



Northumberland

County Council

COMMITTEE: AUDIT

DATE: 22 MAY, 2019

REVIEW OF EXTERNAL INSPECTION REPORTS – ADULTS & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Report of Cath Mcevoy-Carr, Executive Director of Adults Social Care and Children's Services

Cabinet Members: Councillors Veronica Jones and Wayne Daley

1. Purpose of report

To inform Audit Committee members of the findings from external inspections that have taken place in the last 6 months (1st October 2018 to 31st March 2019) pertaining to Adults and Children's Services, and to provide assurance that the resulting reports are receiving due scrutiny.

2. Recommendations

Members note the findings and assess the effectiveness of the scrutiny arrangements.

3. Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the Living, Learning and Thriving corporate priorities.

4. Key issues

- All inspected services remain compliant in Adults social care. All Short term support services are judged Outstanding, and all other establishments are judged Good.
- Our five residential homes for children and young people including our National Secure Children's Home continue to be judged as Good or better.

- In relation to school inspections that took place in this period, the overall impact is that Ofsted has judged 86% of primary schools as Good or Outstanding up to the end of March 2019, which is just below the national average (87%), but a 1% increase on the September 2018 figure. The proportion in the secondary school sector is lower, 61% compared with 75% nationally.
- Northumberland received its local area SEND (special education needs and disabilities) inspection between 1st October and 5th October, 2018. As a result, we were required to produce a Written Statement of Action (WSOA), as has been the case for 7 out of 8 local areas within the region.
- The vast majority of early years provision in Northumberland continues to be judged by Ofsted as Good or better (96%), equal to the national average.

5. Background

The report focuses on external inspection activity in Adults and Children's Services between October 2018 and March 2019. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspects Adults' provision and Ofsted inspects Children's provision, apart from the Youth Offending Service which is inspected by the HMIP (Probation inspectorate). The report identifies the outcome judgements of the inspections and assurance that appropriate actions are being taken in response to any recommendations. The full inspection reports are available on request.

Adult Care CQC inspection status

The table below lists the services inspected by CQC. NHFT (Northumbria Healthcare Foundation Trust) manages adult social care services on behalf of the Council with several shared management posts in place. All inspected services remain compliant in Adults social care. All Short term support services (STSS) are judged Outstanding, and all other establishments are judged Good.

Table 1

Provider	Judgement	Provider	Judgement
Chibburn Court	Good	STSS - Central/SE	Outstanding
Sea Lodge	Good	STSS - Alnwick	Outstanding
Tynedale Hse	Good (with Caring Outstanding)	STSS - Berwick	Outstanding
Shared Lives	Good	STSS - West	Outstanding
Hatfield Chase	Good (with Caring Outstanding)		

All recommendations arising from these inspections are supported with an action plan and monitoring reports are scrutinised by senior managers and arm's length Governance staff.

Children's Services

This report features four types of inspections in Children's services: the Council's residential homes for children; schools; SEND and early years.

Children's residential homes Ofsted inspection status

Ofsted's and the Council's aim is that all children and young people deserve to live in children's homes that are judged Outstanding or at least Good. At the 31st March 2019, all of the Council's residential homes for children and young people were judged to be Good or Outstanding. Phoenix House and Kylee House secure unit were inspected in the summer, and Coanwood, Barndale and Thorndale within this period; Coanwood being judged Good with Outstanding leadership, Barndale and Thorndale, again, judged as Outstanding across the board. All council-run open children's residential homes are judged to have Outstanding leadership. These are excellent outcomes.

As well as meeting regulatory standards, the homes demonstrate well that they consider and act upon feedback from the children and young people. The model used is the Pillars of Parenting approach (more details of which are available on request).

For all children's homes, there are action plans in place to respond to any recommendations or areas for improvement identified from the inspections. These actions and the progress against them are updated by the Registered Managers and shared with the Performance team. Where appropriate, there is internal challenge to assess if the areas for improvement are sufficiently addressed by the action plans. Where progress has not been sufficiently timely, challenges and agreed changes have been made by the service to meet recommendations accordingly.

Safeguarding

There were no children's safeguarding inspections or focused visits in the period. However, we did submit a self assessment as part of the Annual Engagement process with Ofsted, and a copy of the resulting letter is in the appendix. In addition, an Improvement Plan is in place and was last reported to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny committee in April - a copy is available on the Council's web page.

School inspections

In relation to school inspections, 85% of pupils were in primary schools judged as Good or Outstanding at their most recent Ofsted inspection by 31st March 2019. In real terms, this works out as 18,067 pupils out of a cohort of 21,285.

This compares to a national average of 86%. There have been 15 published primary school inspection reports between 01/09/18 – 31/03/19. Of those, all were judged to be Good, a trajectory that is bringing Northumberland much closer to the national average, Ofsted do monitoring visits for primary schools that are judged to be Requires Improvement or inadequate and there have been none so far in the current school year. All new academies now keep their previous inspection result. Targets are under review and will strike a balance between ambition and what can reasonably be achieved. Overall, the key point is that the judgements for recently-inspected primary schools have improved and Northumberland's figure is now much closer to the national average.

It is the prime responsibility of the governing bodies and head teachers of those schools to deliver on improvements. The Council commissions School Improvement Partners (SIPs) to monitor and challenge those schools to improve, one of the products being a termly SIP visit report which includes what judgement they conclude the school would receive if they were inspected at that point. Members should note that periods between inspections range from 18 months to 3 years therefore statistics of this nature are slow to change and short term trend patterns difficult to identify.

With regards the proportion of children attending a secondary school judged Good or Outstanding, the figure of 66% is better than the regional average (62%), but is below the national average of 80%. In real terms, the Northumberland figure works out as 14537 pupils in secondary schools judged to be Good or Outstanding, out of a cohort of 22070. There have been 5 published secondary and middle school inspection reports between 01/09/18 – 31/03/19. Of these, 0 were judged to be Outstanding, 4 to be good, 1 to be Requires Improvement and 0 to be Inadequate. 3 schools that had been judged to Require Improvement previously received a Section 8 monitoring visit, 1 school has been judged not to be taking effective action, while 2 have.

As well as the actions outlined for primary schools, Members should note the task of turning round this pattern of under-achievement will take at least 3 years based upon Ofsted inspection schedules. The multi academy trusts that have incorporated NCC grade 4 (ie Inadequate-rated) schools continue to put in place strategies to review performance of pupils.

There are 5 Northumberland schools who are currently graded as Good by Ofsted who are at risk of not maintaining that grade at their next inspection. This is due to a range of individual factors including the quality of some of their key outcomes and for some schools, the capacity of leadership. All are making improvements which we hope will be recognised by Ofsted at their visit. All 5 schools are receiving additional support from the LA central teams and are part of the LA priority group.

14 Northumberland maintained schools currently Require Improvement, of those 4 have received monitoring visits and were deemed by Ofsted to be 'Taking

effective actions'. Of the 10 awaiting monitoring visits, 9 are expected to be judged as 'Taking effective actions'.

There are 7 Academies that Require improvement, of those 1 has received a monitoring visit and was deemed by Ofsted to not be 'Taking effective actions', whilst 2 were deemed to be 'Taking effective action'. There are 3 inadequate schools which are already Academies, whilst 1 school which was due to become an Academy has had its Academy order revoked.

Academies are not in the control of the Local Authority and therefore the LA cannot intervene to drive forward improvement. There are currently 40 academies in Northumberland and this figure is set to grow.

There are currently 133 'Good or Outstanding' schools in Northumberland.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Northumberland received its local area SEND (special education needs and disabilities) inspection between 1st October and 5th October, 2018. As a result, we were required to produce a Written Statement of Action (WSOA), as has been the case for 7 out of 8 local areas within the region.

The inspection resulted in the need for improvement in 3 key areas:

- Weaknesses in the local area's arrangements for jointly planning, commissioning and providing the services children and young people with SEND and their families need
- The graduated response to identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND is not embedded in mainstream primary and secondary schools
- The poor outcomes achieved by children and young people with SEND and weaknesses in successfully preparing them for their adult lives.

A copy of the full WSOA can be found on the Local Offer web page and here:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Child-Families/SEND/Northumberland-Written-Statement-Of-Action-Plan-12-03-19.pdf>

Ofsted and the CQC notified us that they judged the WSOA to be fit for purpose with well thought-through actions.

Progress is monitored every month and reported to the SEND Strategic Board, which has parent carer and elected member representation. In addition, it is scrutinised by the Department for Education and NHS England every 3 months, to ensure Northumberland's progress is on track. The first monitoring meeting following the submission of the WSOA is on 10th June.

Early Years Inspections

Services such as nurseries and childminders are inspected by Ofsted. 96% of Northumberland's providers are graded Good or better by Ofsted, equal to the national average. 75% of children were 'school ready' in 2018 (above the national average). 480 Ofsted registered settings deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage to 0-5 year olds and 333 deliver funded education of which 195 are PVI's (private voluntary and independent) settings and 125 are schools. 958 2 year olds and 3115 3/4 year olds have accessed their funded entitlements.

6. Implications

Policy	Raising standards in social care and education are Council priorities.
Finance and value for money	None
Legal	None
Procurement	None
Human Resources	Regulatory inspections of residential homes assess compliance with HR policies.
Property	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	None
Risk Assessment	Audit Committee reviewing a schedule of incoming inspection reports mitigates the risk of the council not taking appropriate action in respect of such issues. It also improves the governance framework.
Crime & Disorder	None
Customer Consideration	Ensuring that external inspections are properly followed up will provide assurance to customers that service weaknesses are being addressed.
Carbon reduction	None
Wards	All

7. Background papers:

Care Quality Commission inspection reports; Ofsted inspection reports; NCC Overview and Scrutiny reports

8. Report sign off

Officers	
Monitoring Officer / Legal	Liam Henry
Executive Director of Adults Social Care and Children's Services	Cath Mcevoy-Carr
Portfolio Holder(s)	Wayne Daley / Veronica Jones

9. Author and Contact Details

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