

PEOPLE (CHILDREN) SCRUTINY PANEL

13 June 2013

CHILD PROTECTION ACTION PLAN

Report of the Strategic Director for People

STRATEGIC AIM:	Creating a Brighter Future for All
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides Scrutiny with the Action Plan setting out how the areas for improvement identified in the Ofsted inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children will be addressed.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **That Scrutiny notes the Ofsted Child Protection Action Plan.**

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The Ofsted Inspection Report has been presented to Children's Scrutiny Panel and to Cabinet previously

3.2 On 16 April 2013, Cabinet made the decision that the two areas for improvement specified as within six months occur within four months, with a further report to Cabinet at the end of July 2013.

3.3 The original Action Plan has therefore been revised to ensure that the key actions can be completed within this new timescale.

3.4 **Areas for improvement**

The actions required to improve the quality of help and protection given to children and young people in Rutland set out in the Ofsted report are as follows:

Immediately:

- 1) Ensure that decision making regarding new referrals is consistent and robust, clearly and fully recorded and subject to regular management overview
- 2) Ensure that all children in need cases have a clear plan focused on addressing their assessed needs and that the progress and appropriateness of the plan is regularly reviewed
- 3) Ensure that management case discussions clearly record any decisions made and, where relevant, timescales for agreed actions.

Within three months:

- 4) Establish robust processes for cases moving between support provided under the common assessment framework (CAF) and targeted social care interventions, including clear and well recorded access to social work advice and expertise.
- 5) Improve the consistency and quality of work undertaken under the CAF
- 6) Ensure that Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Board provides effective scrutiny and challenge of the progress of work being undertaken to improve early help services in Rutland
- 7) Undertake a safeguarding audit of open disabled children's cases and review the arrangements for management oversight of this work.

Within six months:

- 8) Ensure performance management and quality assurance arrangements include a clear and consistent focus on service quality and that progress in key areas of improvement is regularly evaluated
- 9) Establish arrangements to strengthen the influence of the experiences and views of children and their families in the development of child protection and children in need services.

3.5 The Action Plan attached sets out how the improvements will be made. This represents a significant programme of change to improve the quality of work undertaken with children and families, including the quality assurance arrangements and the influence of the views of children and families. Ofsted recognised the high quality of child protection work and this action plan builds on this to improve the effectiveness of interventions to those needing less intensive levels of support, i.e. early help and child in need services. Most of the work is well underway or has been completed. The plan is supported by more detailed and longer term team plans to ensure that it is well-implemented and sustainable. There is a high level of commitment from staff to delivering these improvements, which should also place children's services in a stronger position for future inspections.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

RISK	IMPACT	COMMENTS
Time	L	The actions are achievable within the timescales.
Viability	L	There is the capacity and capability to implement the required improvements.
Finance	L	The improvements can be made within existing resources.
Profile	M	If the actions are not addressed this could attract significant attention. There would also be a risk to the outcome of future Ofsted inspections.
Equality and Diversity	L	The Action Plan addresses the needs of vulnerable children, young people and families.

Report Author
Wendy Poynton

Tel No: (01572) 722577
e-mail: enquiries@rutland.gov.uk

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.