



Northumberland

County Council

COMMITTEE: AUDIT

DATE: 27TH SEPTEMBER 2023

Review Of External Inspection Reports – Adult Social Care and Children’s Services

Report of Cabinet Members: Guy Renner-Thompson and Wendy Pattison.

Lead Officers: Audrey Kingham, Executive Director of Children, Young People and Education and Neil Bradley, Executive Director of Adults, Ageing and Well being

1. Purpose of Report

To inform Members of the activity pertaining to Adults Social Care and Children's Services regarding external inspections and associated actions. This covers the period from 1st January 2023 to 30th June 2023.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended:

1. To assess the effectiveness of the actions the Council takes in response to external inspections, and confirm an assurance that the Council is taking appropriate action in respect of any issues.

3. Link to Corporate Plan

This report relates to the Tackling Inequalities priority of the Corporate Plan.

4. Key issues

- Northumberland's residents are protected, cared for and supported by services that external bodies judge to be good on the whole, and where they fall below that, the Council acts promptly where it is within its powers.
- 86.7% of all Northumberland-based Adults Social Care providers were rated as Good or Outstanding at the end of June 2023, a small increase from the position in the last report (84.8% at end of December 2022). Section 5.1 describes what actions are taken when the Care Quality Commission (CQC) judges provision as being less than Good. Northumberland is performing above the equivalent national figure where 83.3% of services with a rating are Good or Outstanding.

- Inspections of children’s residential homes have continued and there has been 1 inspection during the period. All 5 units are judged to be Good or better, with Kylee secure unit judged as Outstanding on all criteria when it was inspected in the autumn. Section 5.2.1 describes what actions are taken when Ofsted moves a provision from Outstanding to Good.
- The Council’s Youth Justice Service was inspected in April by Her Majesty’s Probation Inspectorate. With an overall judgement of Good, three areas were singled out as Outstanding. Section 5.2.2 details what actions are being followed up by the service.
- Inspections of schools recommenced in the summer term of 2021 and the findings have been positive overall, leading to an increase in the proportion judged Good or Outstanding. 93% of Northumberland’s schools are judged by Ofsted to be Good or Outstanding compared to 89% nationally. Section 5.2.3 describes the actions that have been implemented in the one inspection during the period where Ofsted downgraded their judgement of a school.
- Inspections of early years providers continue, and the vast majority are judged to be Good or Outstanding (97%), similar to the national average. Section 5.2.4 describes what actions are taken when Ofsted judges provision to be less than Good.
- Preparation for the new Area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) inspection and Adult Learning inspections continues.

5. Background

The report focuses on inspection activity undertaken by the CQC and Ofsted between January 2023 and June 2023.

5.1 Adult Social Care CQC inspection status

86.7% of all Northumberland-based Adults Social Care providers were rated as Good or Outstanding at the end of June 2023, compared to 84.8% at the end of December 2022.

The table overleaf describes the new registration and published inspection activity that has taken place between January and June 2023. It provides the detail of what settings / services have been inspected so that Elected Members can see where the changes have taken place.

Where ratings have deteriorated from Good to Requires Improvement, the local authority is working with the management of the settings to implement the actions required. This involves Council officers working to support the provider on whatever the issues are that have led to the deterioration in rating. This can be any one of the five domains that CQC inspects although the management of the home and the assessment of whether it is ‘well led’ is the most common area for care homes to struggle with compliance.

Where a service has been rated Inadequate, the volume and complexity of issues requires more intensive and prolonged officer input. It may also require the Council to restrict new placements into a service for safety reasons and to ensure the service can direct resources to rectifying problems. In the case of the two services that were

rated inadequate at the time of the last report, one of these has improved its rating to “Requires Improvement” and we anticipate that the recent inspection of the other service rated Inadequate will have the same outcome although the report was to be published after 30th June which was the cut-off date for this report.

The work of Council teams and colleagues in the NHS aimed at improving overall quality results is achieving positive results and we can see improvements where the work has been put in to rectify adverse ratings. Council officers continue to monitor services proactively and to provide overall support to the market to maintain positive ratings, although these are independent organisations operated and controlled by their

CQC-registered locations in Northumberland - changed registration or with an inspection published January-June 2023

Status	Location Name	Location Primary Inspection Category	Publication Date	Location Local Authority	Location Latest Overall Rating (June 2023)	Location Latest Overall Rating (December 2022)
Changed	Hartford Court	Residential social care	04/02/2023	Northumberland	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Birkinshaw Manor	Residential social care	17/02/2023	Northumberland	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	The Grange Nursing Home	Residential social care	29/03/2023	Northumberland	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Woodhorn Park	Residential social care	18/02/2023	Northumberland	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Cambian Dilston College	Residential social care	24/03/2023	Northumberland	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Ponteland Manor Care Home	Residential social care	05/01/2023	Northumberland	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Crofton Court	Residential social care	16/03/2023	Northumberland	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Helping Hands - West Northumberland	Community based adult social care services	24/02/2023	Northumberland	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Aurora Home Care Ltd	Community based adult social care services	23/05/2023	Northumberland	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Dene Grange Care Home	Residential social care	18/03/2023	Northumberland	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	East Riding Care Home	Residential social care	24/06/2023	Northumberland	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Changed	Albury House	Residential social care	06/04/2023	Northumberland	Requires improvement	Good
Changed	Elpha Lodge Residential Care Home	Residential social care	20/05/2023	Northumberland	Requires improvement	Outstanding
Changed	Chasedale Care Home	Residential social care	09/06/2023	Northumberland	Requires improvement	Good
Changed	Astor Lodge	Residential social care	09/02/2023	Northumberland	Requires improvement	Good
Changed	The Oaks Care Home	Residential social care	30/03/2023	Northumberland	Requires improvement	Good
Changed	Victoria House	Residential social care	25/01/2023	Northumberland	Requires improvement	Good
Changed	Havendene Residential Home	Residential social care	26/01/2023	Northumberland	Requires improvement	Good
Newly published	Beresford Lodge Residential Care Home	Residential social care	25/02/2023	Northumberland	Good	
Newly published	Sphere Specialist Healthcare	Community based adult social care services	04/03/2023	Northumberland	Good	
Newly registered	TC Care Global Ltd	Community based adult social care services		Northumberland		
Deregistered	Walby Hill (Adult Care Home)	Residential social care	06/08/2021	Northumberland		Good
Deregistered	Chibburn Court	Residential social care	16/02/2018	Northumberland		Good
Deregistered	The Grange	Community based adult social care services	26/02/2020	Northumberland		Good
Deregistered	Eleanor Nursing and Social Care Ltd - Northumberland	Community based adult social care services	07/09/2022	Northumberland		Good
Unchanged	Northumbria Supported Living Service	Community based adult social care services	30/06/2023	Northumberland	Good	Good
Unchanged	Chester Court	Residential social care	09/02/2023	Northumberland	Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Unchanged	Abbeyfield House - Alnwick	Residential social care	06/05/2023	Northumberland	Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Unchanged	Alexandra Park	Residential social care	10/05/2023	Northumberland	Inadequate	Inadequate
Unchanged	Scarbrough Court	Residential social care	29/06/2023	Northumberland	Good	Good
Unchanged	Bridge View	Residential social care	04/05/2023	Northumberland	Good	Good
Unchanged	Dolphin View Care Home	Residential social care	06/04/2023	Northumberland	Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Unchanged	Wansbeck Care Home	Residential social care	13/06/2023	Northumberland	Good	Good

Source: CQC Active Locations register dated 01 January 2023/ 01 July 2023
(available at <https://www.cqc.org.uk/about-us/transparency/using-cqc-data#directory>)

own managers. The recruitment and retention of staff in social care services continues to cause challenges and is a significant drain on provider resources and the Council continues to support with local and national initiatives to resolve this although it remains a problem throughout the country. There have been some signs of the situation improving since April 2023 although there remain concerns that recruitment and retention problems have not been resolved at a structural level.

5.1.1 Local authority-managed inspected services

SERVICE	DATE LAST INSPECTED	INSPECTION OUTCOME
Hatfield Chase	15.6.22	Requires Improvement
Sea Lodge	14.11.18 31.8.22 (targeted inspection for safe and well led)	Good Inspected but not rated. No areas for concern identified
Shared Lives	9.5.18	Good
Tynedale House	4.12.19 9.12.20 (Focused Visit)	Overall Outstanding Good practice in Infection, Prevention & Control (IPC)
STSS - Alnwick	20.12.18	Overall Outstanding
STSS - Berwick	27.6.17 18.2.20 19.7.23 (targeted inspection for safe and well led)	Overall Outstanding Inspected but unable to complete due to COVID restrictions – will be re-inspected at some point No areas of concern identified – report awaited
STSS – South / Central	29.8.17	Overall Outstanding
STSS - West	4.7.17 31.7.23 (targeted inspection for safe and well led)	Overall Outstanding No areas of concern identified – report awaited

The CQC now have their 5 pilot sites for local authority inspections:

- Birmingham City Council
- Lincolnshire County Council
- North Lincolnshire Council
- Nottingham City Council
- Suffolk County Council

They will be using the single assessment framework. They will also be undertaking case tracking as part of the pilots which will retrospectively follow the pathway of a small number of case files to gather evidence for the assessment. A small team led by the Deputy Director of Local Authority Assessment Delivery, has been appointed to undertake the pilots.

For each local authority in the pilot, they will provide a report and indicative scores for all the quality statements and an overall rating, though these will not be formal ratings. Any learning from the pilots will inform the formal assessments which will start later from September 2023.

Feedback / learning from the first pilot site assessment (Nottingham City Council) was due to be given to the Assurance Group of the NEADASS on 29th August 2023.

The CQC have also confirmed the two pilot areas for Integrated Care Systems to be assessed later in this summer are:

- Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System
- Dorset Integrated Care System

As part of their monitoring approach the CQC carried out a review on 4th May 2023 of the data available to them about the following services: North STSS (Short Term Support Service) Alnwick; North STSS Berwick; Northumberland Supported Living Service; Shared Lives Northumberland; Southeast STSS; Tynedale House; West STSS Hexham. They found no evidence that they need to carry out an inspection or reassess the rating of each of the services.

Due to the fact that there had been no face to face contact for 5 years, two of our short term support services have received a targeted inspection around the Safe and Well Led domains (Berwick STSS on 19th July 2023 and West STSS on 31st July 2023). Both services received positive informal feedback with no cause for concern. The reports are yet to be received; therefore, these will be reported on at the next committee meeting.

5.2 Children's Services

This report features several types of inspection activity in Children's services: notably the Council's residential homes for children; the inspection of the Youth Justice Service; schools and early years provision.

5.2.1 Children's residential homes

All local authority-managed children's residential homes continue to be rated Good or better by Ofsted. Barndale House short break unit was inspected in January and was rated as Good.

HOME	JUDGEMENT	COMMENTS
KYLOE	Outstanding (prev Good)	Judged Outstanding on all criteria Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's education and learning outstanding Children's health outstanding How well children and young people are helped and protected The effectiveness of leaders and managers
BARNDALE	Good (prev Outstanding)	At the most recent inspection there were no Recommendations or Requirements. When asked why the home was no longer judged as "Outstanding", the response was that it was due to the shared space and the building's appearance preventing a homely environment.
COANWOOD	Good (prev Good)	During this reporting period our open residential homes have experienced staffing shortages. Therefore, their ability to maintain a Good judgement is testament to the resilience, skills and commitment of our staff teams.
PHOENIX	Good (prev Requires Improvement)	
THORNDALE	Good (prev Outstanding)	

With regards to Barndale the issue preventing it from being rated Outstanding was due to the building/environment not being homely with acknowledgement that this would be difficult due to the use of a school building. The service is currently working on a development plan to obtain a different building which will offer a more homely environment. All of our four other homes have completed any requirements or recommendations from previous inspections and at the end of June, we were awaiting our annual visits*, which will take place prior to 31st March 2024.

*Thorndale received its inspection in August with the report yet to be published and Kylee House secure unit received a monitoring visit in August, again yet to be published.

5.2.2. Youth Justice Service

The Council's Youth Justice Service was inspected in April by His Majesty's Probation Inspectorate. With an overall judgement of Good, three areas were singled out in July's report as "outstanding", one of these being the ambition, commitment and young person-centred approach of our staff, partners and leaders. There were two actions arising from the inspection:

- a. Ensure that the voice of children and their parents and carers is more robustly heard and utilised at strategic decision-making level
- b. Forensically analyse and segment out-of-court data, use findings to identify what works well, and utilise this to influence strategic and operational practice.

Progress on these actions will be monitored through the multi-agency Youth Justice Management Board.

5.2.3 Future Children's Social Care Inspection activity

It is anticipated that the next activity under the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services framework (ILACS) will be in the form of a full inspection of the Council's Children's Services which will involve 5 days preparation following notification and then 5 days of fieldwork. Prior to this, Children's Services volunteered to participate in a

joint Ofsted and CQC thematic review of services that support 0-2 year olds. Due to the timing of the report's submission, a verbal update on the findings of that review will be provided at the committee meeting itself.

5.2.4 SCHOOL INSPECTIONS

Between 1st January and 30th June 2023, 32 inspections took place. Schools that have no previous grade have academised since their last inspection.

Primary/First schools:

	Previous Grade	Current Grade	Report
Croftway Academy	-	Outstanding	Here
Greenhead C of E Primary School	Good	Good	Here
Red Row First School	Good	Good	Here
Seghill First School	Good	Good	Here
Malvin's Close Academy	-	Outstanding	Here
Belford Primary School	Good	Good	Here
Shilbottle Primary School	RI	Good	Here

Burnside Primary School	Good	Good	Here
Haltwhistle Primary Academy	-	Outstanding	Here
Hareside Primary School	Good	Good	Here
Wark Primary School	Good	Good	Here
Seahouses Primary School	Good	Good	Here
Whittingham Primary School	Good	Good	Here
Branton Primary School	Good	Good	Here
Tritlington C of E Primary School	RI	Good	Here
Acomb First School	Good	Good	Here
Ponteland Primary School	-	Good	Here
Henshaw Primary School	Good	Good	Here
NCEA Warkworth C of E Primary School	-	Good	Here

Ellingham C of E Primary School	Good	Good	Here
Stead Lane Primary School	Good	Good	Here
Heddon on the Wall Primary School	Good	Good	Here
Bellingham Primary School	Good	Good	to follow
Horton Grange Primary School	Good	Outstanding	to follow
Tweedmouth Prior Park First School	RI	Good	to follow

The overall figure for the percentage of first/primary schools judged by Ofsted as Good or Outstanding was 95.9% at the end of June 2023, which is above the national average of 90%. This equates to 118 / 123 schools. None of the First / Primary schools inspected in the period were judged to be less than Good, nor downgraded.

Secondary/High schools:

	Previous Grade	Current Grade	Report
St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy	RI	Good	Here
Berwick Middle School	Good	Good	Here
Ponteland High School	Good	Good	Here
NCEA Duke's Secondary School	Inadequate	RI	Here
Bede Academy	Good	Good	to follow

The overall figure for the percentage of secondary schools judged by Ofsted as Good or Outstanding was 86.7% at the end of June 2023, which is above the national average of 81%. This equates to 26 / 30 schools. Academies, such as NCEA Duke's, are not in the control of the Local Authority and therefore the Local Authority cannot intervene easily to drive forward improvement. However, we offer the same level of support to academies as maintained schools should they wish to accept it.

Special Schools:

	Previous Grade	Current Grade	Report
Emily Wilding Davison School	RI	Inadequate	Here
Hexham Priory School	-	Outstanding	Here

The overall figure for the percentage of special schools judged by Ofsted as Good or Outstanding was 80% at the end of June 2023. This equates to 8 / 10 schools (including the Pupil Referral Unit).

A School Improvement Board has been instigated at Emily Wilding Davison School. LA (Local Authority) staff, governors and the school leadership team meet monthly to drive improvements forward. It is clear that the school is already much improved since January when it was inspected.

5.2.5 EARLY YEARS EDUCATION & CHILDCARE

25 graded Ofsted inspections of early years and childcare providers in Northumberland were carried out between 1st January and 30th June 2023. Of these:

- 10 were inspections of childminder settings,
 - 2 Outstanding;
 - 7 Good;
 - 1 Requires Improvement.
- 15 private, voluntary or independent (PVI) group settings were inspected,
 - 2 Outstanding;
 - 11 Good;
 - 2 Requires Improvement.

All providers receiving a less than Good judgement have been supported by the Early Years Team to address highlighted issues.

To date, 97% of the total number of early years and childcare providers in Northumberland are judged as being Good or better and this is in line with the all-England figure of 97%. This figure equates to 169 out of 174 inspected providers.

5.2.6 SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

The new Area-wide inspection framework was released by Ofsted in November, 2022. It has been shaped by the pilot that Northumberland participated in back in March 2022. It is a graded inspection that focuses on the lived experience of children and young people with SEND, and their families. Two areas within the north east region have been inspected under this framework, namely Hartlepool and Gateshead. Preparation of the documents required for the inspection is underway and overseen through the SEND Partnership Board.

5.2.7 ADULT LEARNING SERVICE

Northumberland's Adult Learning Service is expecting its inspection soon. It will be a graded inspection that will judge Overall effectiveness, as well as 8 sub domains, namely: quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; leadership and management; education programmes for young people; adult learning programmes; apprenticeships; and provision for learners with high needs. The grading at the previous inspection in 2018 was Good.

6. Implications

Policy	Raising standards in social care and education are Council priorities.
Finance and value for money	None
Legal	<p>The committee's terms of reference state that it has a function to consider the Council's framework of assurance and ensure that it adequately addresses the risks and priorities of the Council. The results of external inspections are an independent view on an aspect of the County Council's framework of governance and the external inspections referenced in this report are included in the Annual Governance Statement which this committee reviewed in January.</p> <p>Inspections are carried out under the legislative framework set out in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For educational provisions section 5 of the Education Act 2005, section 125 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, and Childcare Act 2006. 2. For Adult Social Care under the Care Quality Commission regulatory framework. 3. For Children's Social Care under the Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) regulatory framework.
Procurement	None
Human Resources	Regulatory inspections assess compliance with HR (Human Resources) policies.
Property	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A x	N/A. No groups could be disadvantaged as a result of this report.
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.
Crime & Disorder	None.

Customer Consideration	Ensuring that external inspections are properly followed up provides assurance that service weaknesses are being addressed. Northumberland's residents are protected, cared for and supported by services that external bodies judge to be Good on the whole, and where they fall below that, the Council acts promptly where it is within its powers.
Carbon reduction	More meetings are taking place virtually and hence the need to travel is less.
Health and wellbeing	Inspections take health and wellbeing into account when making judgements about their findings.
Wards	All

7. Background Papers

Care Quality Commission Active Locations Register
NCC (Northumberland County Council) list of school inspections
His Majesty's Probation Inspectorate – Youth Justice Service Inspection Report

8. Report Sign Off

Director of Law and Corporate Governance (Monitoring Officer)	Neil Masson obo Stephen Gerrard
Executive Director of Resources & Transformation [Section 151 Officer]	Jan Willis
Executive Director of Children, Young People and Education	Audrey Kingham
Executive Director of Adult, Ageing and Well being	Neil Bradley
Chief Executive	Helen Paterson
Cabinet Member (s) Councillor Wendy Pattison – Adults' Wellbeing Councillor Guy Renner-Thompson – Children and Young People	Wendy Pattison and Guy Renner-Thompson

9. Author and Contact Details

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