



**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE - 13 NOVEMBER 2017**

**PROGRESS REPORT: OFSTED CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT  
ACTION PLAN 2017 - 2020 - THE ROAD TO EXCELLENCE**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY  
SERVICES**

**Purpose of report**

1. To inform the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee of progress made against the OFSTED Continuous Improvement Action Plan. The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and the progress made.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. At its meeting on 11 September 2017, the Committee received a report on the OFSTED Continuous Improvement Action Plan and supported the approval, by Cabinet, of the growth bid for Children and Family Services for £2.5m for the 2018/19 financial year. The Committee asked the Director of Children and Family Services submit a report to the next meeting of the Committee setting out details of timeframes and milestones related to the actions in the OFSTED Continuous Improvement Plan.

**Background**

3. The Single Inspection of Children's Social Care was undertaken in November 2016 and 17 recommendations were made for improvement. The resulting Action Plan - "The Road to Excellence" 2017 – 2020 was developed. This report outlines progress made against the Action Plan in addressing the recommendations made by OFSTED.
4. The Action Plan addresses the OFSTED's findings by providing a strategic vision for improvement that is founded on four aims:
  - i. Being a Learning Organisation
  - ii. Embedding Excellent Practice
  - iii. Taking the Right Action at the Right Time, and
  - iv. Developing Policy and Performance

The Action Plan and progress made against each OFSTED recommendation to date is attached at Appendix A.

5. Appendix A uses a RAG rating to indicate progress as follows:

- green – shows good progress and moving towards completion;
- amber – on track to deliver in a longer agreed timescale; and
- red – areas requiring further focused work.

The ratings provide a judgement of what evidence exists to demonstrate the departmental response to a recommendation, with some consideration given to the progress of planned actions. This evidence is largely taken from performance and business intelligence data and findings from quality assurance audits that are used together to monitor the progress of the Action Plan.

6. The summary of ratings is:

- 5 recommendations are rated Green
- 12 recommendations are rated Amber
- 0 recommendations are rated Red

The recommendations vary in scale and scope and therefore some areas, especially those that start at a lower baseline, require longer timescales to produce demonstrable evidence of improvement. Progress is monitored via a monthly meeting of senior and middle managers that is chaired by the Assistant Director of Children's Social Care.

7. **Highlights of progress are:**

- i) A review of all processes and procedures in First Response has been undertaken to ensure a timely and proportionate response to all children;
- ii) The level of Children in care with three or more placement moves has improved from 10.5% in September 2016 to 7.6% in September 2017;
- iii) 87% of children's cases that were audited in June 2017 were graded Good or Outstanding for management oversight;
- iv) The number of completed single assessments in September 2016 was 191 (90% were completed in 45 days). In September 2017, 390 assessments were completed (74.9% within 45 days). In real terms, this equates to 120 more assessments completed within timescale;
- v) The rate of re-referrals in September 2017 is 18.5% compared to 25.8% in September last year;
- vi) Published adoption scorecard measures on timeliness show:

- An average of 517 days from entering care to adoption; being less than the statistical neighbour average of 549;
  - An average of 195 days from court authority to place a child and the decision to match being less than the statistical neighbour average of 210;
- vii) The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) measure is in line with the England average at 16;
- viii) A refreshed Special Guardianship Order (SGO) process is now in place. In the last 12 months, 45 young people were discharged from care onto a SGO, an increase of 29 when compared to the point of inspection;
- ix) Care Leavers in suitable accommodation has sustained high performance at 91.8%, which is 11 percentage points above statistical neighbours;
- x) Around 37% of discharges from care have been a return home, which is better than both statistical neighbours and the England average;
- xi) Caseload sizes in many teams, e.g. First Response, Children in Care, Disabled Children Team and CSE are now all within agreed levels. Work is ongoing to address the situation in Child Protection and Strengthening Families teams.
- xii) The action plan attached as Appendix A outlines the progress made to date against all 17 OFSTED recommendations and the further planned work to achieve all targets as outlined in The Road to Excellence: Ofsted Continuous Improvement Plan 2017-2012.

### **Consultations**

8. In developing the Continuous Improvement Plan, the Children and Family Services Department has engaged with partner agencies, primarily through the Local Safeguarding Children's Board where partners were able to feed in their views on the Plan.

### **Resource Implications**

9. Resource implications of responding to the OFSTED inspection have already been agreed through the growth bid. These monies have been used to establish additional capacity across the service. The recruitment process is still ongoing so not all posts have been appointed to on a permanent basis.

## **Background Papers**

- The OFSTED report: Leicestershire Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers - November to December 2016 <http://ow.ly/16uB30gfp7d>
- The Road to Excellence (Plan on a Page).  
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s131466/Ofsted%20funding%20Appx%20A%20-%20Plan%20on%20a%20Page%20CIP.pdf>
- The Continuous Improvement OFSTED Action Plan.  
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s131466/Ofsted%20funding%20Appx%20B%20-%20Continuous%20Improvement%20Plan.pdf>

## **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

10. None.

## **Officer(s) to Contact**

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## **List of Appendices**

Appendix A – Progress against OFSTED recommendations as part of the OFSTED continuous Improvement action Plan 2017-2020- The Road to Excellence.

## **Equality and Human Rights Implications**

11. Responding to the findings of the OFSTED inspection will improve services for all groups of children and families.