

Title	Children's Services Update
Date	7 November 2017
Report of:	Tolis Vouyioukas - Executive Director Children's Services Cllr Warren Whyte - Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Lead contacts:	Carol Douch – Service Director, Children's Social Care Sarah Callaghan – Service Director, Education

Purpose of this report:

1. To provide the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update on current priorities within Children's Services.

Recommendation for the Health and Wellbeing Board:

1. To note the report and the specific issues identified in relation to children's health and wellbeing.

Preparation for Ofsted

1. The re-inspection of children's safeguarding services under the Single Inspection Framework is due before December 2017. The inspection will last for four weeks and lead to judgements on the following areas:
 - Overall effectiveness
 - The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection
 - The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence including adoption performance and the experiences and progress of care leavers
 - Leadership, management and governance
2. The lead inspector will phone the Director of Children's Services before 9.30am on the Monday morning to inform him that the inspection will start and the inspection team will be onsite on the Tuesday morning.
3. A significant amount of work has been undertaken over the last few months to ensure Buckinghamshire County Council and partner agencies are prepared for the inspection.
4. All partner agencies will be involved in the inspection both through multi-agency case tracking audits, interviews and focus groups.
5. A 'welcome presentation' has been developed to give the inspectors an overview of Buckinghamshire and the improvement journey we have been on since 2014.
6. A series of 'storyboards' have also been developed for staff and partners setting out the improvements at each stage of the child's journey, impact on outcomes for children and areas for further development.

7. An independent improvement consultant is currently working with senior managers in children's social care to provide external scrutiny, challenge and support in key areas of practice identified through a self-evaluation process.

Social Care Update

1. On average, there are 780 referrals for statutory social care in Buckinghamshire each month. Of these, around 67% progress into social care.
2. There the table below shows the number of children and young people open to social care services compared to a year ago.

	Sept 2016	Sept 2017
Number of Children in Need	1695	1407
Number of children on a Child Protection Plan	535	579
Number of Children Looked After	442	455
Number of Care Leavers	188	204

3. There are a number of specific issues in relation to the health of our looked after children which are currently being reviewed by a multi-agency working group to ensure clear processes are in place to assess and monitor the health of our looked after children across the agencies. This includes improving performance against the following KPIs. This work is being overseen by the Corporate Parenting Panel.

	Current performance*
% initial health assessments are completed within 28 days of becoming looked after	79% (Aug 2017)
Current looked after children, who have been looked after for at least 12 months, with an up to date health assessment (in the last 6 months for CLA aged under 5, and in the last 12 months for CLA aged 5-plus)	65% (Sept 2017)
Current looked after children, who have been looked after for at least 12 months, who have had a dental check in the last 12 months	44% (Sept 2017)

*based on BCC performance data from children's social care system (LCS)

4. There are robust arrangements in place, both in terms of actions to improve our overall performance for Health Assessments, and in terms of oversight of this work. This includes:
 - An improvement action plan overseen by the Joint Commissioners to drive performance, which is supported by the multi-agency Working Group.
 - The Corporate Parenting Panel receives and scrutinises regular performance reports and updates against the improvement action plan.
 - The Named Nurse for Children in Care at Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust (BHT) has implemented robust tracking of all Initial and Review Health Assessment pathways. Escalation processes are invoked where there is delay or potential delay to ensure consent/ documentation in a timely way. Weekly reporting for Initial and Review Health Assessments support effective escalation.
 - An action plan has been formulated to improve headline reporting around Review Health Assessments.

- The Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have led the recruitment/training of a small pool of GPs to supplement assessment capacity for children and young people who meet agreed criteria. This pool has been used to good effect to complete assessments, when children are placed out of county or on our boarders.
 - In relation to Review Health Assessments specifically, a process for enduring consent is being developed, which will reduce the need to seek consent again at each Review Health Assessment.
5. The Working Group is also looking more broadly at how the Health Assessment process can be used to support improved outcomes and access to services for children and young people. In particular joint working between Children's Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and BHT has led to the development of a revised pathway to enable consistent and timely early identification of mental health needs through the use of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire as part of the Health Assessment process.

SEND Update

1. Buckinghamshire is due a Local Area SEND inspection undertaken by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). It will cover all services for SEND across Health, Education and Social Care and will focus attention on 3 key questions:
 - How effectively do we identify children and young people with SEND?
 - How effectively do we assess and meet the needs of children and young people with SEND?
 - How effectively so we improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND?
2. The inspection team will be made up of Ofsted and CQC inspectors including a specially recruited and trained SEN Ofsted Inspector, usually a serving practitioner in another local authority. The local authority will receive 5 days' notice of the inspection and the inspection itself will last for 5 days.
3. In Buckinghamshire we have clearly identified areas requiring development and these are reflected in our Improvement Plan. Delivery against this plan is monitored through weekly touchdowns, and a monthly core group meeting, as well as an overarching scorecard that provides statistical data for ongoing monitoring.
4. The strategic oversight of the implementation of the SEND reforms sits with a newly established Integrated Services Board (July 2017) and this has been integral to creating shared ownership and accountability across the local area. An integrated dashboard is under development to support continuous improvement. Currently the dashboard focuses primarily on local authority services; however, work is underway to extend this across Health to ensure a fuller data set is informing developments. Data relating to timeliness of Education Health and Care needs assessments and waiting lists has been requested from health services including community Paediatricians, mental health services, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, and Physiotherapy.
5. Whilst there is more to do to ensure children with SEND and their families receive a high quality and timely service, we are confident that appropriate action is taking place to move forward. We are working very closely with both the SEND Youth Forum and FACT Bucks (parent/carer forum) to ensure that the child and parent

voice is integral to all developments.

6. A pilot project, due to launch in November 2017, will roll out a new approach that fulfils all requirements of the SEND reforms. This aims to ensure children receive the appropriate support from an early stage without the need for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or specialist placements where possible, ensuring access to specialist advice and support without an EHCP. Focusing more resource on early identification and support will free up capacity to enable our children with the most complex needs who do need an EHCP to have their needs met in a timely way, including specialist placements and care packages as appropriate.
7. An overview of some of the key data relating to SEND is provided below. It clearly identifies the significant crossover between Education and Social Care and the need for all services to be working together. For example, of the 3656 children with EHCPs/Statements, 778 are also known to Social Care. Children with SEN support are overrepresented in exclusion figures (45 out of 119 exclusions in 2016/17 academic year).
8. A commitment to joint working, co-production, the pooling of budgets and development all age pathways are key aspects that the Integrated Service Board will be taking forward in the coming weeks.

SEND and Social Care

September 2017 data

Number of Statements and EHC Plans Maintained by BCC	3606
Number of Statements and EHC Plans Financed by BCC	3656
Number of Children in Need with a Statement/ EHC Plan either financed or maintained by BCC (includes Looked After Children and Child Protection)	589
Number of Looked After Children with a Statement/ EHC Plan either financed or maintained by BCC	130
Number of Children on a Child Protection Plan with a Statement/ EHC Plan either financed or maintained by BCC	59