



Report of Corporate Management Team

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**Councillor Ossie Johnson, Cabinet Member for Children and
Young People**

Purpose of the report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet details on the new Ofsted Single Inspection Framework (SIF) for Children's Services.

Background

- 2 From November 2013, Ofsted brought together child protection, services for looked after children and care leavers and local authority fostering and adoption services into one single inspection framework for children's services – the Single Inspection Framework (SIF). Running parallel to the SIF, there will also be an inspection of the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).
- 3 The implementation of multi-agency inspections was deferred by Ofsted, however work is currently ongoing with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), HMI Probation, HMI Constabulary and HMI Prisons, on the development of a new joint multi-agency inspection framework, which is due to be implemented from April 2015.
- 4 Based upon a three-yearly inspection cycle it is anticipated that Durham will be inspected between October and December 2014 as Durham was last inspected in November 2011. However, inspection is unannounced and could be called at any time.
- 5 At our last inspections in 2011, safeguarding services were judged to be 'outstanding' and services for Looked after Children (LAC) were judged to be 'good'. The local authority's adoption and fostering services were each judged to be 'outstanding' at their last respective Ofsted inspections in 2010.

Scope

- 6 The scope of the Single Inspection Framework is very broad and will cover:
- Children and young people who are receiving or who need early help.
 - Children and young people who are referred to the local authority and are assessed (or not).
 - Children and young people who become the subject of a child protection plan or have been the subject of a plan and need continuing support.
 - Children who are receiving support through a child in need plan.
 - Children looked after (with a plan for adoption, to return home, special guardianship or residence order, living with a foster family) and children accommodated.
 - Care leavers.

The Judgements

- 7 Inspectors will make a judgement on the **overall effectiveness** of services and arrangements for children looked after, care leavers and children who need help and protection. This is a cumulative judgement derived from the performance grade assigned to each of the following key and graded judgements:

Judgement Type	Judgement Area
Key	The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection.
Key <i>Graded*</i> <i>Graded*</i>	The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence. This key judgement is based on the following <i>graded</i> judgements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adoption performance• Experiences and progress of care leavers
Key	Leadership, management and governance.

**A graded judgement describes significant and statutory aspects of provision for looked after children, care leaders and leadership.*

- 8 All judgements, whether they are key or graded, are measured using a four point scale:
- Outstanding
 - Good
 - Requires improvement (which replaces 'adequate' in the previous framework)
 - Inadequate
- 9 A judgement of 'inadequate' in any of the three key judgements will limit the overall effectiveness judgement to inadequate.

Key Changes

- 10 There are significant changes in comparison to previous inspection frameworks.

There will be a greater emphasis on:

- the child's 'journey';
- leadership and management oversight at all levels;
- early help;
- scrutiny of practice; and
- performance information and documentation.
- 'good' is used as the benchmark;
- 'requires improvement' will replace the 'adequate' judgement.
- Less interest in focus groups, partnerships and what professionals think and more in practice and user experience.

Inspection Results to date

- 11 To date, 11 Single Inspection Framework inspections have been completed and all reports have been published on the Ofsted website. Of these, only 5 have received an overall effectiveness judgement of at least 'good' and only 3 LSCB judgements have been 'good'. Details are attached at Appendix 2.

Preparing for the Inspection

- 12 Work has begun in Durham to prepare for the forthcoming inspection. This includes the following:

- **Benchmarking** Durham's current position and identifying necessary actions against inspection reports published to date.
- **A 'mock inspection'** carried out by a neighbouring Local Authority and subsequent action planning to address areas for improvement identified.
- Collating the **information, documentation and performance data** requested by Ofsted.
- Preparing a **Self-Assessment** for County Durham, highlighting the current position against the framework, key strengths and areas for development.

The role of the Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Children's Services in the SIF

- 13 A key judgement area in the Single Inspection Framework is around leadership, management and governance. If the council is judged to be 'inadequate' in this key judgement area, this will limit the overall effectiveness of the whole inspection to 'inadequate'. The Ofsted inspection handbook outlines the meetings inspectors will require with senior staff, including the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and the Lead Member. These meetings will be in addition to individual interviews with inspectors during the inspection fieldwork period.

- 14 It should also be noted that benchmarking with other authorities has shown that inspectors have also engaged with members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Children and Young People, the Corporate Parenting Panel and local partnerships, such as the Children and Families Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Board. Presentations on the inspection process are being delivered to the relevant committees and partnership boards within Durham.
- 15 Ofsted guidance and learning from other LA's shows that key areas inspectors will be looking for those interviewed to demonstrate include:
- Inspirational, confident, ambitious, visible, innovative and influential leadership which changes the lives of children, young people and their families and ensures the highest-quality services are provided.
 - Effective implementation and evaluation of change to respond to changing needs and the performance of services and staff.
 - A comprehensive knowledge about what is happening at the 'front line' and an understanding of how well we are performing, including both strengths and weaknesses.
 - Examples of rigorous and timely challenge to address concerns and the difference this has made.
 - An awareness of the views of the views of children, young people and their families and using these to influence strategic thinking.
 - Effective partnership working with clear, embedded accountabilities and responsibilities.
 - A successful and effective role as a Corporate Parent, testing for commitment, knowledge and ambition for services and in relation to their Corporate Parenting responsibilities within the context of budget cuts.
 - The Chief Executive and/or Lead Elected Member holding the LSCB Chair to account.

Recommendations and reasons

- 16 Cabinet are recommended to note the implications for the Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Children and Young People in relation to the inspection and implications for the committees of the Council including Overview and Scrutiny and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Background papers

- [Ofsted Single Inspection Framework and Evaluation Schedule](#)
- [Ofsted Single Inspection Framework Inspection Handbook](#)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance	None
Staffing	The SIF will impact upon strategic and frontline staff in Children and Adults Services and partner agencies
Risk	<p>There is a reputational risk to the Council should the rating fall below 'good' which is the accepted benchmark.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Education has the power to intervene if he considers that a Local authority is failing in its safeguarding duties toward children</p>
Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty	All equality and diversity issues have been considered in developing quality processes within CAS.
Accommodation	None
Crime and Disorder	None
Human Rights	None
Consultation	Ofsted consulted on the SIF in June-July 2013 and the LSCB in October 2013. Following the outcomes of those consultations Ofsted published the SIF evaluation framework and inspection handbook in November 2013.
Procurement	None
Disability Issues	These are considered as part of the local authority's commitment to equality and diversity.
Legal Implications	<p>The inspection will be carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA).</p> <p>The LSCB review will be conducted under 15(A) of the Children Act 2004.</p>

Appendix 2: Inspection results to date

Local Authority	Inspection Date	Overall Effectiveness	The Effectiveness of the LSCB	Previous Inspection Judgement
Derbyshire	19-Nov-13	Good	Requires Improvement	Safeguarding – Good LAC – Good (Mar 2011)
Hartlepool	19-Nov-13	Good	Requires Improvement	Safeguarding – Good LAC – Good (Oct 2009)
Hillingdon	25-Nov-13	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Safeguarding – Good LAC – Good (Jun 2010)
Slough	19-Nov-13	Inadequate	Inadequate	Safeguarding – Inadequate LAC – Adequate (Apr 2011)
Sheffield	19-Nov-13	Requires Improvement	Good	Safeguarding - Adequate LAC - Adequate (Oct 2010)
Bolton	14-Jan-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Safeguarding – Good LAC – Good (Feb 2012)
Coventry	28-Jan-14	Inadequate	Inadequate	Safeguarding – Good LAC – Adequate (Mar 2011)
East Sussex	14-Jan-14	Good	Good	Safeguarding – Good LAC – Adequate (Nov 2010)
Essex	14-Jan-14	Good	Requires Improvement	Safeguarding – Inadequate LAC – Adequate (Jun 2010)
Hounslow	14-Jan-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Safeguarding – Good LAC – Good (Sep 2009)
Staffordshire	14-Jan-14	Good	Good	Safeguarding - Adequate LAC - Adequate (Jun 2009)