

<b>Title of paper:</b>	Post Ofsted Safeguarding Inspection Action Plan Progress	
<b>Report to:</b>	Children's Partnership Board	
<b>Date:</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> March 2015	
<b>Relevant Director:</b>	Alison Michalska Corporate Director, Children and Adults	<b>Wards affected:</b> All
<b>Contact Officer(s) and contact details:</b>	Amy Weir (Chief Social Worker, Children's Social Care) <a href="mailto:amy.weir@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">amy.weir@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a> Michelle Roe (Children and Adults Business Implementation Officer) <a href="mailto:michelle.roe@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">michelle.roe@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a> (0115) 87 63422	
<b>Other officers who have provided input:</b>		
<b>Relevant Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) objectives(s):</b>		
<b>Stronger safeguarding</b> – With a key focus on ensuring that there are high standards of safeguarding across all agencies and that the Partnership takes a pro-active approach to the elimination of domestic violence.		✓
<b>Healthy living</b> – With a key focus on increasing the proportion of children and young people who have a healthy weight.		
<b>Reducing substance misuse</b> – Partnership work to lessen the impact on children of parental drug and alcohol misuse and to reduce drug and alcohol misuse amongst children and young people.		
<b>Raising attainment</b> – Raising the attainment levels and increasing engagement in employment, education and training.		
<b>Improving attendance</b> – Improving rates of attendance at both Primary and Secondary as a key foundation of improving outcomes.		
<b>Summary of issues:</b>		
<p>Following our unannounced three-week inspection of 'services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers' in March 2014, Ofsted Inspectors concluded that Nottingham children remain safe. The Council and Safeguarding Children Board received a judgement of 'Requires Improvement' in our first inspection under the new Ofsted framework.</p> <p>This report highlights some of the key areas of progress since the inspection and the areas requiring further development.</p>		
<b>Recommendations:</b>		
<b>1</b>	The Partnership notes the key areas of progress and areas requiring further development.	
<b>2</b>	The Partnership receives regular updates on the Improvement Action Plan.	

## 1. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

In March 2014 Ofsted inspected Nottingham City Council's services for children in need of help and protection; children looked after and care leavers (also known as the Single

Inspection). The inspection was unannounced and lasted for four weeks; inspectors met with managers, frontline workers and partners and they sampled a large number of case files to judge the quality of safeguarding practice in the City. The inspection also included a review of the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children's Board (NCSCB).

Their main findings were that, across all elements of the inspection framework, we 'required improvement' but they found no children to be 'unsafe' in the City. The inspection did not find any areas for priority and immediate action; however 26 key areas for improvement were identified.

In response to the key findings Nottingham City Council was asked to produce an Improvement Action Plan identifying each action and detailing what will be done to address it and by whom, some of these actions will be longer term programmes of work. This Improvement Action Plan was submitted to Ofsted in August 2014.

Since the inspection Nottingham City Council has actively engaged with Ofsted and we have worked with them to pilot 'Challenge Seminars' designed to help local authorities develop their improvement plans.

Since April 2014 we have worked to put in place strong qualitative and quantitative monitoring of the Improvement Action Plan and its impact on frontline practice. The main governance route is through the Children and Adults Leadership Team

### **Areas Progressing Well**

All 26 key areas identified as requiring improvement are being actioned and have themed work in progress to address them. Our key achievements over the last 12 months are around:

#### Leadership Team Delivery Plan

- The Recruitment and Retention Strategy for social workers has been developed, based on feedback from exit interviews and consultation with the social care workforce. Key actions will be delivered over the next few months.
- The IT system re-design went out to tender and 3 responses have been received from suppliers which means we're on track to introduce a new case management system for children's social care by March 2016.
- The Voice of the Child is now included within all templates.

#### Children's Social Care Delivery Plan

- SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) templates have been created for Care Plans and Supervision meetings and plans are now transitioning onto these new formats.
- Packages of support for Newly Qualified Social Workers have been improved.
- There has been a reduction in the number of unallocated Child in Need cases in social work team. We've continued to ensure that all unallocated children are seen and supported by qualified social workers and that work is overseen by Team Managers

#### Vulnerable Children and Families Delivery Plan

- The communication campaign around attendance in schools has been successful and secondary attendance has improved by an average of 2% over the autumn term which is 5661 extra school days over the term.

- The Priority Families Programme has expanded and is now an Early Adopter of the Phase 2 national Troubled Families Programme. This means that partners have targets to work with 3870 priority families between 2015-2020.

### Education Delivery Plan

- The remit of the Virtual School has been extended to support children in care over the age of 16 and additional capacity has been secured to ensure better tracking and monitoring for our looked after children.

### **Areas still in development**

There are a few areas within our Post Inspection Action Plan which are still in development and require more work to escalate activity, including:

1. Delivering a restructure of our Fostering & Adoption service.
2. Ensuring that all children's cases have an up to date chronology.
3. Ensuring that schools are informed about the role of the Virtual School and that data sharing agreements and protocols are in place around key city-wide issues like attendance and children missing education.
4. Refreshing our Family Support Strategy and Pathway, ensuring that we fully embed learning from the Priority Families programme and Signs of Safety roll-out.

The main reason for these delays has been due to the changes in directorate during the intervening period, particularly following the departure of the Director and Heads of Service within the Vulnerable Children and Adults service and following the re-structure of the Fostering and Adoption service. Our staffing structures have now stabilised and we are continuing to review and monitor areas for further improvement.

Although additional funding was made available to fund required improvements, budget constraints have also been a limitation, particularly given the announcement of further cuts. We are continuing to work hard to provide the essential services to safeguard and protect children and young people despite the financial challenges faced by the whole Council.

### **Next Steps**

Following development of the initial communication plan to share the lessons learnt during inspection, a refreshed and comprehensive Communications Plan will be launched at the 12 month anniversary to ensure that learning has been embedded. Areas of good practice will be promoted in April.

Early Help and Specialist locality teams are now working more closely together to aid the transition between the services.

We are inviting Ofsted to attend a meeting of our Leadership Team in June where we will be reviewing performance and progress around the Plan.

## **2. RISKS**

The inspection did not find any areas for priority and immediate action. The Improvement Action Plan is ensuring that all areas for improvement are addressed.

We have set out the risks and contingencies which will be followed to mitigate those risks.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

£383,500 was received corporately to assist with post inspection activity in addition to £4.5million for the new IT system. All other improvements have been made within existing budget allocations.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

To be scoped through the Improvement Action Plan.

### **5. CLIENT GROUP**

All children, young people and their families.

### **6. IMPACT ON EQUALITIES ISSUES**

The remit of the Ofsted Safeguarding Inspection is to ensure effective safeguarding of all children and young people in the City and to ensure that the specific needs of individual groups of children are addressed particularly where evidence of safeguarding risk or needs to support vulnerable families and children have been identified.

### **7. OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES AFFECTED**

**8.**

Stronger Safeguarding - With a key focus on ensuring that there are high standards of safeguarding across the entire department and Partnership.

### **9. CONTACT DETAILS**

Alison Michalska  
Corporate Director – Children and Adults  
✉ [alison.michalska@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:alison.michalska@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)  
☎ 0115 8763332

Amy Weir  
Chief Social Worker – Children's Social Care  
✉ [amy.weir@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:amy.weir@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

Michelle Roe  
Children and Adults Business Implementation Officer  
✉ [michelle.roe@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.roe@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)  
☎ 0115 8763422