

OFSTED INSPECTION – UPDATE

Report of the Chair of the Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 Health and Wellbeing Board Members will recall that Ofsted has recently undertaken an inspection of Local Authority services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. At the same time Ofsted reviewed the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The inspection was undertaken between 11th May and 4th June 2015, with the final report published on the 20th July 2015.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update on progress against the seven Ofsted recommendations made to the LSCB.

2. Background

- 2.1 Ofsted is currently undertaking a national programme of inspections of Local Authority Children's Services and related LSCBs. There have been 58 inspections of LSCBs (between November 2013 – June 2015) and all inspection reports have been published.
- 2.2 In Sunderland, Ofsted last inspected Children's Services for children looked after, safeguarding arrangements and the five Children's Homes in April 2012. The judgement delivered at that time was that across the above three domains services were either good and in one case outstanding. The judgement delivered by Ofsted in July 2015 was that across the range of inspected services, including the LSCB, services were deemed inadequate.
- 2.3 Immediately prior to publication, Ofsted provided both the Local Authority and the LSCB with a series of recommendations with actions required to address the identified shortcomings.

3. Recommendations for the LSCB

As indicated above, there are seven specific recommendations identified for the LSCB.

These are set out below:-

- a) Ensure full Board approval of agreed priorities and action planning
- b) Ensure that the Board is able to effectively monitor the quality and impact of services for children across the Partnership

- c) Accelerate implementation of an early help strategy, ensuring that it is consistent with the 'multi-agency threshold guidance' document and then monitor its effectiveness
- d) Review multi-agency training to ensure it supports and promotes front line practice and is able to respond to demand following imminent publication of a high number of Serious Case Reviews (SCRs); then ensure lessons are learnt and improvements embedded
- e) Agree with partner local authorities on Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP), a coordinated response to the high number of SCR's awaiting publication
- f) Ensure that multi- agency arrangements for the oversight of children missing and at risk of sexual exploitation or trafficking are driven by effective information sharing, performance monitoring, action planning, and are strategically coordinated and monitored by the Board.
- g) Review the resources available to undertake the governance of Multi-Agency Looked After Partnerships (MALAP) to ensure a sufficient focus.

Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board will have been aware that some time before the inspection there were already concerns about the effectiveness of the LSCB, and that these were the subject of a Board development event held in September 2014. Specific concerns focussed upon the extraordinary high number of SCRs that had been commissioned by the LSCB, and the impact that had in terms of diverting the Board's attention away from what is considered to be its 'core business'. A series of recommendations came from that event, including making some significant changes to the governance arrangements (for the Board, its Executive and the supporting sub-committees); developing urgent proposals to address some core business failings; and adopting a more focussed action planning around the outstanding SCRs. In addition, attention was also given to repairing, what was considered to be in part, failing partnership working especially relationships between members of the Partnership and Local Authority colleagues.

Significant work took place between December 2014 and April 2015 that focussed upon bringing improvements to the above, and it's fair to say that by the time Ofsted inspected the LSCB in May 2015, much progress had been made across all areas. Ofsted reported at the inspection feedback session that they recognised that whilst a great deal of progress had been made in addressing and rectifying the shortcomings of the LSCB, at the time of the inspection it was just too early to measure the impact of those changes, and consequently judged the LSCB to be inadequate.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 Upon receipt of the Ofsted recommendations the SSCB Executive group immediately set about ensuring that a speedy and comprehensive 'Recovery Plan' was produced. This is attached as Appendix 1. A number of the Ofsted recommendations have already been progressed within the SSCB Ofsted Action Plan. For example:-

Ofsted recommendation no.2 is in part a criticism that (at the time of the Inspection) the LSCB's Section 11 audit was incomplete, (even though the LSCB was still within timescale to complete it) and since then this has been significantly progressed.

- 4.2 Similarly, the Early Help Strategy (Ofsted recommendation no. 3) is making good progress (but of course is very much an underpinning strategy that needs to be scoped and owned across the full partnership, especially by colleagues in Children's Social Care).
- 4.3 Ofsted recommendation no. 4 relates to the learning from SCRs although, at the time of the inspection, only 2 SCRs had actually entered the public domain.
- 4.4 Ofsted recommendation no. 7 relates to the Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP) – a responsibility that was only taken over by the LSCB just prior to Ofsted's inspection in order to ensure that this statutory responsibility was met fully – and this responsibility has now been returned to the Local Authority (which is the appropriate place).
- 4.5 The LSCB must, of course, take care not to minimise the validity and voracity of the Ofsted recommendations – and here I must provide the HWB with assurance about the absolute determination of the LSCB to ensure that the performance of the LSCB (and within this, the Ofsted recommendations) improves to required levels. Should Ofsted quickly return and review progress, significant improvement taking the LSCB out of its 'inadequate' classification would be witnessed and of course, crucially, evidenced. It is important that the HWB understand that there is full commitment to achieving this position right across the Partnership including Children's Social Care.

5. Recommendation

5.1 Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to:-

- a) Note the contents of this report
- b) Acknowledge the good progress already made in terms of addressing the recommendations from the Ofsted inspection
- c) Receive a further report later in the year confirming that full implementation has been achieved

**SSCB Ofsted Action Plan
Updated 4th September 2015**

This is the SSCB Ofsted Action Plan based on the findings of the Inspection of the SSCB in May 2015

Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Progress	Deadline
142. Ensure full Board approval of agreed priorities and action planning	Agree mechanism and governance for safeguarding structure via: •Discussion with Children's Services Commissioner (NW) •Partnership meeting to be held regarding future of the Children's Trust Board and it's replacement if appropriate	Chief Operating Officer, Sunderland People Services	Planning session held August 2015	September 2015
	Implement robust attendance monitoring and reporting arrangements from SSCB Sub Committees through to Board to include challenge process for non-engagement	SSCB Business Manager/SSCB Chair	All SSCB Board and Sub Committees have attendance monitoring on agenda to be discussed as part of every meeting. Attendance reporting system from sub committees through to Board meetings in place. Issues of non-attendance/lack of engagement to addressed immediately by subcommittee and SSCB chairs Meeting with sub committee chairs on 09.09.15 to confirm requirements above.	
	Business Case report to go to Children's Services improvement Board to demonstrate the need for additional funding/resources from partners for a limited period of time and to cover costs for additional SCRs	SSCB Business Manager/Head of Integrated Commissioning	Report written August 2015 and Discussed at SSCB Executive Group on 17.08.15	October 2015

Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Progress	Deadline
	Review SSCB Partner's Annual Safeguarding Report and Section 11 Audits to determine the level of commitment of partners	SSCB Business Manager/SSCB Vice Chair	Section 11 Audits reviewed July 2015 Initial evaluation of evidence for 5 agencies received at meeting 11.08.15 Section 11 Audits of agencies are in progress	
143 Ensure that the board is able to effectively monitor the quality and impact of services for children across the partnership.	Embed the SSCB Quality Assurance and Performance Framework and agree dashboard/RAG Rating on key performance indicators	SSCB Quality Assurance Sub Committee Chair		October 2015
	Agree 12 Key Performance Indicators to report to SSCB		SSCB Quality Assurance Workshop to be held	
	Benchmark SSCB against arrangements in Leeds/Essex/Nottingham County	Performance and Improvement Lead, People Services, Sunderland Council		September 2015
	Benchmark SSCB against arrangements in Richmond on Thames through Sunderland Children's Services Commissioner/Performance Lead	SSCB Quality Assurance Sub Committee Chair		January 2016
	Report to SSCB to propose method/tools to support SSCB to effectively monitor quality and impact of services		SSCB Quality Assurance Workshop to be held	October 2015
144 Accelerate implementation of an early help strategy, ensuring	Launch and implement Early Help	SSCB Vice Chair/Interim Head of	The Early Help Strategy has been signed off. CM to draft a foreword for the Early Help Strategy. Implementation	September 2015

Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Progress	Deadline
that it is consistent with the 'multi-agency threshold guidance' document and then monitor its effectiveness.		Safeguarding, Children's Safeguarding, Sunderland Council	plan to be developed	
	SSCB to raise awareness of thresholds for intervention as outlined in SSCB Early Help Strategy and Threshold Guidance	SSCB/SSAB Training and Workforce Development /Communication and Engagement Sub Committee		
	Develop and deliver a programme of mandatory multi-agency workshops/training to ensure there is a comprehensive understanding of Early Help across partners	SSCB/SSAB Training and Workforce Development Sub Committee		
	Map out current provision and areas for development.	SSCB Quality Assurance Sub Committee Chair		
	Develop and implement reporting arrangements for the scope and effectiveness of Early Help provision across the local partnership			
145 Review multi-agency training to ensure it supports and promotes front line practice and is able to respond to demand following the imminent publication of a high number of Serious Case Reviews (SCRs); then	Review and update multi-agency training including, content, methods of delivery and evaluation process to support frontline practice.	SSCB/SSAB Training and Workforce Development Sub Committee Chair		September 2015
	Identify the multi-agency training needs from serious case reviews in Sunderland and externally where appropriate			

Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Progress	Deadline
ensure lessons are learnt and improvements embedded	Update SSCB Training Strategy and Training Programme based on the needs identified		JU will review 'Thresholds' from the performance data at the T&WD Sub Committee. 'Deep dive' by partner organisations, early warning indicators, audits required.	
	Review and implement the SSCB Quality Assurance of training process			
	Undertake audit to measure the impact the training has made	SSCB Development and Training Officer		
146 Agree with partner local authorities on Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP), a coordinated response to the high number of SCRs awaiting publication	Review LCDRP and SOTW CDOP terms of reference and update as appropriate	SSCB Local Child Death Review Panel Chair		September 2015
	Review and update the SOTW CDOP Business Plan			
Ensure that multi-agency arrangements for the oversight of children missing and at risk of sexual exploitation or trafficking are driven by effective information sharing, performance monitoring, action planning and are	Complete a multi-agency Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) data mapping exercise	SSCB Chair	Section 11 Audit included Section 11 Agency dates on CSE. Information collated to inform profile. Palantir being used to collate data and information held by agencies. Initial Data Set identified in SSCB, QA and Performance. Agreed in July 2015	September 2015
	Complete a CSE Needs Assessment to inform a developing Action Plan			

Ofsted Recommendation	Action	Lead	Progress	Deadline
strategically coordinated and monitored by the board.	Agree and implement MSET Subcommittee arrangements to ensure robust attendance and engagement and CSE reporting arrangements to ensure SSCB has an up to date and informed view of current levels of risk, alongside intervention and disruption activity	SSCB MSET Sub committee Chair	Review of membership planned for 08.09.15. Attendance Monitoring to begin 08.09.15 to include immediate escalation and challenge where attendance/engagement not adequate.	
	SSCB to commit to working in partnership to raise awareness of CSE	SSCB Chair	SSCB is part of high profile sub regional MSET focusing awareness week in October 2015 to include CSE conference on 20.10.15. Week will include activity around CSE, Trafficking etc.	September 2015
	Police to share information re: campaigns/ awareness raising/ publicity.	ACC Northumbria Police		
148 Review the resources available to undertake the governance of Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP) to ensure a sufficient focus	MALAP to sit with LA and SSCB to hold it to account.	Interim Associate Director Children's Services	•Agreed at Development Session (20.09.15) and Executive Group Meeting (17.08.15) that MALAP to revert to Local Authority arrangements.	August 2015
	Brief report to go to SSCB recommending	Interim Head of Looked After Children, Children's Services	MALAP Report to be drafted for SSCB on six monthly basis	October 2015

