

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

11 FEBRUARY 2014

Title:	Summary of the New Ofsted Single Inspection of Services for Children		
Report of the Corporate Director of Children's Services			
Open Report		For Decision	
Wards Affected: NONE		Key Decision: NO	
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Summary: <p>This report summarises the new Ofsted single inspection framework for children's social care and LSCBs. The inspection covers children in need of help and protection, looked after children and care leavers. The summary report outlines the changes in the scope and judgements made in the single inspection framework, as well as providing an overview of inspection process.</p> <p>A presentation will accompany this report at the Health and Wellbeing Board to explore in detail some of the changes in the new framework.</p> <p>A brief overview of the current CQC programme of child safeguarding and looked after children reviews is also provided. A full report will come to a future meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board.</p>			
Recommendation(s) The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:			
(i) Note the content and scope of Ofsted's new single inspection of services for children in need, looked after children, care leavers and the new Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB) reviews and provide comments as appropriate.			
(ii) Note the CQC health programme of reviews on safeguarding and looked after children running from September 2013 and April 2015			

1. Background and Introduction

- 1.1 Ofsted's single inspection framework was published in October 2013 and came into effect in November 2013 on a universal three year cycle. The inspection brings together into one inspection: child protection; services for looked after children and care leavers, and local authority fostering and adoption services. Alongside the single inspection, there will also be a review of the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. This new Ofsted inspection framework has been introduced following a recommendation in the Munro Report, Protecting Children, 2011 that an inspection approach should take into account the 'child's journey'
- 1.2 The single inspection framework has now commenced and the first tranche of five LAs inspected (Derbyshire, Hartlepool, Slough, Sheffield and Hillingdon) under the framework was announced on 19 November, and inspections started on 20 November. The second tranche has commenced week beginning 13th January 2014 with a further 6 LAs currently being inspected (Bolton, East Sussex, Essex, Hounslow, Staffordshire and Coventry).

2. Content of the single inspection of services for children in need, looked after children and care leavers

- 2.1 The Ofsted single inspection focuses on the effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements to help and protect children, the experiences and progress of children looked after, including adoption, fostering, the use of residential care, and children who return home. The framework also focuses on the arrangements for permanence for children who are looked after and the experiences and progress of care leavers. In addition, the leadership, management and governance judgment 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.
- 2.2 The scope of the inspection, therefore, is very broad covering the following:
- Children and young people who are receiving or who need early help
 - Children and young people who are referred to us and are assessed (or not)
 - Children and young people who become the subject of a child protection plan or have been the subject of a plan and need continuing support
 - Children who are receiving support through a child in need plan
 - Children looked after (with a plan for adoption, to return home, special guardianship or residence order, living with a foster family) and children accommodated
 - Care leavers
- 2.3 Under the new framework, inspectors will make three key judgements in the single inspection:

- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection;
- The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence (including contributory and graded judgements on adoption performance and the experiences and progress of care leavers); and
- Leadership, management and governance.

2.4 The overall effectiveness judgement will be a cumulative judgement based on those three key judgements listed in 2.3.

2.5 Judgements will be made on a four-point scale: outstanding, good, requires improvement (replacing the previous 'adequate' judgement) and inadequate. A judgement of 'inadequate' in any of the three key judgements will limit the overall effectiveness judgement to inadequate.

2.6 Where a Local Authority is judged to be inadequate for overall effectiveness, a full inspection will take place within 12 to 18 months (unless otherwise directed by the Secretary of State). Where a Director of Children's Services (DCS) holds the DCS statutory responsibility for more than one LA, the inspection of each LA will be concurrent wherever possible.

2.7 It is clear in the inspection framework that **only 'good' is now good enough**. Services judged as less than 'good' will now be judged as 'requires improvement' rather than adequate, as was the case in previous inspections. A key focus of the inspection is the extent to which children's experiences and progress are prioritised and the effectiveness of the help, protection and care that they receive.

2.8 For the first time Ofsted will also make discrete, graded judgments on the 'experiences and progress for care leavers' and adoption. Inspectors will evaluate the quality of plans for children's futures, the management and practice oversight of those plans to make them happen and the extent to which any delays are being swiftly reduced. They will also consider the quality of support and care for young people becoming independent and leaving the system, including the provision of safe and good housing, access to education, training and employment and the extent to which those individuals feel supported by their corporate parents.

3. Single inspection framework process

3.1 Inspections will be announced at short notice. The Local Authority will be notified that the lead inspector and a small team of inspectors will be arriving the following day to begin the inspection; the rest of the team will arrive at the start of the following week. Local Authorities will be informed on a Tuesday by 9.30am the day before the inspection commences.

3.2 The full inspection team will normally comprise seven suitably qualified HMI – six with experience in delivery and inspection of social care and one experienced in inspection of education provision. The inspection will take four weeks with a combination of on and off site time. The inspection team will normally be on site for 11 working days, and Ofsted will publish the report on its website within 30 working

days of the end of the on-site inspection. The LA is required to publish an action plan in response to the report within 70 working days of receiving the final report.

- 3.3 Where inspection evidence suggests that there are weaknesses in multi-agency practice, the relevant inspectorates will be notified, and may decide to inspect in accordance with their statutory powers.
- 3.4 As outlined in the single inspection Handbook, the LA will be asked to prepare and provide a large range of individual child level data in the first 2 weeks of the inspection as outlined in Annex A Ofsted guidance. The data requirements now span social care and education, as well as early help assessments, CAF and targeted intervention over a 6 month period mostly and cover children in and out of borough. The Children's Performance and Strategy team are currently undertaking a risk assessment on the new data requirements in order to identify key problems and solution to any data supply issues.
- 3.5 The LA will also be required to undertake an audit of 18 cases, selected by Ofsted, covering the experience and journey of the child, family, carer and the effectiveness of help and protection. The LA will be required to share the findings of those 18 audits with Ofsted inspectors once field work commences. The cases selected by Ofsted will comprise of: 6 children in need of help and protection, 10 looked after children including at least 2 out of borough and 2 care leavers.
- 3.6 Inspectors will also track the experiences and quality of practice in an additional 25-30 case files of children and young people during the onsite inspection across a range of criteria. Further cases may be selected for examination by inspectors if there is a particular theme the inspectors would like to examine in more detail. Inspectors will also evaluate thresholds and effectiveness of services through targeted sampling of at least 50 case files. In total, therefore around 100 children and young people will be looked at by inspectors.
- 3.7 As well as data and case file tracking, inspectors will also directly observe practice and interview staff and managers at all levels. A range of meetings will be directly observed by inspectors, for example, child protection and child in need meetings, legal planning meetings, looked after children reviews and early intervention meetings. The inspectors will also interview (face to face or by telephone) the Lead Member for children's services, the LSCB chair, business manager and LSCB partners, the corporate parenting group, the LA adoption panel chair and the fostering panel chair, family court representatives and Cafcass.
- 3.9 Views of children, young people and their families and foster carers will be sought by inspectors and form a significant part of the inspection. Supervision records and foster carer's records and reviews are also in the scope of the inspection.
- 3.10 Commissioned services will also be contacted by inspectors, including independent fostering agencies, children's homes, social work providers and voluntary adoption agencies.
- 3.11 The DCS will be updated on a daily basis on the progress of the inspection via brief face to face meetings. Any cases of safeguarding concern will be raised immediately for action.

3.12 A draft report is sent to the DCS within 15 working days of the end of fieldwork for a factual accuracy check. The DCS has five working days to respond. A pre-publication report is sent to the DCS, chair of the LSCB, local authority Chief Executive, lead member and Department for Education (within 25 working days of the end of fieldwork). The final inspection report is published on Ofsted's website (within 27 working days of the end of fieldwork).

Review of LSCBs

3.13 The Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013 were published on the same day as Ofsted published the new single inspection framework. These regulations enable the Chief Inspector to conduct a review of the performance by a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), opening the way for Ofsted to review and report on the effectiveness of the LSCB at the same time as reporting on the inspection of the LA.

3.14 The LSCB review will usually take place in parallel with the single inspection of the LA. However, the review can be undertaken as a stand-alone review. The LSCB chair will be notified about the review at the same time as the Director of Children's Services (DCS). There will be an overall effectiveness judgement based on the same four point four point scale: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

3.15 The judgement of the LSCB will be derived from an assessment of its compliance with statutory responsibilities in accordance with the Children Act 2004 and the Local Safeguarding Children Board regulations 2006. Inspectors will evaluate the LSCB's understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of multi-agency practice; the effectiveness of their monitoring and evaluation; and how well they have identified areas for improvement. The scope of the LSCB review is as follows:

- Assessment of evidence of coordination between statutory partners in work and mechanisms in place for helping, protecting and caring for children in the local area.
- Assessment the effectiveness of multi-agency training and the evaluation of its impact on management and practice.
- Ensuring that policies and procedures in respect of threshold for intervention are understood and effectively operated.
- Ensuring that Challenge of Practice and casework auditing are rigorous and used to identify areas for improvement.
- Ensuring that serious case reviews, management reviews and reviews of child deaths are used as opportunities for feedback and to drive improvement.
- Assessment of the LSCBs evaluation of local performance and its ability to influence and inform service delivery.

- 3.16 The LA is required to provide a range of information as part of the LSCB review and inspectors will interview a range of stakeholders including the LSCB chair, the LSCB business manager, the DCS, the Chief Executive and at least two other statutory LSCB partners. This would usually be a health and a police representative as a minimum. They will also, wherever possible, interview the lay members.
- 3.17 A draft report will be sent to the chair of the LSCB and board members within 15 working days of the end of the inspection. The Chair has 5 working days to report factual inaccuracies. The final report will be combined with the final report of the single inspection, and published together on Ofsted's website. In any instances where the review does not take place at the same time as the single inspection, the report will be published separately.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 Ofsted consulted on the new framework in the summer of 2013 and carried out pilot inspections. Following the outcomes of those consultations and pilots, Ofsted re-published the single inspection framework "Framework and evaluation schedule for the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers (single inspection framework) and reviews of Local Safeguarding Children Boards" and the handbook, with new sections on the review of LSCBs in October 2013. Full details of those publication and reports can be accessed via the web links on page 8.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 Ofsted inspections are conducted under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- 5.2 Ofsted regulates and inspects a range of children's services, including childcare, children's social care, the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, adult and community learning, School Improvement Local authority arrangements and secure establishments.

6. Risk Management

- 6.1 The outcome of the single inspection and Ofsted judgements are highly significant in terms of the reputations of the Local authority. The Secretary of State for Education has the power to intervene if he considers that a Local authority is failing in its safeguarding duties toward children. The 2012 Ofsted inspection of safeguarding and looked after children (June 2012) judged the overall effectiveness of safeguarding to be good; outcomes for looked after children were judged as adequate overall.

7. Care Quality Commission (CQC) Child Safeguarding and Looked after Children Inspection Programme

- 7.1 Following deferment of the planned multi-agency inspections of child protection arrangements, the CQC announced its intentions to undertake reviews of how health services keep children safe and promote the health and wellbeing of looked after

children. The CQC implemented its programme of Children Looked After and Safeguarding Reviews on 30th September 2013, which will run until April 2015.

- 7.2 CQC will inspect health services within local authority areas in England and will case track individual children in each area. CQC will prioritise inspections based on the identified risk within the health services in those areas and visit at short notice. They will use their powers under Section 48 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 to conduct this review.
- 7.3 The reviews will evaluate the quality and impact of local health arrangements for safeguarding children and improving healthcare for looked after children and care leavers. As with Ofsted's single inspection framework, there will be a focus upon the experiences of looked after children and children and families who receive safeguarding services.
- 7.4 The lines of enquiry have been identified as:
- The experiences and views of children and their families.
 - The quality and effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in health.
 - The quality of health services and outcomes for children who are looked after.
 - Health leadership and assurance of local safeguarding and looked after children arrangements.
- 7.5 A full report and presentation on the CQC Children Looked After and Safeguarding Reviews will be reported to a future Health and Wellbeing Board meeting, including an update on preparation in health for this review in Barking and Dagenham.

8. Multi-agency child protection inspections update

- 8.1 The multi agency child protection inspection framework has been deferred. However, from April 2015 - with Ofsted's partner inspectorates (CQC, HMIP, HMIC and HMI Prisons), a framework that additionally evaluates the contribution of core statutory partners to the care and protection of children will commence. This will not replace the single inspection. Ofsted (together with colleague inspectorates) will select a sample of local authorities to visit for the multi-agency child protection inspection. The existing Ofsted framework will be the spine of that inspection with additional criteria to assess the contribution of partner agencies.

9. Background Papers Used in Preparation of the Report

- 9.1 A number of background papers were used in preparation for this report (see below links for more detail), including the framework and evaluation schedule for the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and reviews of LSCBs, Ofsted, November 2013 and the Ofsted handbook for single inspection; reports on responses to Ofsted consultation on the single inspection and LSCB reviews.

- [Ofsted single inspection framework and reviews of LSCBs](#)
- [Ofsted inspection handbook for single inspection](#)
- [Report on responses to Ofsted consultation on single inspection framework](#)
- [Report on responses to Ofsted's consultation on the review of the effectiveness of LSCBs](#)
- [Ofsted PowerPoint presentation on the single inspection \(PDF document\)](#)
- LGA/ADCS/SOLACE booklet, [Lessons from the single inspection framework pilots \(PDF document\)](#)