

Oxfordshire County Council Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after, care leavers and the Review of the effectiveness of the local safeguarding children board.

Contact Officer:

Lucy Butler
Deputy Director Children's Social Care and Youth Offending Service

Purpose:

Members are asked to note the outcome of the recent Inspection. A short presentation of findings will be given by Lucy Butler.

Background:

During May this year Ofsted carried out an inspection of children's services in Oxfordshire. This Inspection has been thorough and wide-ranging, looking at around 180 different cases across all areas of work. Inspectors met with 27 young people, 11 parents and 2 carers. In addition, they have observed dozens of practice meetings and met with a very significant number of partner organisations.

The final judgement from Ofsted was published on 30th June. The outcome of our 4 week inspection is that Children's Services have been judged as Good in all six categories.

These include:

- Children who need help and protection
- Looked After Children
- Adoption
- Experiences and progress of Care Leavers
- Leadership, Management and Governance
- The Local Children's Safeguarding Board

The full report is attached but in summary inspectors said that we had significant strengths in that;

- Our children and young people are safe and protected.
- Social workers are compassionate and really care about the children and young people they work with.
- Achievements of children and young people are celebrated and social workers are really proud of those achievements.
- Staff are enthusiastic and knowledgeable, really know the children and young people they work with and speak about them with warmth.
- The voice of the child comes through in everything we do and we learn and develop our practice to take into account what we hear. We talk to our children and young people and really listen to them.

- Social Care and Early Intervention services are working well together.
- Parents feel really supported by step down arrangements - they are pleased with the support they have from Early Intervention when stepping down from statutory services.
- Thresholds are well used and responses are timely and proportionate.
- There is good management oversight and commitment and staff feel supported by their managers.
- Children and young people benefit from a stable, reliable workforce.
- We use creative and innovative approaches to our work.

There are, however, areas that the Inspectors have said need further development, including that;

- Parents need to be given more time to read and question reports prepared for Child Protection Conferences.
- There needs to be a greater range of available placements for young people who are looked after by the Authority.
- The educational outcomes for our looked after children needs to improve.
- Some of our governance arrangements need to improve.

Submission of the post inspection Action Plan to address the areas for improvement is Monday 6th October 2014.