

Appendix 1

Children's Services and external scrutiny: Inspection Frameworks, Peer Reviews and National Returns

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This report sets out an overview of all key elements of external scrutiny the children's services directorate is currently answerable to. This covers inspection frameworks, sector led improvement approaches and key national data returns we are required to make to central government.

Inspection Frameworks

The Children's Services directorate is directly subject to a wide range of inspection frameworks from Ofsted. We also work closely with partners across the city who are have inspections on their provision. A summary is given below of some key areas of this work.

Social care

Single Inspection Framework (SIF)

This framework was introduced in 2014.

What are they inspecting? The specific remit of the SIF is to inspect children in need of help and protection, children in care, care leavers plus a review of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). For us, this means an inspection of our 'front door' to social work, all the work that takes place around a child's journey through the system and then leaving care as young adults or being adopted.

When did they last come? They inspected us in April/May 2015. It is a four week inspection framework.

What was the judgement? They judged that Children's Services in Brighton & Hove required improvement to become good. Our sub-judgements were:

Children in need of help and protection – requires improvement

Adoption performance – good

Experiences and progress of care leavers – good

Leadership, management and governance - good

The review of the LSCB found it to be good.

When might they come again? It is unlikely Ofsted will repeat the same inspection again with us. Authorities who were judged to be inadequate will get a re-inspection, but otherwise the SIF will continue until all local authorities in England and Wales have been visited, then a new framework will be launched. This is likely to commence in January 2018.

We produced an action plan as part of our response to the Ofsted inspection and will be conducting an annual review to check progress against that plan.

Joint targeted inspection framework (JTAI)

This new framework was launched in January 2016 and is a multi-agency inspection between HMI Ofsted, Probation, Police and the Care Quality Commission who look at health services. They will inspect the front door to services plus a 'deep dive' theme will be used for every 6 months of this new framework, starting with Child Sexual Exploitation and Children Missing from Home, Care and Education. This is a shorter inspection than the SIF but requires a partnership response.

Ofsted targeted inspection framework

This framework was launched in January 2016 and is very similar to the JTAI, except is only looking at the local authority arrangements. This framework is likely to be used where there are significant concerns eg from whistleblowing, complaints or a previous inadequate inspection. Like with the JTAI, Ofsted have nominated a theme for the first 6 months of this framework and this too will be CSE / Missing. Therefore the preparation work for the JTAI would also be relevant for this inspection.

Children's Centres

What are they inspecting? Ofsted inspects Children's Centres looking at a range of matters including knowledge of local communities, delivering high standard services, targeting vulnerable groups and good partnership working.

What did they last come? Ofsted visited all of our Children's Centres between March 2011 and December 2012

What was the judgement? All of our Children's Centres are judged to be good or outstanding

When might they come again? The inspection framework is currently on hold with a review due in Spring 2016.

Please note that the Care Quality Commission (Health inspectorate) will also visit any integrated provision we provide in order to inspect the health elements. This includes looking at council buildings where health services are delivered and there is an expectation the premises will be compliant with NHS infection control guidance, therefore annual audits on this are undertaken.

Education, skills and early years inspections

The Common Inspection Framework was launched in September 2015 and covers the inspections of maintained schools, academies, non-association independent schools, further education and skills providers and registered early years settings. As with the Single Inspection Framework for social care inspectors will offer a judgement on overall effectiveness. They will also make graded judgements on:

- the effectiveness of leadership and management;
- quality of teaching, learning and assessment;
- personal development, behaviour and welfare; and,
- outcomes for children and learners

Early Years

As at December 2015 88% of Brighton & Hove early years providers (including private, voluntary and public sector run nurseries, pre-schools and child-minders) were judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted. Of the nurseries run by the council 3 are outstanding, 3 good and 1 judged to be satisfactory.

Schools

As of the end of December 2015 83.3% of B&H schools are judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted. The percentage of pupils in good or outstanding schools is 88.1 in primary and 80.8 in secondary, above national averages.

Colleagues in Education & Inclusion review the performance of schools on a termly basis and ensure that schools who are on the journey to good receive support and challenge and that schools judged good or better that may be at risk of losing those judgements also receive appropriate support and challenge.

Following the introduction of the new framework in 2015 it takes a little time to 'bed down' as inspectors and school leaders understand the changes and the implications they will have on the judgements made.

Colleges and sixth forms

Inspections of these institutions are also covered under the common inspection framework as referenced above. Ofsted are interested to see how the individuals benefit from the education provided and they look in detail at those with protected characteristics such as disabilities or those from a BME community.

School Improvement

Ofsted updated their School Improvement Inspection Framework in 2014. This framework allows them to look at the local authority arrangements for supporting improvement in schools and the education of children & young people. These inspections assist local authorities in their duty to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential so that all children & young people benefit from at least a good education. The new framework amended the previous overarching judgement of effective/ineffective to a narrative judgement.

Community and adult learning

These providers are graded on the following where appropriate: 16-19 study programmes, adult learning programmes, apprenticeships, traineeships and provision for learners with high needs.

Our local provision (managed by the Friends Centre) was recently inspected and we are waiting for the report to be published.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

SEND Reforms

Ofsted have recently consulted on a proposed new inspection framework looking at how effectively local areas fulfil their responsibilities towards disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs. This will be a joint inspection with the Care Quality Commission and is expected to commence in May 2016. As yet the detailed inspection framework has not been released but a working group is already looking at developing a self-assessment, engagement activities with partners and practical planning for when the inspectors are here.

Residential homes

We have two residential children's homes in Brighton & Hove and these are for children with disabilities offering long and short term residential options.

They are inspected annually with a progress visit 6 months later.

Drove Road was last inspected in 2015 and was judged to be Good and are working on their Ofsted action planning and preparing for the next inspection

Tudor House was last inspected in 2015 and was judged to be Outstanding

Regular Meetings

The Ofsted Regional Director or their representative meets with the Director of Children's Services to discuss findings of inspections

The link officer from HMI Ofsted (schools) meets with the Head of Standards and Achievement and officers relevant to the focus of the meeting each term to discuss inspections in the city, progress of schools to good and any other issues they wish to raise.

The Regional Schools Commissioner has oversight of the performance of academies and free schools and the local authority can report any concerns about academies and free schools to them.

Department for Education / National College for Teaching and Leadership
Meets with the local authority termly to discuss schools causing concern and the action the we are taking.

The Directors of Education for the Diocese of Chichester (Church of England) and Diocese of Brighton and Arundel (Catholic Diocese) meet with the Head of Standards and Achievement termly to discuss the performance of their schools.

Beyond inspections

Ofsted are often interested in wider areas of local authority work that are not always subject to in depth inspection frameworks. Examples include private fostering and early help provision. Ofsted have in the past published themed reports on specific topics, these are a useful tool for learning about best practice and benchmarking our activities and outcomes against others. This will now continue with the JTAs, every

six months Ofsted will produce a report on the overall findings from the most recent theme.

As a local authority our main interaction is with Ofsted however we do need to be aware and keep prepared for inspections conducted by other inspectorates such as Care Quality Commission, Police and Probation. This is particularly true of our integrated services such as Children's Centres and the Youth Offending Service.

A lot of work is undertaken across the authority to prepare for those inspections, this includes

- Maintaining up to date self assessments
- Creating and implementing action and development plans
- Detailed preparation on the information requirements by Ofsted in the immediate days following notification of an inspection
- Reviewing and using our performance tracking and management information methods
- Peer review activities (detailed further below)
- Communication plans for how to inform partners upon notification
- Practical arrangements like ICT support for inspectors working on site

A key element of any inspection is the voice and experiences of children, young people and their families. The local authority is always developing ways in which these can be captured, considered and then influence future service delivery. This can be through 1:1 conversations with a social worker, surveys, focus groups or formal consultations. A vital part of this work is acting upon complaints and comments received.

Role of Elected Members

It is also important to consider the role of elected Members in relation to our inspection activity. Ofsted and others such as the Local Government Association have issued helpful guidance for Members to explore their roles and responsibilities in this. In relation to the social care inspections Members will have an enhanced role as Corporate Parents and there will be scrutiny from inspectors on whether they have a grip on knowing the needs of local children as well as the quality of services provided.

Members can ensure they have this grip by a variety of means including

- Taking a tiered 'need to know' approach with a small number of members holding a lot of detailed knowledge, a wider group having a good general understanding and then some key briefings to all Members reminding them of their role and the various work that takes place to support continuous improvement
- Requesting reports at committee, allowing for cross party scrutiny of issues
- Requesting performance data and considering what this means for groups of different children
- For those who are also governors information about that specific school could be requested and analysed

Members will be invited to learn more about our services on World Social Work Day on 15th March 2016. .

Sector Led Improvement (SLI) approaches

As a local authority we are committed to developing as a learning organisation and we encourage our services to engage in sector led improvement approaches. This is a tried and tested method of service review and improvement which gains particular value by local, regional or national peers reviewing our services, providing feedback and making recommendations.

Children's Service's has been closely involved with organisational wide SLI activities such as the Local Government Association Peer Challenge in 2014 and the ongoing equalities assessment work being undertaken, with the Equalities Framework for Local Government assessment being planned for later this year.

Within the department there is a strong commitment to an SLI approach, with senior managers often supporting (when diaries allow) activities in other authorities. This helps us learn through manager development as well as observing practice elsewhere.

We have also invited peer review groups in to help us on our improvement journey in several areas, including.

- Missing Children
- Children's Centres

We are currently in discussions with the LGA for conducting a safeguarding peer review in June, an important point in our post SIF inspection activity to check our progress.

Key national data returns

We also have a number of requirements to submit data to central government. This is an essential element of our public accountability and allows us to benchmark our performance against our neighbours, statistical and otherwise.

A summary of some of our main returns is given below.

Education

- School Admissions – numbers of parental preferences met, numbers of appeals and annual confirmation of admissions arrangements
- GCSE / AS and A level results
- Year 1 phonics assessments
- School Census – an annual submission of a wide range of data from our schools including workforce and alternative provisions to mainstream
- Details on what work we are undertaking to improve school attendance, report on our work with parents
- School capacity and condition of premises
- Young people not in education, employment and training
- Early Years census – numbers of children in funded 2 year old places
- School exclusions
- Healthy weight programmes in schools

Social Care

- LSCB Child Death Review Panels – the number of deaths and whether any were judged to be preventable
- Children in Need census – details on those children in our Children in Need system
- Children in Care – details on those children in our care system
- Private Fostering – numbers of children in these arrangements
- Information on numbers and characteristics of both children adopted and adopters
- Information on fostering households, foster carers and those being fostered

Early Help

- Names, addresses and various identifiers (e.g. Date of Birth, NI number, NHS number) of individuals engaged locally on the Stronger Families Programme
- Troubled Families Programme Family Progress Data. Tracking trends in key areas such as domestic violence, mental health, and ASB, of individuals engaged locally on the Stronger Families Programme, for periods of one year prior to intervention up until closure of case.

Further enquiries

For any further enquiries or copies of any recent inspection reports please contact:

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