


<p>London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p> <p>CHILDREN AND EDUCATION POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE</p> <p>29 FEBRUARY 2016</p>		
<p>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE</p>		
<p>Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services</p>		
<p>Open Report</p>		
<p>Classification: For Information Key Decision: No</p>		
<p>Wards Affected: All</p>		
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report provides a brief overview of recent developments of relevance to the Children's Services department for members of the Policy and Accountability Committee to consider.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report

3. OFSTED INSPECTION OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION, LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN & CARE LEAVERS AND REVIEW OF THE LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

- 3.1. At the previous meeting of the Committee, Members were notified that Ofsted had started their inspection of our Family Services Department, focussing specifically on services for children in need of help and protection, looked after children and care leavers. The inspection also included a review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- 3.2. The inspection, which was undertaken in parallel with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster City Council, was a very detailed,

thorough process, lasting a total of four weeks; starting on Tuesday 12 January and ending on Thursday 4 February.

3.3. The Ofsted team in Hammersmith and Fulham consisted of eight inspectors, with specific leads for reviewing:

- Leadership and Management
- Children in Need of Help and Protection
- Looked After Children
- Fostering
- Adoption
- Children with Disabilities
- Care Leavers and Education of Looked After Children
- The Local Safeguarding Children's Board

3.4. Where these services are delivered on a cross-borough basis, responsibility for inspecting them was shared between inspectors based in each borough.

3.5. During the four week process, inspectors:

- evaluated and explored in detail a large sample of children's cases (around 200 in total) in order to judge the quality of front-line practice and management and the difference this makes to the lives of children, young people, their families and carers – this will included discussions with social work staff, including their managers and other professionals working with the child or young person
- tested the decision-making at all stages of a child's journey (early help; referral and assessment; children in need; child protection planning; continuing support; the decision to remove a child from home; permanence planning; placement decisions, including work to support return home; leaving care)
- met with children, young people, parents and carers
- shadowed staff in their day-to-day work, for example observing practice in the duty team, the work of social workers with children and families and the work of independent reviewing officers
- observed practice in multi-agency meetings such as child protection strategy meetings, child protection conferences, looked after children reviews and resource panels

3.6. Inspectors will make a judgement on the **overall effectiveness** of services and arrangements for children looked after, care leavers and children who need help and protection, which is graded on a four point scale:

- outstanding
- good
- requires improvement
- inadequate

- 3.7. The overall effectiveness judgement is a cumulative judgement derived from:
- the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection
 - the experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence, including graded judgements on:
 - adoption performance
 - the experiences and progress of care leavers
 - leadership, management and governance.
- 3.8. In addition, there will be a separate judgement for the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, which is based on the same four point scale.
- 3.9. Thus far, the forensic nature of the inspection process has resulted in a particularly tough framework. Of the 78 inspections that had taken place prior to ours, only 17 local authorities had achieved an overall effectiveness judgement of 'Good', with 41 authorities judged to 'Require Improvement' and 20 authorities found to be 'Inadequate'.
- 3.10. A formal report will be written by the Lead Inspector and will be sent to the Executive Director of Children's Services, the Chief Executive and the Chair of the LSCB. This will contain the judgement for Hammersmith and Fulham and will outline key strengths, along with any areas for development and priority action. The report will be published in mid-March.
- 3.11. The local authority must publish a written statement of action they propose to take in light of the findings within 70 working days of the report being published.

4. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONFERENCE

- 4.1. Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Public Health are working together to host their first joint Equalities and Diversity Conference on 26 February 2016. The theme of the conference is 'promoting mental health awareness and wellbeing in the workplace across all three boroughs'.
- 4.2. The key aims of the conference are:
- To promote the three councils as employers of choice, who are proactive in promoting a healthy working environment for staff
 - Understanding the needs of our service users and responding innovatively to promote positive health outcomes
 - To celebrate the diversity of our combined workforce and of the communities we serve, as well as facilitating a space to discuss key issues and help us to determine priorities and actions for the year ahead
- 4.3. This conference is aimed at all staff and will include:
- Keynote Speaker: Ruby Wax.

- Discussion about the issues raised, led by Nick Pendry, Head of Clinical Practice – Children’s Services and Dr Mike Robinson, Director of Public Health.
- Abbey Murray, Westminster Youth MP.
- A range of interactive workshops including Mindfulness and Mental Health Awareness.
- Networking and information stalls.

5. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. As this report is intended to provide an update on recent developments, there are no immediate legal implications. However any legal issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. As this report is intended to provide an update on recent developments, here are no immediate legal implications. However any legal issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

7. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. As this report is intended to provide an update on recent developments, there are no immediate financial and resource implications. However any financial and resource issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT**

None.