

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL - REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

1.	Meeting:	Corporate Parenting Panel
2.	Date:	20th July, 2015
3.	Title:	Update on Ofsted Inspections of Children's Homes
4.	Directorate:	Children and Young People's Service

5. Summary

- 5.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Corporate Parenting Panel members of the most recent Ofsted inspection outcomes in our five children's homes and to discuss ongoing improvement work across the service.
- 5.2 In addition, the report discusses a proposal for named Elected Members to visit each of our children's homes twice per year with the Regulation 44 Visitor, to monitor the quality of care afforded to young people in line with Elected Member Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 **That Corporate Parenting Panel Members note the information provided about the most recent inspection findings and the details of improvement work ongoing.**
- 6.2 **That Corporate Parenting Panel approve in principle that Elected Members will accompany the Regulation 44 Visitor on two visits per year to each of our children's homes, and that named Elected Members will be identified for this purpose.**

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

7.1.1 The Local Authority has five children's homes, as follows:-

- **Silverwood** - A five bed home for young people aged 12 to 18 to stay long term.
- **Woodview** - A six bed home for young people aged 12 to 18 to stay long term.
- **St Edmunds** - A six bed home for young people aged 12 to 18 to stay long term.
- **Cherry Tree House** - A five bed home for children with disabilities to stay long term.
- **Liberty House** - A nine bed home offering short breaks for children with disabilities.

7.1.2 All children's homes are inspected at least twice annually by Ofsted. This includes one full inspection per year lasting two days and one interim inspection per year usually taking one day.

7.1.3 Ofsted inspects children's homes for compliance with the Children's Homes Regulations, 2015, and against nine 'Quality Standards'. These are:-

- Quality and Purpose of Care
- Children's Wishes and Feelings
- Education
- Enjoyment and Achievement
- Health and Well-Being
- Positive Relationships
- Protection of Children
- Leadership and Management
- Care Planning
- Regulation 5 - A new regulation on engaging with the wider system to ensure each child's needs are met

7.1.4 Ofsted grade children's homes one of four grades as follows:

Outstanding - Such a home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

Good - Such a home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Requires Improvement - In such a home there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of Looked After children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

Inadequate - Such a home is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

7.1.5 In addition to an overall grade for:-

'the overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home'

Ofsted also grade homes on the sub-categories of:-

'how well children and young people are helped and protected'

and

'the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers'

7.2 **Current Ofsted Inspection Grades for Local Authority Children's Homes in Rotherham**

7.2.1 The following details the most recent Inspection grades awarded by Ofsted to each of our five children's homes:-

- **Silverwood** - The most recent full inspection was in July 2015. The home was graded '**Good**' in all areas.
- **Woodview** - The most recent full inspection was in June 2015. The home was graded '**Inadequate**' in all areas.
- **St Edmunds** - The most recent full inspection was in July 2014. The home was graded '**Good**'. The home had an interim inspection in October 2014 and was said to have declined in effectiveness, but maintained the grading of '**Good**'.
- **Liberty House** - The most recent full inspection was in September 2014. The home was graded '**Good**'. The home had an interim inspection in January 2015 and was said to have sustained effectiveness.
- **Cherry Tree House** - The most recent full inspection was in January 2015. The home was graded '**Adequate**' (Adequate as a grade was replaced by 'Requires Improvement' in the new Inspection framework implemented from April 2015).

7.2.2 In summary then, we have three children's homes currently graded as 'Good', one graded as 'Adequate' and one graded as 'Inadequate'.

7.3 Inspections in June and July 2015

7.3.1 Two of our homes have been inspected in the latest round of inspections. These are Woodview in June, and Silverwood in July.

7.3.2 As detailed above, Silverwood was inspected in July and was graded 'Good' in all areas. We have yet to receive the written report from Ofsted, however, the verbal feedback from the inspector included the following:-

- The Inspector had positive feedback from the young people, the staff team, schools attended by the young people and family members.
- Risk Assessments and Care Plans were good.
- Young people feel safe.
- There are good relationships between staff and young people.
- The staff team is consistent.
- There is a commitment to education.
- Leadership is good, there is effective management, all staff feel supported, supervisions and PDRs were in place, and there is a lot of staff training carried out and in place.
- There is a good relationship with all services.

7.3.3 Woodview was inspected in June and was graded 'Inadequate' in all areas. We have received the written report and a Compliance Notice has been issued. The Compliance Notice details areas where the Ofsted Inspector found the service to be non-compliant with the regulations. The Compliance Notice sets out actions the children's home must take by 24th July, 2015. In summary, they are as follows:-

- Take steps to update all Risk Assessments to include current risks and strategies to manage them and children's Care Plans.
- Minimise the risk of fire by encouraging young people to reduce their use of cigarettes and take steps to ensure the children and young people do not smoke in their bedrooms.
- Staff to build better relationships with young people in order to provide effective behaviour management.
- Assess the practice of locking doors and restricting access to parts of the home. Consider alternative methods of managing risks, for example, the use of waking night staff.

7.3.4 In addition to the failures noted at Woodview, the written Ofsted report noted that a strength in the home is that:-

'There is a new manager in place who recognises the strengths and weaknesses of this home. He has plans in place to address the issues in this home.'

7.3.5 The new manager referred to above has developed a full and detailed improvement plan to address the failures and omissions found by Ofsted and improvements are currently being implemented.

7.4 Improvement Work Ongoing Across Our Children's Homes

7.4.1 There are a number of improvement initiatives ongoing or planned for our children's homes currently including:-

- **Ethnographic Research** - This is research aimed at identifying how it feels for a young person living in a children's home and for staff working in one, with a view to the findings informing our work to make our homes as positive an environment as possible.
- **Social Pedagogy Training** - This is planned for staff across the service and is about teaching staff the value of engagement with young people and equipping them with the skills to build positive relationships.
- **Building Refurbishment** - Plans are underway to refurbish, where necessary, the children's homes to ensure they are a pleasant home for children to live in.

7.5 Elected Member Involvement in Regulation 44 Visits to Children's Homes

7.5.1 It is a requirement of Regulation 44 of the Children's Homes Regulations, 2015, that all children's homes must be visited once per calendar month by an independent person who must assess the extent to which the home is safeguarding and promoting young people's welfare. The Independent Visitor must send a report of her findings each month to Ofsted.

7.5.2 Elected Members, as Corporate Parents, have a role to ensure that Looked After children, including those placed in our children's homes, are having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

7.5.3 Named Elected Members have previously visited our children's homes in their role as Corporate Parents. It is proposed that a system is established to ensure regular Elected Member visits and it is proposed that these visits be aligned with the Regulation 44 visits in order to minimise disruption for the young people in the home and for the Elected Member to be informed by the work of the Independent Visitor.

7.5.4 It is proposed that the details of such a system be discussed and agreed at Corporate Parenting Panel. The proposed model would be for a named Elected Member to be identified as the 'Corporate Parent Visitor' for each home and for that person to accompany the Independent Visitor to two visits to the home per year.

8. Finance

8.1 There are no financial implications from this report.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

9.1 Ofsted Inspection outcomes reflect the standard of care received by our Looked After children. Poor Ofsted outcomes reflect poor care and this can present a risk to those children.

9.2 The report has provided information about Ofsted inspection outcomes. Poor Ofsted gradings are a risk to the Council's reputation. A failure to address shortcomings and omissions is a further reputational risk.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

10.1 Ofsted inspection outcomes are an important indicator of our performance.

10.2 It is important that Corporate Parents play a full role in ensuring that Looked After children receive good care. Looked After children and young people placed in children's homes are some of our most vulnerable. Elected Member visits to children's homes is one good way for Members to fulfil their Corporate Parenting Responsibilities.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

None attached.

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