

CHESHIRE EAST HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD
Reports Cover Sheet

Title of Report:	Children's Improvement Plan Update
Date of meeting:	28 th November 2017
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Health & Wellbeing Board Lead:	Mark Palethorpe

Executive Summary

Is this report for:	Information <input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Decision <input type="checkbox"/>
Why is the report being brought to the board?	The Health and Wellbeing Board is the accountable body for the Children's Improvement Plan in relation to the recommendations from the Ofsted inspection in July 2015. This report is our annual self-assessment of progress against the recommendations, and is being brought to the board to allow the board to scrutinise progress.		
Please detail which, if any, of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy priorities this report relates to?	Starting and Developing Well <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Living and Working Well <input type="checkbox"/> Ageing Well <input type="checkbox"/> All of the above <input type="checkbox"/>		
Please detail which, if any, of the Health & Wellbeing Principles this report relates to?	Equality and Fairness <input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility <input type="checkbox"/> Integration <input type="checkbox"/> Quality <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safeguarding <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All of the above <input type="checkbox"/>		
Key Actions for the Health & Wellbeing Board to address. Please state recommendations for action.	The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutinise progress against the Ofsted recommendations • Endorse the recommendation that dedicated improvement monitoring activity is replaced by business as usual activities to reduce duplication • Endorse the recommendation that the HWBB will continue to monitor progress through six monthly progress reports on the recommendations that have not yet been met 		
Has the report been considered at any other committee meeting of the Council/meeting of the CCG board/stakeholders?	The Council's Corporate Leadership Team Meeting The Local Safeguarding Children Board		

Has public, service user, patient feedback/consultation informed the recommendations of this report?	The progress report includes evidence from our key stakeholders: children, young people, parents, carers and staff, to support our evidence of progress to date.
If recommendations are adopted, how will residents benefit? Detail benefits and reasons why they will benefit.	The Children's Improvement Plan aims to improve outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people through improving the quality of our Children's Social Care services. By scrutinising progress against the plan, challenging Children's Social Care and holding them to account, Health and Wellbeing Board members are ensuring we continue to improve how we safeguard children and young people.

1 Report Summary

- 1.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is the accountable body for the Children's Improvement Plan in relation to the recommendations from the Ofsted inspection in July 2015.
- 1.2 This report is a self-assessment of our progress to date against the recommendations from the Ofsted inspection. A self-assessment of our progress was completed last year in July 2016. On the basis of this assessment, it was agreed that a number of the recommendations had been met but that our progress against all the recommendations would be revisited in a year's time to ensure that progress had been maintained, and also to evaluate our position relative to the other longer term quality or practice recommendations that had not yet been met.
- 1.3 We are now over two years on from the inspection period, and the quality of our practice has considerably improved in this time. We have continued to build on the progress we have achieved so far in our journey, and the amount of good quality practice continues to increase. Our quality of practice as measured through audit has shown a continued positive trajectory over the past year. Overall, audit judgements show an increase in the percentage of cases considered to be good or better (45% cases in Q1 compared to 34% in Q4, and circa 20% throughout the previous year 2016/17). This is a significant achievement; this is a massive 32% decrease in cases that are less than good since last year.
- 1.4 Adoption continues to be a real strength. There was a 40% increase in adoptions last year. The total number of children adopted by the end of September 2017-18 was 13. In addition, there are 26 individuals with an adoption plan, 6 of which are living with their adoptive family/ foster to adopt placement.
- 1.5 Although the quality of practice continues to improve, overall, the majority of our practice is not yet consistently good, and therefore not yet of the depth and quality we want for our children and young people. Plans are in place to continue to drive improvements to practice, including the adoption of **Signs of Safety** which will support us to achieve a cultural change in our practice so we are more child-centred, solution-focused, and respectful and inclusive of families. This will support us to make the step change to consistently good and outstanding practice, leading to improved outcomes for our children and young people.
- 1.5 Robust arrangements are in place to ensure managers at all levels are regularly informed on and held to account for the timeliness and quality of their service, enabling effective action to be taken in response to our areas for improvement. A

consistent finding from all inspection and peer review activity has been that we know ourselves well.

1.6 The majority of the recommendations from the inspection have now been met. Although significant progress has been achieved, the following recommendations remain outstanding:

- **Rec. 5:** Ensure that strategy meetings and decisions are informed by relevant partner agencies
- **Rec. 8:** Ensure assessments for children in need of help and protection and children looked after are timely, consistently consider the full range of children's needs, contain thorough analysis and are routinely updated to reflect changes in circumstances.
- **Rec. 9:** Ensure that plans to help children in need of help and protection, looked after children and care leavers, are specific, clear, outcome-focused, and include timescales and contingencies so that families and professionals understand what needs to happen to improve circumstances for children. This includes improving the clarity of letters before proceedings so that the expectations of parents are clear.
- **Rec. 12:** Improve the timeliness of initial health assessments so that children who become looked after have their health needs assessed within the expected timescales.
- **Rec. 7:** Strengthen frontline practice to ensure effective action is taken to support children who go missing
- **Rec. 16:** Strengthen commissioning arrangements to ensure that services meet the needs of families and children in need of help and protection and children looked after by improving the use of family group conferences so that all possible options for children are consistently explored. **Whilst we have decided not to implement a traditional Family Group Conferences model we will continue to strengthen core social work practice by using Connected Person's meetings, so that all possible options are explored for children and young people.**

2 Recommendations

2.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

1. Scrutinise progress against the Ofsted recommendations
2. Endorse the recommendation that dedicated improvement monitoring activity is replaced by business as usual activities to reduce duplication
3. Endorse the recommendation that the HWBB will continue to monitor progress through six monthly progress reports on the recommendations that have not yet been met

3 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is the accountable body for the Children's Improvement Plan in relation to the recommendations from the Ofsted inspection in July 2015, therefore needs to ensure progress against the recommendations is scrutinised.

3.2 Cheshire East has been on a four year improvement journey since our inadequate inspection in March 2013. Since this time, progress against the Ofsted recommendations and the quality of Children's Social Care services have been scrutinised and reported separately, and dedicated forums and scorecards have been developed to support challenge on progress in these areas. The majority of recommendations have now been met, and we are in a significantly stronger position than we were in the last inspection in July 2015. Over time, arrangements have been increasingly brought within business as usual service development activity, and this activity has appropriately moved to a focus on achieving good quality practice rather than meeting the Ofsted recommendations or measuring compliance with these. However, some dedicated improvement activity remains which is a legacy of our journey and is increasingly becoming a duplication of existing processes.

3.3 It is recommended that progress is monitored against the outstanding recommendations as these are the key areas that need to be improved.

4 Impact on Health and Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

4.1 The Children's Improvement Plan contributes to the Health and Wellbeing priority of 'starting and developing well' by improving how we safeguard our most vulnerable children and young people.

5 Background and Options

5.1 Please see the full progress report for more information. For more information on our adoption of Signs of Safety please see our [Signs of Safety Strategy](#).

6 Access to Information

6.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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