

Peer Review Round 8
15 and 16 September 2015

Wokingham Peer Review Feedback

Michael Bracey, Milton Keynes Council
Helen Guluin, Brighton and Hove Council
Mary Brimson, Portsmouth Council
Robert South, Southampton

Thank you

For making us feel so welcome and organising such an interesting programme of meetings and visits.

Particular thanks for Sherrie for taking care of all the organisational arrangements.

Please share our thanks with the people who gave up their time to meet with us

‘Test the golden thread of our aspiration and commitment to our children in care and care leavers’

- Elected members have a high level of commitment and are aware of their challenge and support function in relation to the corporate parenting agenda.
- Resources are being made available – for example sport initiatives, Elevate, virtual school capacity, targeted youth service. Hear4U is a positive development. It is not clear how sustainable this is.
- The extent to which the ‘golden thread’ reaches into partner organisations, for example health and schools appears to need more work.
- We agree that more needs to be done to ensure that children needs are addressed at the appropriate level of intervention
- Further progress needs to be made on creating a shared view of strengths and areas of development in relation to service performance and delivery.
- There has been a lot of activity at a senior level to ensure policy and practice is being progressed but this now needs a period of consolidation.

Suggestions for next steps

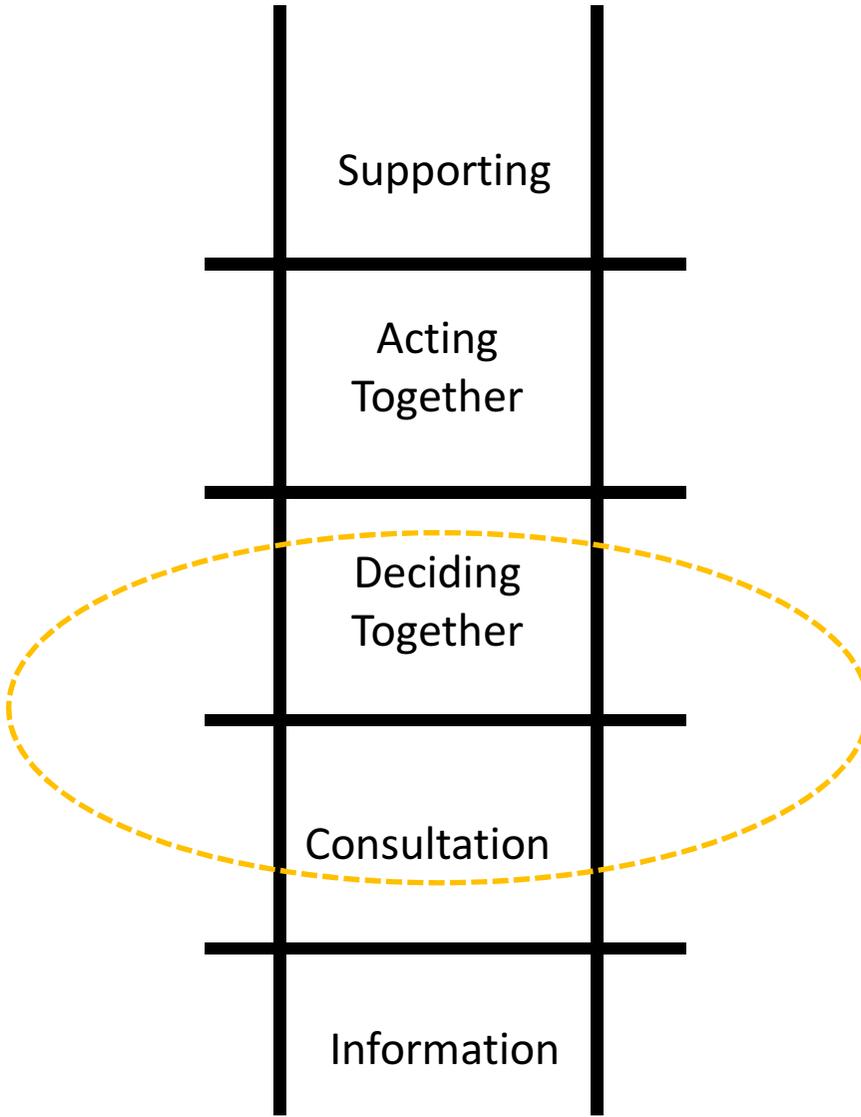
- A move towards a more integrated and simplified multi-disciplinary structure and process with a greater focus on individual children.
- Staff at every level owning and understanding performance and their contribution.
- At each level of management is there the appropriate level of performance management and accountability? With the responsibility for action planning to address issues?
- Impact timing of current objectives (services eg elevate, Virtual School, Housing initiatives) and action needs to be communicated and understood at every level and by young people.

Suggestions for next steps (cont)

- Partnership with schools needs to further develop and promote social inclusion.
- Partnership with Berkshire Health Care Foundation Trust with regards health assessments and delivery of plans a matter of significant concern.
- Current adoption services from preparation for children, recruitment and assessment of adopters and post adoption support needs to be more closely aligned.

‘Test if we have achieved our aspiration of placing children at the centre of what we do’

- The implementation of Signs of Safety appears to be having a positive impact on the engagement of children and parents in their own plans – this continues to be embedded in the Here4U service.
- Good progress towards permanent staffing is starting to make a difference and ensuring greater continuity.
- Advocacy appears to be an area where improvements have been made, especially for children in care.
- Training for foster carers, staff and health visitors on a parenting model is improving consistency of approach to children in care.
- The use of the Pupil Premium needs to be fully optimised.
- Indications are that joint work with the police has reduced the number of missing episodes.



Suggestions for next steps

- Continue the work exploring the gender imbalance within the looked after population.
- Increase supported opportunities for children and young people to participate in service review and developments.
- Focus effort on ensuring that children's needs are consistently being addressed at the appropriate level of intervention.

Questions...

- Are the right children coming into care at the right time?
- Are you sharing best practice from those services and workers trying to 'get upstream'.
- Do you have a good understanding of the care entry and exit points and whether services are targeted appropriately .
- Is the pace of change *appropriate* in all areas?

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