

SINGLE INSPECTION FRAMEWORK STATEMENT OF ACTION

The Ofsted 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 took place in Hartlepool between 19 November 2013 and 11 December 2013.

The overall judgement is that services for children are good; the local authority leads effective services that meet the requirements for good. The judgement for the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board is requires improvement; the LSCB is not yet demonstrating the characteristics of good.

The inspection identified a number of strengths within the local authority children's services which are detailed within the inspection report which can be downloaded at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/hartlepool>.

The local authority shared with Ofsted its Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan during the inspection which highlighted where the authority performs well and identified areas for improvement to strengthen performance and practice. The areas for improvement highlighted during the inspection reflect the priorities identified by the local authority which are included within the Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan. The action plan below summarises the priorities for action detailed in the Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan with specific reference to the Areas of Improvement identified through the inspection. In their inspection, Ofsted identified the following areas for improvement:

- Social workers need to ensure that the rich knowledge of the children they work with is reflected in case records.
- Social workers must be supported by managers in supervision to 'think the unthinkable' at all times so that the experiences and views of both children and parents are equally understood and considered in decisions about risks and next steps.
- Social workers should, in every case, assess the risks and use complete chronologies more effectively to consider and take account of the family history, including recent events.
- Children's participation in the arrangements to protect them should be well supported, and monitored by managers.
- Managers need to ensure that the views of children, young people and their families are used more regularly to influence service developments and improve existing services.
- Accelerate progress in implementing the management improvement plan to further raise practice standards and more effectively quality assures key aspects of social work practice.
- Child protection conference chairs and Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) must improve their practice in questioning the quality and content of assessments and plans for children. They must challenge social workers to clearly set out (in key

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documents) what a child thinks about their situation, and what they would like to see happen to improve things. The recording of children's wishes should be clearly documented.

- Implement the child sexual exploitation strategy and screening tool so that early identification of those at risk is effective, routine and systematic.
- Promote police attendance at child protection strategy meetings routinely, so that in every case the most recent information can be shared, understood and used to plan the most effective protective actions.
- Ensure the 'Throughcare Team' develop more effective ways of understanding and describing the impact of their work. The use and regular review of clear targets in pathway action plans should show the difference the actions have made. They should also ensure that care leavers are routinely provided with information about their legal entitlements.
- Further increase the proportion of young people moving into education, employment, training or university.

The implementation of this action plan will be monitored through the Children's Services Management Team, the Departmental Management Team and Children's Services Committee.

The effectiveness of the action plan and the improvement in services will be evaluated through the Performance Management Framework which includes monthly audits of case files, monthly performance clinics, quarterly themed audits and service user feedback interviews. These will demonstrate the implementation of learning from the inspection and embedding of improved practice.

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WHAT DOES THE LOCAL AUTHORITY NEED TO IMPROVE?

Areas for Improvement	Action	By Whom and When
Social workers need to ensure that the rich knowledge of the children they work with is reflected in case records.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Recording Standards for social workers demonstrating best practice in recording and implement through practice clinics • Commission Write Enough training for staff • Deliver practice clinics in effective use of summaries and chronologies using best practice examples 	<p>Social Care Heads of Service / Principal Social Worker</p> <p>30 September 2014</p>
Social workers must be supported by managers in supervision to 'think the unthinkable' at all times so that the experiences and views of both children and parents are equally understood and considered in decisions about risks and next steps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and amend system generated supervision record to support reflective practice; • Develop practice guidance for supervision using Tony Morrison material and tools which support reflective practice; • Heads of Service and Assistant Director to undertake case reviews with workers and managers which support reflective practice; • Implement decision making recording tool. 	<p>Assistant Director / Heads of Service</p> <p>30 September 2014</p>
Social workers should, in every case, assess the risks and use complete chronologies more effectively to consider and take account of the family history, including recent events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording standards will outline best practice in preparing chronologies and case summaries • Assessments when a child is referred for services will require the preparation of a summary of previous involvement in context of current presenting need and risk; • Assessments will require the chronology to be prepared for the 25 day supervision checkpoint; 	<p>Social Care Heads of Service / Principal Social Worker</p> <p>Team Managers</p> <p>30 September 2014</p>
Children's participation in the arrangements to protect them should be well supported, and monitored by managers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the conference improvement plan and user engagement plan for child protection conferences to increase children's participation in conferences and ensure effective advocate arrangements are in place; 	<p>Head of Safeguarding and Review / Principal Social Worker</p>

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Areas for Improvement	Action	By Whom and When
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase take up of advocacy support for children subject to child protection conferences through contract with NYAS • IRO's to report quarterly to Divisional Management Team on children's participation in conferences • Deliver solution oriented toolkit and guidance to support social workers in developing effective working relationships with children • Team Managers to ensure all assessments record the child's views. 	<p>31 July 2014</p> <p>IRO's</p> <p>Head of Access and Strategic Planning / team managers</p>
<p>Managers need to ensure that the views of children, young people and their families are used more regularly to influence service developments and improve existing services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team managers to undertake feedback interviews with children and parents on a monthly basis. • Implement user engagement plan for safeguarding • Deliver Participation Strategy with particular focus on children subject to safeguarding arrangements. • Introduce comment forms and feedback cards (already in place in conferences) in reviews; • Ensure learning arising from complaints is effectively communicated to workforce and embedded in practice. 	<p>Team Managers</p> <p>Principal Social Worker</p> <p>Participation Manager / Safeguarding and Review Manager</p> <p>Assistant Director</p> <p>30 September 2014</p>
<p>Accelerate progress in implementing the management improvement plan to further raise practice standards and more effectively quality assures key aspects of social work practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan through Divisional and Business Management Teams. • Finalise and implement the Performance Management Framework and update Standards/Quality Assurance documentation. • Implement Solution Oriented Toolkit and Guidance for staff to improve standards of practice. 	<p>Assistant Director / Heads of Service</p> <p>30 June 2014</p> <p>Head of Access and Strategic Planning</p> <p>30 September 2014</p>

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<p>Child protection conference chairs and Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) must improve their practice in questioning the quality and content of assessments and plans for children. They must challenge social workers to clearly set out (in key documents) what a child thinks about their situation, and what they would like to see happen to improve things. The recording of children's wishes should be clearly documented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete implementation of Safeguarding and Review Service Development Plan. • Finalise and implement IRO Professional Challenge document; • Deliver training to independent chairs / IRO's on above and best practice standards. 	<p>Safeguarding and Review Manager / Assistant Director</p> <p>31 July 2014</p>
<p>Implement the child sexual exploitation strategy and screening tool so that early identification of those at risk is effective, routine and systematic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Tees Strategic and Hartlepool VEMT action plan 2014/15 • Child sexual exploitation Risk Assessment Tool implemented from 01/05/14; • Children vulnerable to exploitation to be discussed at VEMT practitioners group to share intelligence and ensure appropriate services are in place to reduce risk and safeguard child. 	<p>Tees Strategic and Hartlepool VEMT group led by LSCB Business Manager.</p>
<p>Promote police attendance at child protection strategy meetings routinely, so that in every case the most recent information can be shared, understood and used to plan the most effective protective actions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet regularly with police to discuss any barriers to attendance at strategy meetings and share management information on attendance. • Consider effective use of ICT and video conferencing; • Discuss with police option of placing officer in Hub as part of development of multi agency safeguarding hub. 	<p>Head of Safeguarding, Assessment and Support / Assistant Director</p> <p>30 June 2014</p>
<p>Ensure the 'Throughcare Team' develop more effective ways of understanding and describing the impact of their work. The use and regular</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Recording Standards for social workers demonstrating best practice in recording and implement through practice clinics • Commission Write Enough training for staff 	<p>Head of Specialist Services</p>

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<p>review of clear targets in pathway action plans should show the difference the actions have made. They should also ensure that care leavers are routinely provided with information about their legal entitlements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver development session with team to strengthen practice around Pathway Planning and reviews of targets with young people. • Provide copy of entitlements to each care leaver and ensure they fully understand these. In future, these will be provided to young people at the time of needs assessment and annually thereafter. 	<p>September 2014</p> <p>Team Manager Through Care Team</p> <p>30 June 2014</p>
<p>Further increase the proportion of young people moving into education, employment, training or university</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with colleges and employers to increase number of education, employment and training opportunities. • Implement Care to Work scheme. • Work with Higher Education establishments to offer aspirational training sessions to young people. • For all care leavers at risk of being NEET deliver bespoke package of support to enable them to access learning and development opportunities 	<p>Head of Specialist Services / Head of Youth Support Services</p>

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WHAT DOES THE LSCB NEED TO IMPROVE

Areas for Improvement	Priority and Immediate Action	By Whom and When
<p>The Hartlepool Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) must take steps to support the identification, assessment and safeguarding of children at risk of sexual exploitation screening methodology and developing a plan for implementation to ensure that professional staff are able to use this resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Tees wide Risk Assessment tool; • Launch of tool through awareness raising sessions to all agencies. • Deliver practice clinics and workshops for multi agency staff on implementing screening tool. • Evaluation of use of screening tool by practitioners and deliver targeted support where needed. 	<p>Hartlepool Operational VEMT group</p> <p>May - July 2014</p> <p>Summer 2014</p>
<p>The HSCB must accelerate its work with the Tees-wide Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked group (VEMT) and fully implement the Child Sexual Exploitation strategy to ensure effective, early identification, assessment and intervention for children and young people who may be at risk of / or are being exploited.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy and VEMT action plan in place at Tees and local level. Implementation has commenced and will be fully delivered during 2014/15. • VEMT Operational and Practitioners group to monitor progress of implementation and report quarterly to Board. Board to challenge any delays or difficulties experienced • VEMT operational group to audit cases discussed in practitioners group to ensure children are identified and referred for appropriate services for intervention. 	<p>Strategic and Operational VEMT group</p> <p>Quarterly reporting to LSCB</p> <p>30 September 2014</p>
<p>The HSCB should ensure that its work with 'young inspectors' informs the planning and evaluation of service delivery and that this is extended to include feedback from children and families who have directly received help and protective services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise an agreed work plan with young inspectors for 2014/2015 including terms of reference for work; • Set up liaison meetings between Young Inspectors and Business Manager and Independent Chair; • Young Inspectors to be supported to include compliance with section 11 in all their inspections • Young inspectors to be involved in user engagement plan for child protection conferences 	<p>LSCB Business Manager / Participation Manager Completed Quarterly</p> <p>30 June 2014</p> <p>30 April 2014</p>

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<p>The HSCB needs to accelerate progress and implementation of its strategic action plan, with a particular focus on children who experiences domestic violence and who abuse drugs or alcohol, so that it has a positive impact on outcomes for these vulnerable children and young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSCB development day to determine priorities for 2014/15 and determine work plans which will impact upon these issues and improve outcomes for children; • Strategic Group for Hidden Harm to be established with annual work plan and outcomes to be achieved; • Strategic domestic violence group to be re-established with annual work plan and outcomes to be achieved. 	<p>LSCB Business Manager / Assistant Director / Independent Chair April 2014</p> <p>May 2014</p> <p>May 2014</p>
<p>The HSCB should develop an effective multi-agency data set and routinely scrutinise partners performance, challenging and auditing where necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi agency dataset to be developed which reflects the priorities of the Board and is regularly scrutinised by Board and performance challenged. • Single agency audits of safeguarding practice to be reported to LSCB • Performance and Quality sub group to undertake multi agency audits which are reported to and scrutinised by LSCB. • LSCB will track implementation of recommendations arising from audits. 	<p>LSCB Performance and Quality subgroup</p> <p>Quarterly</p>
<p>The HSCB should increase its influence and effectiveness through improved strategic arrangements with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Family Justice Council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Chair to attend Health and Wellbeing Board and Family Justice Council bi-annually. • Annual Report of LSCB to be presented to Health and Wellbeing Board and Safer Hartlepool Partnership; • Bi-annual meetings to take place between independent chair and Chief Executives of strategic partners in LSCB 	<p>Independent Chair</p> <p>Bi annually</p>