions and strategy meetings involve all relevant agencies so that multi-agency information informs assessment of risks.
- iv. Ensure that return home interviews with children missing from home and care are completed consistently and effectively so that the intelligence gained reduces the recurrence of further missing episodes.
- v. Strengthen management oversight of social workers in the children looked after and care leavers' services.
- vi. Ensure that the sufficiency strategy, supported by effective commissioning, provides a better supply of high-quality placements for children looked after, particularly for adolescents who display challenging behaviours.
- vii. Ensure that children's care plans are effectively and regularly reviewed to confirm whether their needs are being met through their placements, and establish alternative plans where necessary.
- viii. Ensure that children looked after who live outside of the local authority area are not disadvantaged through slower access to essential services, particularly child and adolescent mental health services, education support and regular health assessments.

- ix. Ensure that children looked after are supported to build strong and enduring attachments to their carers through more timely permanence decisions for long-term foster family arrangements. Ensure timely life story work, which is kept up to date.
 - x. Ensure that all social workers and personal advisers working with young people leaving care have a clear knowledge of their current circumstances. This aim should be supported through consistently effective pathway planning, to ensure that young people understand and receive all their entitlements and that their identified needs are met.
 - xi. Ensure that children are aware of how to complain about services provided to them and that more advocacy support is provided for children on child protection plans and for those who are looked after. Ensure good access to independent visitors for children looked after.
9. From the date of publication of the inspection report, the local authority had 70 days to prepare and submit an action plan to Ofsted. The action plans are set out in appendix 1 and build on the council's comprehensive understanding of the complex needs of the community that the inspection recognized, and the plans already in place to address areas of practice not consistently strong.
10. The progress against the local improvement plan will be overseen by the Children's and Adults Board chaired by the Strategic Director of Children and Adults services and where relevant the Corporate Parenting Committee.

Policy implications

11. The action plan to address recommendations sit within the context of the current strategic priorities of the Children and Young People's Plan and are actively being aligned to current priorities within the department, these include
- Budget saving and efficiency programme within Children and Adult Services
 - Transformation and service development work in relation to areas such as early help, including the troubled families programme and local approaches safeguarding such as adolescents at risk
 - Revised sufficiency strategy and improvements to placements both in house and external providers and DFE innovation funding including for residential care and post 16 accommodation strategy
 - The local Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Area Review which was completed on 29th June 2018. A letter will be published setting out the findings of this within 33 days of that date.
 - Local recruitment and retention strategies
 - CATCH 22 innovation programme for a Careleavers Partnership.

Community impact statement

12. There are no equalities implications from this report, other than it being noted that community safeguarding activities, such as those relating to FGM and honour based violence were highly commended in the Ofsted inspection.

Resource implications

13. There are at present no additional resource implications arising for this report.

Legal implications

14. Services to children and families are provided within the statutory framework of support and protection to local children and young people, as set out in legislation such as the Children Act 1989, Children Leaving Care Acts, and Children Act 2004. SIF inspections are carried out under the s136 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
London Borough of Southwark 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	Ofsted, London	Ofsted, Tel 0300 123 1231
Link (please copy and paste into your browser): https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/local_authority_reports/southwark/052_Single%20inspection%20of%20LA%20children%27s%20services%20and%20Review%20of%20the%20LSCB%20as%20pdf.pdf		
Ofsted Inspection report to Cabinet 19 September 2017	Tooley Street, SE1	Southwark Council Offices, Tel 020 7525 5000
Link (please copy and paste into your browser): http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s71032/Report%20Ofsted%20Inspection%20-%20Post%20Inspection%20Plan.pdf		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark Post Ofsted Single Inspection Framework Action Plan October 2017

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Alasdair Smith, Director, Children and Family Services		
Report Author	Elaine Allegretti, Assistant Director Quality and Performance Improvement, Children and Family Services		
Version	Final		
Dated	29 June 2018		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included	
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No	
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No	
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			29 June 2018