

Summary Sheet

Council Report Corporate Parenting Panel 6th December 2016

Report Title: Ofsted Activity Report- Children Looked After

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan? No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report – Ian Thomas, Strategic Director, CYPS

Report Author(s): Ian Walker – Acting Head of Service and Brent Lumley, Responsible Individual CYPS

Ward(s) Affected: ALL.

Summary

The report provides a summary following the Ofsted Inspection of RMBC Children's Homes in 2016. Liberty House Short Breaks Residential Home is registered with Ofsted and they are inspected by them twice a year. They receive a full two day inspection and an interim one day inspection. The full inspection determines the grade and the interim inspection assesses progress in relation to that grade.

This report clarifies the decision made by Commissioner Bradwell on the 12th September 2016 in relation to Silverwood and Cherry tree House Children's Homes.

This report also outlines some detail of the findings from the Ofsted Monitoring Visit that took place with the Looked After Children Service from the 20th to the 21st October 2016.

Recommendations

That the Panel notes the detail provided in this report detailing the outcome of recent Ofsted inspections of Rotherham MBC's Liberty House Short Breaks Residential Home children's home and from the Ofsted Monitoring Visit.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 - Areas of Strength and Development.

Background Papers

Whilst there is no decision attached to this report as it is for information the following Reports to DLT provide context in relation to 6-13: 'Consultation on the proposed closure of Cherry Tree House Children's Home' and 'Consultation on the proposed closure of Silverwood Children's Home'.

This report will also provide the Corporate Parenting Panel with an update following their Monitoring Visit on the 20th and 21st October.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Yes – to be presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Ofsted Activity Report –Children Looked After

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Panel notes the detail provided in this report detailing the outcome of recent Ofsted inspection of Rotherham MBC's Liberty House Short Breaks Residential Home children's home and the evaluation of progress undertaken in the Ofsted Monitoring Visit.

2 Background

- 2.1 Ofsted complete monitoring visits where they assess the progress made by inadequate authorities. Ofsted will publish their findings of each monitoring visit. The first monitoring visit in Rotherham has focussed on the Looked After Childrens Service and this report will advise the findings.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 **Liberty House Short Breaks Children's Home** provides planned short-break overnight respite care seven days a week for up to eight children, aged between 8 to 18 years, of either gender who have physical or sensory disabilities, complex health needs and challenging behavior as a result of their disability.

- 3.2 Liberty House also has provision to offer a ninth placement on an emergency basis. The emergency bed will only be offered to young people that currently access Liberty House. This will allow for a more accurate matching process and will also improve outcomes for that particular young person.

- 3.3 Liberty House Short Breaks Service overall aims are twofold. Which are:-

- (i) "To provide a residential short break service which will support children and their families continue to operate as a family unit".
- (ii) "To ensure the experience is stimulating and enjoyable for each child and young person to enable them to develop skills through participation in a range of activities".

A Full Ofsted Inspection of the service on the 02/11/2016 graded the service as 'Outstanding'.

Ofsted Inspection History - Liberty House Short Breaks Children's Home		
Inspection Date	Inspection Type	Inspection Judgement
01/05/2013	Full	Adequate
13/02/2014	Interim	Good Progress
18/09/2014	Full	Good
11/12/2014	Interim	Sustained Effectiveness
27/01/2016	Full	Good
17/03/2016	Interim	Sustained Effectiveness
02/11/2016	Full	Outstanding

3.4 The Ofsted Monitoring Visit concluded that RMBC had taken effective action to address the significant shortfalls identified in the single inspection in 2014. The letter from Ofsted that will be sent to the DfE highlighted that a more stable senior management team had demonstrated a strong focus on performance management and had established determined, effective leadership with clear objectives and aspirations and a sustained focus on improving outcomes for children. It also stated that senior managers had undertaken an honest and robust self-assessment of the service and as a result know ourselves very well. Whilst progress had been slower in the Looked After Children's Service than in some of the other service areas across children's services "there is clear evidence of improvement in some key areas including strategic management, vision and planning, performance management and quality assurance arrangements, service restructure, recruitment and retention and compliance with statutory requirements".

3.5 However, the outcome letter also identified also highlighted the following areas as being in need of further development :-

- Frontline management of social work practice remains weak.
- Permanence planning does not happen early enough after the child's admission to care.
- Supervised contact arrangements are insufficiently resourced and planning is poor.
- Despite the improvements in the scrutiny and challenge provided by the IROs this is yet to lead to improving quality and driving progress in the child's Care Plan.
- Performance in respect of Initial health Assessments remains poor although the timeliness of Review Assessments is improved.
- Placement stability has deteriorated and the number of placement disruptions has increased as the number of looked after children has continued to rise.
- Strategy Meetings do not routinely follow 'Working Together 2015' guidance as some agencies give less than the required commitment.
- There is a lack of evidence of direct intervention or life-story work to help children understand why they came into care or where they are going in the future.
- Although the numbers of children who go missing from care has 'reduced significantly' insufficient children who live out of borough receive a return home interview.

3.6 These recommendations for further action will be incorporated into the Improvement Plan could usefully become a standing agenda item for the Corporate Parenting Panel throughout 2017.

4. Key Issues

4.1 At the inspection of Liberty House Short Breaks residential Home on the 02/11/2016 there were no issues arising from Ofsted Inspection.

4.2 No Statutory Recommendations or Requirements were made following this Inspection.

4.3 It is anticipated that Ofsted may return to Rotherham in late 2017 and so the Improvement Plan will have to have been implemented in full by that date if the best possible outcome is to be achieved

5 Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Whilst there is no decision attached to this report as it is for information the following Reports to DLT provide context in relation to the 'Consultation on the proposed closure of Cherry Tree House Children's Home' and 'Consultation on the proposed closure of Silverwood Children's Home'.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 There are no financial and procurement implications.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no direct legal implications in this report.

8. Human Resources Implications

8.1 There are no Human Resource implications.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 Liberty House deliver a full service of short breaks to a cohort of 37 children within a calendar month, this is subject to fluctuation due to demand.

9.2 Full implementation of the Improvement Plan can only serve to improve the outcomes for looked after children and care leavers

10 Equalities and Human Rights Implications

10.1 None following inspection

11. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

11.1 Partners will be consulted as other directorates who contribute to supporting the home where relevant.

12. Risks and Mitigation

12.1 Continuation of the current provision presents the following risks:

- Inadequate care being provided to any future children in care who might be placed in the home. However at the time of writing this report the service has been judged Outstanding, subject to Ofsted's internal Quality Assurance process.
- That in the event of an inadequate inspection there could be a forced closure resulting in young people having to move from the home in distressing

circumstances. The next inspection will be an interim one and will assess progress in relation to the most recent grade which is 'Outstanding'.

- Risk to the Council's reputation in the event that future inspections find the provision declining in effectiveness. This is a team that has worked hard to deliver and achieve a grade of outstanding. Regulation 44 visits are undertaken on a monthly basis and this allows senior managers to monitor effectiveness and mitigate and practice that falls below outstanding.
- Poor outcomes being achieved by Looked After Children and Care Leavers and reputational risk to the Council.

13. Accountable Officer(s)

Ian Walker Acting Head of Service – Looked After Children.

Brent Lumley, Responsible Individual – Interim Residential Services/Service Manager Looked After Children.

Approvals Obtained from:

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:-

Director of Legal Services:-

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):-

Appendix 1

Liberty House Short Breaks Children's Home	
Strengths	Areas for Development
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home is defined as outstanding	No recommendations or Requirements following the inspection on the 02/11/2016
how well children and young people are helped and protected is defined as outstanding.	No recommendations or Requirements following the inspection on the 02/11/2016
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers is defined as outstanding.	No recommendations or Requirements following the inspection on the 02/11/2016