

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Ofsted Subgroup – 14 June 2016

**Subject:** Children and Young People's Ofsted Preparation and Performance Framework

**Report of:** Deputy Director of Children's Services

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**Summary**

To provide an overview of Ofsted preparation, including current progress to date and next steps.

**Recommendations**

Report is for information.

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**Wards Affected:** All

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**Contact Officers:**

Name: Vince Clark  
Position: Deputy Director of Children's Services  
Telephone: 0161 234 3804  
E-mail: v.clark1@manchester.gov.uk

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to summarise the work being undertaken by the Children and Young People's Service as part of improvement journey towards a 'good' service.

## **2.0 Context**

- 2.1 The priority for the service is to improve the quality and throughput of children's social work activity to deliver a 'Requires Improvement' judgment from Ofsted within three to six months as part of our journey towards excellence.
- 2.2 The Council is subject to an Improvement Notice, issued in March 2015, following the publication of the Ofsted Inspection report in September 2014 and must therefore show significant and sustainable improvement by the time of the next Ofsted inspection. Since the Inspection the Council has demonstrated its commitment and focus to delivering the changes and improvements required. Significant investment has already been committed to the wider Children's Services, specifically related to improvements in the Looked After Children's Service (LAC) and also to address the short fall in the Early Help Services.

## **3.0 Challenges Faced**

- 3.1 The key challenge faced by the Department is to increase the pace and effectiveness of the improvements already made whilst embedding the new ways of working and undertaking recruitment at front line manager and practitioner levels. The new senior leadership team is now in place and focused on maintaining a high degree of pace and urgency to the improvement work. This has been acknowledged by the Improvement Board, which has indicated that the pace and focus given by the senior leadership team is starting to deliver the improvement required.
- 3.2 Since the Ofsted inspection Children's services have been working to an improvement programme and made significant progress;
- New senior leadership team recruited and now in place, including a permanent DCS. This puts the Council back on a sure footing and able to provide sustainable service improvement.
  - Strengthened the 'Front Door' contact centre and MASH – assurance given from the Ofsted mini-inspection in January 2016.
  - Average caseloads for workers have reduced initially from 30 to from 27 in 2014/15 and then to the current level of 24 per social worker.
  - LAC numbers have been reduced from 1,400 in 2014/15 to 1,380 in Aug 2014 and then to 1,237 in Jan 2016.
  - Launch of new Early Help service – new strategy, revised thresholds and three new hubs launched in October 2015. A review has indicated that the long-term strategy and plan is the right one but will take up to 18 months to see significant impact.
  - Representation of the Child's Voice is being strengthened to put children at centre of social work practice, including a new Child's Voice framework due to launch April 2016.

- Adoption performance has improved for the numbers of children adopted and timeliness of adoptions; Foster carer recruitment is also increasing.
- Enhanced Child Sexual Exploitation service with partners has been launched.
- City's work on domestic violence is being reviewed and overhauled with key partners.
- Signs of Safety practice model is being rolled out bringing a new 'strengths based' approach.
- Flexible working arrangements (laptops & smart phones) have been rolled out to the locality social work teams.
- Fit for purpose policies, procedures and standards developed and implemented.
- Workforce strategy developed.

3.3 This amounts to substantial progress, and lays a foundation for improvement and a sense of confidence. However it is only now, with the recruitment of a permanent leadership team that the timing is right to increase capacity within children's social care to ensure that these developments are sustained and high standards of practice are consistently delivered across the service.

#### **4.0 Taking it Forward**

4.1 There remain a number of challenges before we can be confident the service is safe, effective and efficient. The following are reoccurring themes that have been identified by the new leadership team as part of the self-assessment process;

- More needs to be done to strengthen management 'grip' within the service related to poor and inadequately resourced front-line management.
- Whilst progress has been made in reducing caseloads which had been at 30, average caseloads are still at 24 per social worker (which includes 36% of social workers with caseloads in the higher than this) which is a barrier to effective practice improvement.
- Although turnover has fallen and now stands at 12%, social worker turnover within the service continues to be a concern. It also results in too many changes in social worker negatively impacting on outcomes for children.
- Therefore, the quality of practice and recording is variable and there remains limited evidence of good work.
- Still too many children are looked after and there is evidence of 'drift' in the system; which demonstrates a lack of timely and effective outcomes as well as being very costly.
- Insufficient range and choice of care placements leading to reliance on Independent Foster Placements compared to in-house foster placements.
- Evidence of learning from quality assurance activity is not yet embedded in practice.

4.2 The approach to deliver and sustain further improvement will be encapsulated within a Single Service Plan, that will articulate the service priorities and timeline for improvement. This will set out the specific social work improvement actions over the coming year. The plan will include a set of

immediate actions required to take the service out of an inadequate rating;

- Reduce and manage the demand within the service – further strengthening the Early Help offer and strengthening the MASH and ‘front door’ arrangements as well as improving the timeliness of our interventions and increasing permanent outcomes for children in care.
- Implement more manageable workloads – increase the throughput of work related to the key social work interventions (Children in Need, Child Protection and LAC) and reducing caseloads to a manageable level.
- Improve performance and practice management – implement a more robust performance management framework and intelligent accountability within the service.
- Achieve and maintain a stable, confident and competent workforce – improve the ‘Manchester Offer’ to make the Council the employer of choice.
- Ofsted Preparation – step up activity to ensure that logistical and support functions are in place and effective within three months

## **5.0 Reduce the demand**

5.1 The service must reduce and control demand to match that of the Core City’s average. This will be achieved through the implementation of the Early Help Service to ensure that cases do not escalate unnecessarily. Work has also taken place to strengthen the ‘front door’ by effectively implementing the MASH model of work and enhancing emergency out of hours services. Work is underway to clarify the business process to refer into EH and Social Care.

## **6.0 Implementing manageable caseloads**

6.1 This needs to be seen as a fundamental part of improvement journey and a key to long term fiscal sustainability. Despite initial improvements, caseloads are averaging at 24 for qualified social workers and 22 for Newly Qualified Social Workers. Within this there are also hot spots with some teams averaging 27 cases. Regular monitoring and focused management time is slowly reducing the average caseload.

## **7.0 Performance Management Framework**

7.1 A rigorous performance challenge will be built into the day to day running of the service and will be monitored through a set of performance meetings at different levels within the organisation. Chaired by the DCS all areas of activity will be scrutinized and specific actions agreed to implement improvement and consistent practice (see appendix 1).

7.2 This will start with this month’s CMT and then on a monthly basis. This will be done through rigorous performance management which includes dealing with individuals performance and long term absence within the service to improve productivity. There is an immediate need to invest in frontline management to increase productivity, increase management grip and drive standards of practice up. A significant minority of the current management group are not sufficiently skilled to do this and, whilst accountability is increased, the service will need some ‘double running’ to kick start this process.

- 7.3 This is required to address standards of practice and imbed the new performance management framework. This framework will be built into the day to day running of the service. This will ensure that managers at head of service, locality and team management levels implement consistent management oversight of the work within their span of control. The DCS will monitor and report on the effectiveness of the additional investment in social work capacity improving practice and managing demand more effectively.
- 7.4 Through regular benchmarking and analysis of productivity, the service will demonstrate the reduction in demand to that expected of a Core City and at the same time, the throughput of work increases. By maintaining better productivity and lower caseloads the service will be providing better and timelier outcomes for children and young people whilst controlling costs. Demand within the service will be closely monitored and if demand starts to drop below an average of 18 cases per worker plans can be put in place to reduce capacity within the service; i.e. reduce the number of social workers.
- 8.0 Achieve and sustain a stable, confident workforce**
- 8.1 Manageable caseloads of 18 will be central to this offer and will bring about a more stable workforce with higher moral. This will be phased in by reducing cases to 20 and then by the end of the financial year to 18 using a bespoke recruitment approach. Initially this will mean a dependency on agency staff but this will tail off by the end of year one as the City's reputation improves and the evidence of a well managed service with manageable caseloads leads to more permanent recruitment. This will be achieved by building capacity whilst the service recruits permanent, highly motivated and competent staff through an enhanced 'Manchester Offer' which will include:
1. Manageable caseloads
  2. Regular and supportive professional supervision and developmental opportunities
  3. A remuneration package which is in the top quartile
  4. Promotion of Manchester as a place to live and the City Council as an employer of choice
- 8.2 Recruitment is now underway with several recruitment agencies providing experienced Team Managers for the first round of interviews next week. Recruitment is also taking place for social work posts within the city.
- 9.0 Ofsted Preparation**
- 9.1 A dedicated senior management group has been formed and is chaired by the Interim Deputy Director on a monthly basis to focus on the logistical preparation for a full Ofsted inspection. The group now incorporates the preparation work undertaken by the following work groups:
- Annex A
  - Annex M
  - Ofsted Logistical planning
- 9.2 Evidence from the Ofsted Preparation group will be reviewed on a monthly basis and lead managers will be invited to review the priority actions for their

section to assess if these are; a) delivering the required improvements or b) if they need to be reviewed or changed or c) if new actions need to be added. All actions will be SMART and contain the date of their delivery and the named lead who will be delivering this.

- 9.3 The preparation work is also being enhanced by the work being lead by the Deputy Chief Executive (People) to ensure that there is full corporate support across all departments to deliver the effective improvement.

## **10.0 Annex A**

- 10.1 Update and review Annex A submissions with focus on those outstanding as 'amber' or 'red' RAG rating. All key documents are now submitted to the Annex A with the exception of the MCC Sufficiency Strategy. The Sufficiency Strategy is being led by Paul Dempsey and a draft will be submitted. Work is now underway to start the second RAG rating against quality and fit for purpose status of each document. This will be undertaken by the chair of the group and inform actions going forward.

## **11.0 Annex M**

- 11.1 Work is progressing well to gather the key Annex M evidence that will inform our Self-Assessment document later in June. The lead managers for each Annex M evidence area report into this group with timeline for completion of their section. Work has now started on:

- Key activity to address outstanding evidence gaps
- Review and RAG rating and key issues to CMT
- Completion of a Self assessment by end of June 2016

- 11.2 The self assessment will be presented to the DCS and senior leadership team later in June 2016 before being shared with the Improvement Board and this sub group. A quarterly update to the self assessment will then be undertaken to track the pace and sustainability of the improvement work being undertaken.

## **12.0 Ofsted Inspection Preparation Planning**

- 12.1 The group has now started the logistical planning for an Ofsted inspection. Initial actions include:
1. Review of Implementation of an Ofsted aid memoir for all key managers and partner agencies – First draft rolled out to key managers for comments/additions (see appendix 2 attached)
  2. Communications process – overseen by the Communications Strategic Lead to ensure that we deliver briefing notes for all key groups.
  3. IT Requirements – Liaison with corporate colleagues to provide initial ICT logistical preparation underway
  4. Ofsted inspection exercise – initial planning & consideration, underway and will be considered for early July 2016.

## Children’s Social Care Performance Clinic – Agenda

### Core Attendees

**Chair** - Paul Marshall Deputy **Chair** - Vince Clark (**Deputy Chair**)

**PRI** - Jill Meredith, David Carr

**Reform and Innovation** – Mark Leaver

**Strategic Leads** – Amanda Amesbury (**Social Care**), Julie Heslop (**Early Help**).

Linda Evans (**SIU**)

**Supervision/staffing issues** – Karen Andrews

### Agenda Items to be covered by all Heads of Service

- Actions from previous meetings
- QA framework – case audits
- Supervision/ attendance/ staff turnover – performance reports
- Caseload management – review against target
- Missing children – Risk management and mitigations
- Data quality, accuracy and compliance with targets
- Complaints report – To include thematic issues

### Head of Service reports

**Operational Management Attendees** – Service Managers from MASH, Locality Teams and Hubs, Permanency (LAC), Provider Services, Youth Offending

Agenda No	Item	Time
1	<b>Early Help</b> – Julie Heslop, Jo Dalton To cover – EHA numbers by partner, Hub activity, step up, step down, etc	20 Mins
2	<b>MASH</b> – Julie Heslop, Debbie MacQueen To cover - contacts, referrals, re-referrals, conversion rates, timeliness, EDS, partner contributions, step up, step down etc	20 Mins
4	<b>YOS</b> – Julie Heslop , Marie McLaughlin To include - suitable accommodation, numbers in custody, LAC in custody, re-offending etc	20 Mins
3	<b>Statutory Social Work</b> – Amanda Amesbury & Service Managers To cover - assessments, timeliness, visits, activity on open cases, CP plans, admissions, discharges, OOA, Residential and secure placements, care leavers etc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>North</b> – Service manager</li> <li>• <b>Central</b> – Service manager</li> <li>• <b>South</b> – Service manager</li> </ul>	20 Mins 20 Mins 20 Mins
	<b>Break</b>	15 Mins
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Permanence and LAC</b> – Paul Dempsey, Myra O’ Farrell</li> </ul>	20 Mins
4	<b>Fostering and Adoption</b> – Amanda Amesbury, Paul Dempsey To include - adoption scorecards, tracking, enquiries, applications, placement breakdowns etc	20 Mins

<b>5</b>	<b>Quality Assurance and Safeguarding</b> – Linda Evans To include - IRO activity, escalation numbers, quality assurance compliance.	20 Mins
		3hrs 15





Manchester SIF Inspection Implementation Plan - Aide Memoire  
DRAFT

What needs to happen on Days 1, 2 and 3 followed by the other key milestones/days in accordance with the Ofsted framework and the handbook.

Lead and key responsibilities for specific tasks:

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Guardian of Annex A reports	Vince Clark
Owner/moderator for Annex A documents	Eloise Marsh
Lead for the co-ordination, completion and moderation of case audits and report	Amanda Amesbury
Coordinator for tracked cases documentation	Linda Evans TBC
Communication lead for staff and partners (need a communication tree internal and external, briefings for staff prepared)	Shelly Kipling
Lead/owner for IT and logistics and inspectors base set up	Ross Milhench
Key point of contact for lead Inspector, co-ordination of timetable, briefing and debriefing of staff	Vince Clark
'war-room' and KIT location and readiness	Mark Leaver
Rapid Response Team members and locations, contact details	Mark Leaver Karen Andrews TBC

**SIF Notifications** - Ofsted is due to make SIF notification phone calls on Monday morning (from 11<sup>th</sup> April). Local authorities that receive the call need to notify ADCS at [president@adcs.org.uk](mailto:president@adcs.org.uk)

**Contact List**

<b>Name, role, organisation</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
Greater Manchester Police	Vanessa Jardine (substitute to be added)
Manchester CCG Health	Craig Harris (substitute to be added)
Hospital Trusts Health	Contact names to be added
Education	John Edwards  Amanda Corcoran

Probation	Contact name to be added
MSCB	David Ashcroft Munaf Patel (Board Manager)
Chief Execs Office	Sir Howard Bernstein Geoff Little
Elected Members	Sir Richard Leese (Leader) Cllr Shelia Newman (Exec member Children’s) Cllr Akbar (Deputy Exec member Children’s) Cllr Reid (C&YP Scrutiny Chair) Cllrs Andrews, Murphy & Priest (EMG Ofsted Scrutiny Sub-Group)
Independent Improvement	Edwina Grant

### Day 1 - Communication

- Key communication to Leadership Team
- Activate implementation plan
- Staff briefing
- Cascade debriefing forms
- Start diary management of key managers – KIT meetings etc

### Day 2 – ‘Kick Off’

- Meet with the lead inspector, if Joint Team (JT) will need a lead for each agency
- Members of the KIT, if JT needs to be multi-agency
- Presentation of self-assessment – cover:
  1. Annex A – (Strengths and any missing docs or weaknesses)
  2. Annex M – (Summary of self assessment – key issues as reported to last IB/Scrutiny)
  3. Service Plan
  4. SMART action plan to include last inspection actions
  5. Balanced Score Card – (Highlight key indicators and what it tells us about the service, accuracy and compliance)
  6. Senior Leadership Team & Service Structure – link to performance framework
  7. Key issues related to Serious incident notifications, SCRs, Missing and CSE
  8. Detail any current teams with difficulties/issues
- Identification of key lines of enquiry (have a response for each – work that was undertaken by our dedicated team working to a tight deadline)

**Annex A Reports** - Implement a monthly practice run of the Annex A reports – ensure good to go and confidence re accuracy. Annex A is a really useful information set - better in many ways than the statutory data sets (Children in need census; 903 looked after children return). Build in a summary report of what the Annex A tells you about performance eg care leavers in touch, suitable accommodation etc.

Annex A to be built into the performance framework - so children with repeat referrals had been reviewed by managers and a note put on their file. Therefore we shouldn't have been any surprises for us in the data set and specific cases that Ofsted sampled should have shown evidence that we had previously audited ourselves.

All managers to know their data and demonstrate management 'grip' of their part of the service. Annex A reports to be ready for submission by the start of Day 2.

**Picking the 18 Cases** - Push for agree identification of the 18 cases to be audited as soon as possible and the 12 cases to be tracked on Day 2; every minute counts. Be prepared – need to built in a process for all Service Managers to take ownership of their cases to be audited and tracked and follow up immediately. All 18 cases picked for auditing and 12 for tracking to be subject to management scrutiny immediately (need to agree format and structure for this).

The lead inspector are sometimes open to sitting with us to identify the cases for auditing and tracking, therefore we could move straight away to starting the audit process. Need to agree notification process for the 18 audited and 12 tracked cases to enable the allocated social workers, team managers and IROs/CP Chairs to be fully prepared. TM/SW to be able to provide an honest summary and appraisal of the issues and how the case is progressing against the relevant plan (CiN, CP or LAC). Do not hide anything but be prepared to give context for any delay and how any risks are being mitigated.

Ensure education, health and other key partners know the detail of the 30 cases that will be audited and tracked. Allow them to raise any concerns on them before inspector speaks to them. Ensure that the parents and carers of the children involved are all notified via the allocated social worker.

### **Annex A Document File**

- Ensure hard copies available and electronic (IT may not be working and need to send in 'packets' and compressed)
- Sharepoint with passwords
- Documents must only be submitted by the 'gatekeeper/Inspection link officer'
  1. collate all the document requests
  2. check which inspector asked for them
  3. made sure they were approved to be given to the inspector
  4. keep a hard and electronic copy so we knew what had been handed over

Do not let anything go to the inspection team unless it is through the gatekeeper and make sure your inspection team know who your gatekeeper is. (Track everything and only via them and the lead inspector. We will need to escalate to the lead inspector when other inspectors are asking workers/managers for copies).

**Top Tip** - Always check documents and make sure they are up to date and ready to hand over after a final check.

### **Case File Audits**

- Practice the audit process with identified auditors – refine the process and the forms (usual audit tools need to fit for purpose and result in judgement)
- Do multi agency reviews on each case where applicable.
- Copies of each case (one for the inspector, one for us and one for the social worker).
- Make sure the social worker and their team manager are involved in the audit process and understand what the final audit judgement is.
- Inspectors will want to talk to the IRO/Independent chair, health lead (where appropriate) and school representative for the audited cases.
- Do not forget to contact the parents of the 18 cases in case an inspector wants to talk to them. There will be a standard letter to go to them but the worker needs to speak to them.

### **Day 3 – Inspection Industry Commences**

- Maintain Communication - brief staff about the meetings they will be in
- Debrief them once the meetings have finished
- Brief your own staff each day on progress
- Plan for the next keep in touch meeting – what information will be handed over, what will we push back on

**Day 4 - the end of week 1** - Inspection team to feedback about what they have found so far, a chance to identify a few more key lines of enquiry and a chance to agree timescales for activities due in week 2. Ensure plans in place to follow up on any issues or concerns.

- Plan for Week 2 – CMT & Ofsted prep team

**Week 2** - They aren't on site - but likely telephone calls to plan for all the meetings in weeks 3 and 4.

- File auditing, quality checking them and sending these to the lead inspector.
- Create folders for each of the 12 tracked cases.
- Make sure our ducks were in a row for all the key lines of enquiry.
- Nurture staff who are due to meet with inspectors.
- Tidy up case files (visits, case-notes, and chronologies etc up to date).

**Weeks 3 and 4** - There is no escape from the day to day eclectic mix of activity that happens during inspection. The day will start and you feel (relatively) in control. The distractions come thick and fast: people come in; people want to change things; people want to meet with you; someone requests some additional information; you are asked to proof read a document – so keep your diary relatively free during the inspection period.

**Meetings** - We will need to maintain a full meetings schedule and constantly up date this. It will need to be circulated electronically every day but will be subject to constant change.

The arrangement and management of these meetings is a very fluid process. Just when you think you've nailed it, something changes. Our aim should be at the end of week 2 - everyone know which meeting they had to attend, where it was and who it

was with. They should have information to help them prepare based on the topics that were to be covered in each meeting. Most importantly they knew that the meeting date/time/venue/content might change or be cancelled. We all needed to be incredibly flexible.

### **Preparation -**

- Start by filling in the meeting schedule and maintain up to date names and contact details.
- When planning meetings with the lead inspector, make sure you know the topics the meeting will cover
- Give the inspectors and yourselves time to draw breath in between the meetings – they need to write up their notes

**Requests for Additional Information** - These come thick and fast from the inspection team. They can include items they've asked for in addition to Annex A documents through meetings, team visits, include items you want to give them to showcase your work. Pay particular attention to responses to their identified key lines of enquiry, items they identified in the keep in touch meetings and lists of data they requested.

**A Rapid Response Team established** - Need to set up **four** competent members of staff who could pick up on issues raised in the keep in touch meetings, produce additional information as requested, quality check what was being sent out and track which cases inspectors were browsing through.

### **Top Tips**

- Good administrative support is critical (printing and photocopying and tracking everything you give them).
- Requests will come in right up to the last minute.
- Track which cases and ultimately which document inspectors looked at on line and if possible case recording system

**Communicating with staff** - Inform staff what is happening; brief key staff members at the end of each day (about 25 staff who cascade) and as a prompt for generating additional data and documents.

Our end of day meetings three purposes; i) to catch up with staff on meetings and progress that had happened during the day, feeding back the good and the areas for concern; ii) to make sure everyone was aware of the meetings that were happening the following day and iii) maintaining focus and consistency.

Keep in touch with all staff and partners arrangements essential;

- A blog delivered by daily email (usually welcomed by all and provided a great mechanism to keep even those in far flung offices up to date with what the inspector's had found, what they'd said and what they were doing next. Not only our staff and partners)
- The leader and lead member

- Chief Executive.
- Key Partners debrief following KiT with Inspectors