

Wokingham Borough Council

Inspection of Children’s Social Care Services – 3rd June – 14th June 2019

Action Plan

Actions	Completed By	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
<p>Area requiring improvement: The stability of the workforce in the disabled children’s team and the three long-term teams</p>				
<p>21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The high turnover of staff has had a negative impact on the quality of help and protection provided to children. It has contributed to a lack of continuity and a loss of momentum, resulting in a kind of ‘start again social work’. Too many children and families have had to cope with repeated changes of social workers, making it difficult for them to establish and maintain meaningful relationships with them. It has also contributed to drift and delay in planning for some children. The high turnover of staff has also had a particularly debilitating effect on the disabled children’s team (DCT). As a result, some children and their families in need of statutory social work are not being well served. Senior leaders have appropriately accelerated their plans to address the team’s fragility. Senior leaders have succeeded in reducing the size of social workers’ caseloads, but the continuing turnover of staff in the disabled children’s team and in two of the three long-term teams means that the benefits of having more manageable caseloads have yet to be fully realised. 				
Actions	Completed By	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
Take urgent action to stabilise and add capacity in the Children with Disabilities team	End of June 2019	Adam Davis	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced Social Worker turnover. Increased Proportion of permanent Social Workers. Increased Social Worker Morale. Fewer complaints relating to changes in social worker and associated delays. Improved practice quality evidenced by audit.
Appoint Social Care Recruitment & Retention Project Manager	End of August 2019	Viki Elliot-King	Completed	
Agree Social Care Recruitment & Retention project scope and plan and begin implementation	Mid-September 2019	Adam Davis	Completed	

Actions	Completed By	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
Review & Update the Children's Social Care Recruitment & Retention Strategy	End of November 2019	Rachel Oakley/Adam Davis	Completed – update 4/2/20	As above
Appoint to Children's Social Care Recruitment & Retention Specialist Post	End of November 2019	Viki Elliot-King	Completed – update 4/2/20	
Implement Children's Social Care Recruitment and Retention Strategy.	March 2020	Adam Davis	Completed – update 4/2/20	

Actions	Completed By	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
<p>Area requiring improvement: The effectiveness of child in need and child protection plans</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child in need and child protection 'safety plans' are generally less impressive than the danger statements and safety goals on which they are based. It is not always easy to work out how the actions agreed relate to specific safety goals. The plans themselves are not always specific or measurable. This limits their effectiveness and is one of the issues that was highlighted during the recent practice week. Senior leaders are organising a series of workshops at the end of June to address this. 				
Actions	Completed By	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
Implement Safety Plan Training and Development Programme (child in need and child protection plans)	27th June 2019	Rachel Oakley	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Safety Planning involves the family network. All Safety Plans are measurable and clearly relate to danger statements and safety goals. Where a child has several plans, they are clearly linked and have the same goals. Each plan has a clear trajectory and there is evidence that it is being reviewed. Any issues around drift on trajectories are identified and responded to in a timely way. There is a measure in place to evidence the outcomes for the child have been achieved. Regular review of training feedback to ensure training is responsive to need.
Design and deliver bi-monthly 2 day Safety Planning and Direct Work courses	Rolling programme from December onwards	Rachel Oakley	On Track & ongoing	
Deliver Workshop for Managers & Child Protection Chairs: Safety Planning - Supervision and Quality Assuring Danger Statements & Safety Goals	15th July 2019	Rachel Oakley	Completed	
Delivery Workshop to plan next phase of Safety Plan improvement project.	19 th September 2019	Rachel Oakley	Completed	
Recruit Practice Consultant to support and improve practice	End September 2019	Rachel Oakley	Completed	

Actions	Completed By	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
Agree and communicate Safety Planning Standards	End October 2019	Rachel Oakley	Completed – update 4/2/20	As above
Deliver Danger Statement/Safety Goals/Scaling Workshops for DTA	End December 2019	Rachel Oakley	Completed – update 4/2/20	
Carry out audit of Safety Plans to set the quality baseline	End of December 2019	Rachel Oakley	Completed – update 4/2/20	
Set up series of regular Safety Plan audits	End of December 2019	Rachel Oakley	On Track & Ongoing	
Implement Improvement Plan	End of March 2020	Rachel Oakley	Completed – update 4/2/20	

Actions	Completed By	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
<p>Area for improvement: The quality and effectiveness of the social work support that disabled children and their families receive</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The experiences and progress of children in care whose social workers are based in the disabled children’s team, or one of the three long-term teams, tend not to be quite so positive. This is largely a product of competing demands on social workers’ time and, until very recently, high staff turnover. This has made it difficult for some children to get to know their social workers. In some cases, the timeliness of statutory visits has slipped. In others, there has been evidence of drift. • The high turnover of staff has also had a particularly debilitating effect on the disabled children’s team (DCT). As a result, some children and their families in need of statutory social work are not being well served. Senior leaders have appropriately accelerated their plans to address the team’s fragility. • 				
Actions	Completed By	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
<p>Establish a Children with Disabilities Improvement Board. Remit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure correct thresholds are in place, ensuring that children with disabilities are appropriately safeguarded, and that proportionate and appropriate responses to needs are put in place. • Ensure children with disabilities receiving the right service at the right time that is proportionate to their needs. 	End of August 2019	Adam Davis	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of practice, evidenced by audit, is consistently good. • Fewer complaints from parents and carers • Children and Young people will report that their needs have been met
Action Plan produced by Children with Disabilities Improvement Board	End of October 2019	Adam Davis	Completed – update 4/2/20	

Actions	Completed By	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
Implement Children with Disabilities Action Plan	End of March 2020	Adam Davis	Completed – update 4/2/20	As above
Service Manager for Corporate Parenting to have overview of <i>all</i> Children in Care to ensure consistency of service provided.	From September 2019	Adam Davis	Completed	
Audit of Children with Disabilities Cases	End of January 2020	Rachel Oakley	Completed – update 4/2/20	
Children with Disabilities captured within Practice Week	End of March 2020	Rachel Oakley	On Track & ongoing	

Actions	Completed by	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
<p>Area for improvement: The level of critical scrutiny, and quality of supervision, provided by frontline managers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While there is no doubt that there are some talented and able managers at the frontline, the quality of management oversight and level of critical challenge that managers provide are not consistently good. There is evidence of gaps in supervision, as well as drift and delay in some cases. Decisions taken and actions agreed are not always followed up with the rigour and discipline required. The accuracy and completeness of some children’s case records are a cause for concern. Some case files are incomplete. Others are not up to date. This is partly a product of the level of turnover of managers as well as social workers. 				
Actions	Completed By	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
Deliver “outcome focused supervision” training programme for all Children’s Social Care Managers and staff “making the most of your supervision”	15 th October 2019	Rachel Oakley	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All social care staff receive case work and personal supervision at agreed frequency Supervision is reflective, supportive development and provides critical and constructive challenge Supervision is seen to actively progress care plans of children All staff and managers have conversations with their managers and make a “supervision agreement” Staff report that they have effective supervision. Consistently high quality supervision evidenced through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervision audits - Spot checks on Supervision files
Design and deliver a senior leaders programme “making supervision work”. Five training sessions combined with action planning	13 th December 2019	Rachel Oakley	Completed – update 4/2/20	
Staff and managers at all levels have a “supervision agreement/contract” in place	End of December 2019	Rachel Oakley	On Track & ongoing	

Actions	Completed by	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
Review and refresh supervision documentation and templates	End of December 2019	Rachel Oakley	Completed – update 4/2/20	As Above
Evaluate impact of training programme to identify additional training needs	End of January 2020	Rachel Oakley	On Track & ongoing	
Audit of supervision and management oversight to evidence impact of Training programme and identify additional learning and development needs.	End of January 2020	Rachel Oakley	Completed – update 4/2/20	
Reports designed to track case supervision and management oversight – trialled quarter one, revised quarter two	October 2019	Rachel Oakley	On Track & On going	
Monthly Action Learning Sets arranged for Team Managers & Assistant Team Managers	From February 2020	Rachel Oakley	On Track & On going	
Deliver rolling programme of supervision training for new staff and managers	On-going	Rachel Oakley	On Track & ongoing	

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<p>Area for improvement: The oversight and impact of the corporate parenting board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the local authority acts as a responsible corporate parent, senior leaders have recognised that the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) needs to be overhauled. The aim is to make it more effective, while at the same time increasing the influence and engagement of children in care and care leavers. Currently, the CPB has limited oversight of the work of the virtual school, and its interface with the Children in Care Council is stilted. 				
Actions	Completed By	Lead	Status	Expected Outcome
Review current Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) terms of reference, structure, frequency and impact. Develop recommendations for new approach.	End of October 2019	Adam Davis	Completed – update 4/2/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children in Care feedback that their voices are heard by the CPB and that the actions of the CPB are making a positive difference to their lives. Development of services, enrichment, attainment and outcomes for children
Discuss and agree new approach with CPB members.	At Corporate Parenting Board in October 2019	Adam Davis	Completed – update 4/2/20	
Implement new approach	From 1 st January 2020	Adam Davis	Completed – update 4/2/20	
Review Virtual School to take account of work with the Corporate Parenting Board	End Jan 2020	Sal Thirlway	Completed – update 4/2/20	

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