

COMMITTEE: AUDIT

DATE: 26 JANUARY 2022

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 Wendy Pattison and Guy Renner-Thompson

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 July 2021 to 31st December 2021.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended:

- a. To acknowledge the findings
- b. To 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

- € 87.3% of all Northumberland-based Adults Social Care providers were rated as Good or Outstanding at the end of December 2021, an improvement on the position in the last report (June 2021). The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is developing its monitoring approach with a focus on infection prevention and those providers currently graded as Requires Improvement.
- € Inspections of children's residential homes have continued and there has been an interim inspection of Kyoeloe House secure unit, where satisfactory progress was found. Publication of December's inspection of Barndale House is awaited.

- € 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 in both the primary and secondary sectors (92% and 70%, respectively).
- € Inspections of early years providers continue, and the vast majority are judged to be Good or Outstanding (97%), similar to the national average.
- € The multi-agency action plan resulting from the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) has now been signed off by the Northumberland Safeguarding Children Committee.

5. Background

The report focuses on inspection activity undertaken by the CQC and Ofsted between July 2021 and December 2021.

5.1 Adult Social Care CQC inspection status

87.3% of all Northumberland-based Adults Social Care providers were rated as Good or Outstanding at the end of December 2021 compared to 83.7% at the end of June 2021, an improvement of nearly 4%.

The table below describes the inspection activity that has taken place between July 2021 and December 2021. It provides the detail of what settings / services have been inspected so that members can see where the improvements have been made. 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.

Rating Status	Location Name	Location Primary Inspection Category	Overall Rating January 2022	Overall Rating July 2021
Changed	The Gables Care Home	Residential social care	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Hexham Carntyne Residential Care Home	Residential social care	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Havendene Residential Home	Residential social care	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Crofton Court	Residential social care	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Blyth Valley Disabled Forum	Community based adult social care services	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Summerhill	Residential social care	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Walby Hill (Adult Care Home)	Residential social care	Good	Requires improvement
Changed	Cambian Dilston College	Residential social care	Requires improvement	Good
Changed	Tweedmouth House	Residential social care	Requires improvement	Good
Newly rated	Complete Community Home Care Ltd	Community based adult social care services	Good	#N/A
Newly rated	Confidence Care and Support	Community based adult social care services	Good	#N/A
Newly rated	Rose Tree House	Residential social care	Good	#N/A
Deregistered	HC-One Beamish Homecare Limited	Community based adult social care services	#N/A	Good
Deregistered	Woodlands Cottage	Residential social care	#N/A	Good

The CQC will be increasing the number of Infection Prevention Control inspections and sharing best practice found; this will support people being discharged when they are medically fit. From January 2022 they will be beginning a programme of inspections for providers currently rated as Requires Improvement to identify where improvement has taken place and where possible, they will re-rate the service. This

does not affect any of the local authority's nine registered services as they are all rated Good or Outstanding. The CQC will continue to review information held on all services on a monthly basis.

5.2 Children's Services

This report features several types of Ofsted activity in Children's services: notably the Council's residential homes for children; schools; early years provision and the Joint Targeted Area Inspection action plan (JTAI). As part of the ILACS framework for inspecting local authority children's services, there is an annual engagement meeting with Ofsted which took place in October 2021, and for which the service provided a self-assessment of the quality and impact of social work practice. The outcome of the meeting was satisfactory, and the detail is being reported to Family and Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FACS) in January 2022. Following that, February's FACS meeting will also receive a report providing an overview of all the inspections and external scrutiny that Children's Services is subject to. It is anticipated that the next activity under the ILACS framework will be in the form of a focused visit which will look at a particular aspect of children's social work. Five days' notice is provided in advance of a two-day visit. The Youth Justice Service is also expecting its inspection this year, for which Her Majesty's inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) provides five weeks' notice.

5.2.1 Children's residential homes

Kyloe House secure unit received an interim inspection from Ofsted in early autumn which concluded satisfactory progress was being made. Just before the period ended, there was also an inspection of Barndale House short break facility and the findings from that are awaiting publication. Members will be advised of the findings if they are available by the date of the committee meeting.

Phoenix House is currently graded as Requires Improvement and is awaiting its formal inspection. Previous interim visits to the home concluded that all necessary actions had been taken.

There is a centrally-held plan that monitors actions arising from inspections.

5.2.2 Schools

Ofsted resumed graded school inspections in the summer term of 2021. 6 schools were inspected in the summer term and 9 inspected in the autumn term.

Primary/First schools:

- Three first/primary schools who are judged Requires Improvement were deemed to be Taking Effective Action. (Tritlington First School, Central Primary School, Tweedmouth Prior Park First School)
- Two first/primary schools who had converted to academies were inspected and both were deemed to be Good. (Whitfield Primary School, Prudhoe West Academy)
- Three first/primary schools who were judged Good retained their Good grade (Amble Links First School, Scremerston First School, St Aidan's RCVA Primary School)

There are two first/primary schools previously judged by Ofsted to be Inadequate, but have academised since that inspection:

- Croftway Academy
- Shaftoe Trust Academy

The overall figure for the percentage of first/primary schools judged by Ofsted as Good or Outstanding was 92% at the end of December 2021, which is above the national average of 88%. This equates to 112 / 122 schools.

Secondary/High schools:

- Haydon Bridge High School - improved from Inadequate to Requires Improvement
- Berwick Academy - improved from Inadequate to Requires Improvement
- The Blyth Academy – improved from Requires Improvement to Good
- Chantry Middle School - improved from Requires improvement to Good
- Whytrig Middle School - improved from Requires improvement to Good
- Corbridge Middle School - improved from Good to Outstanding
- Duchess's Community High School - declined from Good to Requires Improvement

There is one secondary/high school judged by Ofsted to be Inadequate:

- Duke's Secondary School (academy)

There are two secondary/high schools previously judged by Ofsted to be Inadequate, but have academised since that inspection:

- Ashington Academy
- Bedlington Academy

The overall figure for the percentage of middle/secondary/high schools judged by Ofsted as Good or Outstanding improved to 70% at the end of December 2021, although this remains below the national average of 76%. The figure of 70% equates to 21 / 30 schools.

The overall figure for the percentage of special schools judged by Ofsted as Good or Outstanding was also 70% at the end of December 2021. The figure of 70% equates to 7 / 10 schools (including the Pupil Referral Unit).

Academies are not in the control of the Local Authority and therefore the LA 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.

Members should note the task of turning round this pattern of under-achievement usually takes at least three years based upon Ofsted inspection schedules, but as the inspection schedule has been put back 18 months by the Covid pandemic any full inspection could be up to four and a half years after the initial inspection and short term trend patterns are difficult to identify.

It is the prime responsibility of the governing boards and head teachers of those schools to improve. The Council commissions School Improvement Partners (SIPs)

to monitor and challenge those schools, 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.

Reports for Northumberland schools who have been inspected since September 2021 are available [here](#).

5.2.3 Early Years

Sixteen Ofsted inspections of childcare settings in Northumberland were carried out during the autumn term 2021. Of these, six were inspections of childminding settings, three of which received a Good grading, one was Requires Improvement and two were judged as being compliant. Ten private, voluntary or independent (PVI) group settings were inspected, with two receiving Outstanding judgements, five gaining Good, two Requires Improvement and one Inadequate. All settings receiving a less than Good outcome are visited by the Early Years Team to address issues. An Inadequate judgement means the setting is in breach of their funded hours contract and there will be no more funded children admitted until the grade has improved. Currently 97% of early years provision is graded as being Good or Outstanding, and this is similar to the latest all-England figure of 98% (Ofsted, September 2021).

To support providers during the autumn term 2021 with COVID-19 related issues, the Early Years (EY) team sent out regular updates via email directly to providers which included the most recent guidance and requirements from government in relation to safe practice and reporting cases etc. This information was also uploaded to the Early Years COVID-19 Padlet which providers are able to access in their own time. Members of the Early Years team, specifically the development workers, supported settings on an ongoing basis with other COVID-19 related queries or concerns, or to provide moral and emotional support to managers and leaders. Information is also shared on the EY Facebook page as well as it being a forum for practitioners to support one another and share ideas.

5.2.4 Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI)

The multi-agency action plan resulting from the JTAI has now been signed off by the Northumberland Safeguarding Children Committee. All 21 actions are now judged to have been delivered having been independently scrutinised by the appropriate multi agency sub groups.

6. Implications

Policy	Raising standards in social care and education are Council priorities.
Finance and value for money	None
Legal	Inspections are carried out under the legislative framework set out in:- <p style="text-align: center;">€ For educational provisions-section 5 of the Education Act 2005, section 125 of the</p>

	<p>Education and Inspections Act 2006, and Childcare Act 2006.</p> <p>€ For Adult Social Care under the Care Quality Commission regulatory framework.</p> <p>€ For Children's Social Care under the Inspecting Local Authority Childrens Services(ILACS) regulatory framework.</p>
Procurement	None
Human Resources	Regulatory inspections of residential homes assess compliance with HR policies.
Property	None
<p>Equalities</p> <p>(Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> N/A x</p>	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.
Carbon reduction	None
Health and well being	Inspections take health and well being into account when making judgements about their findings.
Wards	All

7. **Background papers:**
None

8. **Report sign off**

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