

Children First Improvement

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Children & Young People's Services Select Committee - Overview

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Workforce Update

July update

- The vacancy gap has reduced from 18.5% in February to 7% in July;
- The Recruitment and Retention offer has been taken up by 85% of eligible staff;
- 75 fte agency social workers are in post to fill the remaining vacancy gap and support reduction of caseloads;
- Initiative for newly qualified social workers is demonstrating effectiveness, with fresh intake of 41 NQSWs; 7 new Apprentice Social Workers have also been recruited;
- Good progress on management of sickness and other long-term staff absence.

Going forwards

- Planning for further recruitment to maintain the vacancy rate at less than 10%;
- Further improving induction and supervision arrangements;
- Measures to ensure that staff can develop their professional skills;
- Ensuring that social workers receive adequate administrative support.



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Improvement Progress June - July

Foster to Adopt (Ofsted recommendation 6)

- Foster to adopt carers filmed to promote the scheme over June-August, to be uploaded to the website.
- Foster to adopt workshop now part of prospective adopters programme.
- Two foster to adopt families approved.
- Links with new Pre-Birth Team to support early identification of foster to adopt placements.

Pre-birth work (Ofsted recommendation 6)

- All assessments allocated.
- Early care planning in evidence (e.g. 2 x cases escalated to legal process at 22 weeks).
- Improved quality of assessments.



Improvement Progress June - July

MASH (Ofsted recommendation 1)

- Development of online referral form in conjunction with adults services.
- Review of contacts that result in no further action (including benchmarking exercise).

Practice Improvement (Ofsted recommendation 1)

- Practice Standards agreed
- Induction guidance reviewed and updated

CLA (Ofsted recommendations 4,6,7,11 and 12)

- Health task and finish group in place
- Training on education for CLA in place
- Stable workforce established (no SW vacancies)
- 91% of CLA visits on time (June 19)



Corporate Parenting – Education of Children Looked After



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Practice Improvement Plan

- Post inspection action plan required by Department for Education.
- Reflects the 12 areas that need to improve, as identified by Ofsted.
- It is 'our plan' governed by the Improvement Board and adopted by the County Council.
- Sets out actions and impact for the areas that need to improve.
- Plan has been developed following consultation with staff and partners.



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Improvement Planning Framework

The overall improvement planning framework for West Sussex County Council Children's Services can be described in three levels

1. Strategy for Children

- Sets out our ambitions for children in West Sussex.
- A partnership undertaking - holistic plan to improve outcomes for children.
- Provide every child in the county with the *Best Start in Life*.

2. Practice Improvement Plan

- Submitted to DfE and reviewed by Ofsted - aligns with 12 identified areas that 'need to improve'.
- Developed with staff and partners, building on corporate work.
- Currently consulting stakeholders.

3. Children First Programme

- Key implementation mechanism required to deliver the improvement.
- Changing practice, workforce, leadership, operating model and business processes, technology, multi-agency working.
- All Children's Services improvement falls under this Programme.



Commissioner Review

- Review started in July.
- Commissioner meetings underway.
- Team of Hampshire colleagues assessing our services and developing joint approach for improvement.
- Report completed by 30th September for DfE.
- Invitation to John Coughlan to attend September / October Improvement Board meeting.

Ofsted update

- Action Planning Meeting 2nd July.
- Endorsement of 'Children First' approach.
- First monitoring visit confirmed for the week beginning the 25th November.
- Subject focus to be agreed in September.

