
Children's Services and Education Inspection findings

Reason for the Report

1. The Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee's terms of reference require that the Committee receive all relevant Children's Services inspection reports.
2. The terms of reference also require that the committee seek to ensure that the life chances of Looked After Children, Children in Need and care leavers are maximised in terms of educational attainment.
3. The attached Children's Services and Education inspection reports are submitted to the Committee accordingly.

Background

4. The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) undertook an inspection of Children's Services in January 2016. The inspection report was published on the 23rd of March 2016.
5. Inspectors looked at the City Council's access arrangements for children and young people and their families for care and support, or where information was received about children's wellbeing. The inspection included reviewing the effectiveness of the interface between preventative and statutory provision.
6. The inspection centred around five themes: Providing Direction; Delivering Social Services; Shaping Services; Access Arrangements; Assessment Care Management.
7. The inspectorate found significant improvement since its last inspection in 2014 and the report made recommendations to ensure that improvement continues.

8. In particular, the inspectors noted:

“Children in need of protection receive a timely & effective service to keep them safe”

- Strong corporate & elected member support
- Partners well engaged & effective interagency working
- Clear strategic direction
- Staff confidence in leadership
- Improving recruitment and retention Picture
- Morale positive
- Performance management embedded
- Well prepared for SSWB Act

9. This inspection provides a strong platform to build on our improvement journey and above all the message that children in need of protection receive a timely and effective service to keep them safe provides reassurance to everyone.

10. As with all inspections, there are recommendations which we welcome and have incorporated in to our business plan. These are:

- Focus on delivery of early help strategy
- Accommodation for agile working
- Engage staff in next phase of social work re-modelling
- Implement quality assurance framework
- Review Domestic Abuse services
- Strengthen focus of children’s plans on outcomes
- Better capture of children’s views
- Strengthen access & signposting

11. Work is already underway to address these recommendations, for example, the quality assurance framework was implemented in quarter one and there is now an established quality assurance task group leading on the quality assurance audit cycles for the year ahead. Similarly, work on the implementation of the

early help strategy is well underway with the JAFF (Joint Assessment Family Framework) Early Help assessment tool established which is currently being piloted in some schools and the MASH is now operational.

12. The full CSSIW Inspection report is attached at **Appendix A**.

13. Estyn undertook a monitoring visit during the period 25th – 29th January 2016. Cardiff Council is now judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations that arose from the monitoring visit in February 2014. As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales considers that the authority is no longer in need of significant improvement and is removing it from any follow-up activity. The only reference to Looked After Children in the letter is under the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) agenda where the trainee programme for looked after children is highlighted. It noted that it was too early to judge the impact of this scheme on the outcomes and destinations of looked after children.

14. The Estyn Inspection report is attached at **Appendix B**.

Financial Implications

15. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

16. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

17. The Committee is recommended to note the content of the attached reports.

TONY YOUNG

Director of Social Services

13 July 2016