

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015/2016 REPORT NO. 5

MEETING TITLE AND DATE:

Cabinet 17.06.2015

Council 24.06.2015

REPORT OF: Andrew

Fraser

Director of Schools and
Children's Services

Agenda – Part: 1 Item - 6

Subject: Enfield Ofsted Improvement Plan

**Wards: All
Non Key**

Cabinet Member consulted: Cllr Ayfer Orhan

Contact officer and telephone number:

Anne Stoker

0208 379 4075

Email: anne.stoker@enfield.gov.uk

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) carried out an inspection in Enfield from **20 January 2015 to 11 February 2015**. They inspected services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and reviewed of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The report was published **27 March 2015**
- 1.2 The Inspectors found that the local authority leads effective services which resulted in an overall judgment that children's services in Enfield are **GOOD**.
- 1.3 The Inspectors found that the arrangements in place to evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and LSCB partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children also resulted in the judgment that the Local Safeguarding Children Board is **GOOD**.
- 1.4 Ofsted made 15 recommendations to further improve services to vulnerable children, which form the basis of Enfield Improvement plan. Each recommendation has specific actions with tight timescales and named responsible officers leading on implementation.
- 1.5 Progress against the action plan will be overseen by the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB), monitored and reviewed regularly by the ESCB, Director of Schools and Children's Services and Lead Cabinet Member, Assistant Director of Children's Services, Head of Safeguarding and the Children's Services Operational Management Group (OMG). The plan will also be regularly monitored by every overview and scrutiny committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet to note the reports attached as appendices:
- Enfield Improvement Plan
 - 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
 - Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer – 2014/15.
- 2.2 Cabinet to support the Schools and Children’s Services Department and the Enfield Safeguarding Board to implement and achieve the actions relating to the 15 recommendations outlined in the Improvement Plan.
- 2.3 Cabinet to note the specific recommendations within the plan to improve the oversight and scrutiny functions of Senior Managers, the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board and elected members. The events in Rotherham and related published reports highlight the level and nature of risks faced should oversight and scrutiny be unsystematic or lack effective challenge.
- 2.4 Cabinet agree to refer this report to Council for information.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) carried out an inspection in Enfield from **20 January 2015 to 11 February 2015** the report was published **27 March 2015**.
- 3.2 The team of seven Inspectors were on site for a significant amount of time looking closely at the experiences of children and young people who have needed or still need help and/or protection. This included children and young people who are looked after and young people who are leaving care and starting their lives as young adults. They considered the quality of work and the difference Officers and Council Members make to the lives of Enfield children, young people and families. They also reviewed the effectiveness of the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB).

3.3 They examined in excess of 300 case files, observed professional practice with families and judged the effectiveness of help and care given to local children and young people. Wherever possible, they sought feedback from children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors assessed how well the local authority understands how well it is performing and what difference it is making for the people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

3.4 The Inspectors found that Children's services in Enfield are **GOOD** because:

- Enfield's senior managers and leaders have a strong track record of making significant improvements to the lives of vulnerable children and young people.
- Strong partner agency support and political commitment are making a positive difference to children's outcomes.
- The workforce strategy is highly effective, ensuring well-trained and motivated staff teams. A determination to achieve manageable caseloads means that social workers have time to get to know children and protect them more effectively.
- Partnership arrangements to safeguard children and young people from child sexual exploitation ensure that individual children and young people who are considered at high risk of sexual exploitation are effectively safeguarded.
- Elected members demonstrate strong political commitment to children's services.
- The voice of children and young people is given a high priority
- Social workers really care about the children and young people they work with. Young people told inspectors that they have good relationships with social workers, who visit them regularly and listen to their views and concerns.
- Enfield is an innovative local authority, developing and promoting effective approaches to practice in collaboration with its partners,

3.5 The Inspectors found that the ESCB is **GOOD** because:

- Strong and effective partnerships mean that partners are holding each other to account for the delivery of good multi-agency services to children and families in need of help and protection.
- Thresholds are understood, embedded and applied well by partner agencies. They are supported by an escalation policy that is well understood.
- The Board is pro-active in seeking to work with neighbouring safeguarding boards to protect vulnerable children and young people most effectively.
- The multi-agency training plan is comprehensive and well evaluated. Training is responsive to emerging need, including learning from Serious Case Reviews
- Annual Section 11 audits are conducted well. They feature peer review and challenge to identify gaps in agency safeguarding practice, policies or procedures. Gaps are addressed effectively.
- The ESCB ensures that the views of children and young people play a pivotal role in the work of the Board and have influence over service developments.
- There are clear lines of communication between the Enfield Council Chief Executive, the Director of Schools and Children's Services, other senior managers and the Board Chair. This ensures that safeguarding activity remains core business and is effectively managed.
- Child sexual exploitation is a priority for the Board and the local authority. The Board and its partner agencies have a strong grip on these issues and make a clear link between child sexual exploitation, children missing from home and care, and gang activity.

3.6 The Inspectors found that the local authority leads effective services which resulted in the overall judgment that children's services in Enfield are **GOOD**. This judgment was based on the examination of the following areas

1. Children who need help and protection:

2. Children looked after and achieving permanence:

2.1 Adoption performance:

2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers:

3. Leadership, management and governance:

- 3.7 The Inspectors found that the arrangements in place to evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and board partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children led to the judgment that the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) is **GOOD**.
- 3.8 Nationally less than 25% of authorities have received an overall judgment of good, the majority, over 75% are judged as either inadequate or requiring improvement. To date Enfield remains the only London Local Authority to have achieved an overall judgment of good.
- 3.9 The published Ofsted report has made 15 recommendations, which form the Enfield Ofsted Improvement plan. The approved Enfield Ofsted Improvement Plan is attached as a background paper. The first 11 recommendations are from Inspection of Children's Services the final 4 recommendations are from the review of the effectiveness of the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board.
- 3.10 All 15 recommendations have identified actions that will be required to be in place in order to evidence the outcomes and effectiveness of the plan. The actions all have named lead officers that will be responsible for following through on the actions in order to ensure the plan is successful and delivered within timescales.
- 3.11 The Ofsted Improvement Plan will be overseen by the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB), monitored and reviewed by the ESCB, the Director of Children's Services and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not applicable.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Enfield's Children's Services and the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board will require the commitment and support from multiple partners and from colleagues across the Council in order to deliver on this plan within the allotted timescales.

6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

- 6.1.1 The report recommendations require no specific additional resources as they can be met from existing SCS budgets or in the case of the Liquid Logic / SPOE & MASH requirements from the Corporate IT Work Plan Fund.

- 6.1.2 The 2015/16 SCS budget included growth of £201k to part fund a Child Sexual Exploitation Team, however it should be noted that additional funding of £45k for this team is from the one-off Innovation Grant. This means that additional resources would be required in 2016/17 in order to maintain the CSE Team at this level.
- 6.1.3 General demographic pressures and increases in the numbers of Looked After Children led to budget pressures in 2014/15, which are forecast to continue into 2015/16. As a result £936k was built into the 2015/16 budget to partially offset these pressures, with a further £2m set aside in the Corporate Risk Reserve. The budget pressures will be kept under continual review over the coming year to minimise the call on the Risk Reserve, whilst enabling a good Ofsted rating to be maintained.

6.2 Legal Implications

- 6.2.1 The inspection of the local authority's children's services functions was carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- 6.2.2 The review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board was carried out under section 15A of the Children Act 2004 and Regulation 2 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013.
- 6.2.3 The combined report was published under section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

6.3 Property Implications

Not applicable.

7. KEY RISKS

- 7.1 There are specific recommendations within the plan to improve the oversight and scrutiny functions of Senior Managers, the Enfield Safeguarding Children Board and elected members. The events in Rotherham and related published reports highlight the level and nature of risks faced should oversight and scrutiny be unsystematic or lack effective challenge.
- 7.2 Failure to demonstrate progress against Ofsted's recommendations will have a highly detrimental impact on the Council's reputation.

8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

8.1 Fairness for All, Growth and Sustainability and Strong Communities

8.1.1 This improvement plan will strengthen service delivery and partnership working to increase life opportunities and sustainable positive outcomes for children young people and their families.

8.1.2 The plan meets all 3 of the council's key aims and the 9 objectives within the Children and Young People's Plan. With particular emphasis and more weighting upon improving services to those children, young people and families that require prevention and intervention from safeguarding services across a broad spectrum from early help to statutory interventions.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There has been no equalities impact assessment to date however a full equalities impact assessment will be carried out through the ESCB as required.

10. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This plan supports the continuous drive for improvement by the Council and its partners in relation to improved outcomes for children. There are specific recommendations within the plan relating to improving data collection and performance management that rely upon IT solutions being put into practice.

11. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 This improvement plan addresses measures to improve the health and wellbeing of children young people and families. For example the plan will strengthen measures in the Borough to prevent the sexual exploitation of children and reduce associated risk factors. The plan seeks to improve the engagement of health in initial strategy discussions about those children at risk of significant harm and will improve the quality of care planning and pathway plans for those looked after children.

Appendices

1. Enfield Ofsted Improvement Plan
2. Enfield 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
3. Enfield 2015 Annual IRO report