



**Buckinghamshire County Council**

## **Select Committee**

Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

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# **Report to the Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee**

<b>Title:</b>	Children's Services Improvement Programme Actions from Third Monitoring Visit
<b>Committee date:</b>	Tuesday 5 September 2017
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<b>Cabinet Member sign-off:</b>	Cllr Warren Whyte

### **Purpose of Agenda Item**

To inform the Select Committee on the outcome of the third Ofsted Monitoring Visit and actions taken to address areas for improvement.

### **Background**

The Children's Improvement Programme was set up in response to the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Safeguarding Services in August 2014. Since the last report to Select Committee, Ofsted have been undertaking a series of Monitoring Visits which have concluded that improvements have been made to services for children and families but that there is more work to be done to ensure a consistent, quality service is provided to all children, young people and families.

This paper focuses on the outcome of the third Monitoring Visit undertaken in April 2017 and actions that have been taken to in response to the areas the inspectors identified as requiring further improvement.



## **Summary**

The third monitoring visit from Ofsted took place in April 2017, during which inspectors looked at the quality of assessment and planning for children looked after, the quality of care placements and placement support and how the County Council fulfils its 'corporate parenting' role for looked after children.

The inspectors concluded that the County Council is "making steady progress in improving the quality of services to children looked after" in their monitoring visit letter published on 13 June 2017 (see appendix 1).

Ofsted inspectors noted that 'improved practice is evident in respect of services and support provided to children looked after' and that 'an improved focus on care planning has resulted in the majority of children's plans having clear actions and timescales'. Inspectors also stated that 'the development of an increasingly stable workforce, with manageable caseloads, has been critical to the progress achieved to date. Social workers spoken to by inspectors are positive about working in Buckinghamshire and morale is good.' Whilst progress is being made, the inspectors noted that there is more work to be done to ensure consistency of practice to further improve outcomes for children.

Appendix 2 sets out the actions that have been taken in response to the areas for further improvement that were identified by the inspectors. This was presented to the Improvement Board in July 2017 and all actions have been incorporated into the refreshed Improvement Plan.

At the time of writing, the letter in relation to the 4<sup>th</sup> Monitoring Visit, which took place in July 2017, had not been published. Following publication of the letter (due 24<sup>th</sup> August), a response report will be produced and actions embedded in the Improvement Plan.

## **Key issues**

See Appendix 2

## **Next steps**

The Improvement Board will monitor progress against the actions as part of their ongoing monitoring of the Improvement Plan.