

Surrey Social Care Services Board

Ofsted update 25 June 2015



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Ofsted update

- **October/ November 2014:** inspection of local authority and Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) under pilot framework.
- **January 2015:**
 - publication due but withheld as local authority engaged in complaints process.
 - Improvement Board established - chaired by Deputy Leader with cross party membership.
 - Focus on key themes of improvement.
- **May 2015:** confirmation that SSCB report not to be published.
- **June 2015:** publication of local authority inspection.



The judgements on areas of the service that contribute to overall effectiveness are:		
1. Children who need help and protection		Inadequate
2. Children looked after and achieving permanence		Requires improvement
	2.1 Adoption performance	Good
	2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Requires improvement
3. Leadership, management and governance		Inadequate



What does the local authority need to improve?



Key themes of improvement focus

- Early help/child in need (CIN) interface
 - step up and step down process
 - CIN plans
 - monitoring and tracking
 - management oversight
- child sexual exploitation and missing children
- practice quality of plans
- review independence of principal social worker role
- leadership and management.



Improvement recommendations

- **Priority and immediate action (recommendations 1-11)**
 - leadership, management and governance
 - management oversight of quality of practice.
- **Area for improvement (recommendations 12-25)**
 - training
 - assessment and care planning for looked after children
 - care leavers
 - performance information
 - review of principal social worker role.



The local authority's strengths



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Inspectors highlighted the following strengths:

- **Surrey Family Support Programme:** In response to the Government's troubled families' initiative, intensive support to families is provided through the programme.
 - worked with 858 families
 - successfully 'turned around' 412 families (31 March 2014).
- **Culture, ethnicity, disability and gender:**
 - We give good consideration to children and young people's culture, ethnicity, disability and gender when working with families.
 - Positive use is made of interpreting services to support families where English is not their first language.



- **Support for care leavers:** to access higher education is good and the local authority funds university fees and accommodation where necessary.
- **Staying put policy:** This policy is well developed and young people are effectively encouraged to stay with their foster carers where possible. This supports young people in making the transition to early adulthood and independence.



- **Children in care council:** an active group of young people who benefit from a range of activities and whose contribution to developing services that affect their lives is valued and positively responded to by leaders and councillors.
- **Adoption:**
 - Family finding is a strength of the adoption service, and priority is given to securing the most suitable permanence option to meet children's needs.
 - Workers are committed and determined to secure adoption, and use a range of family finding activities.
 - Brothers and sisters are placed together wherever possible.
- **Extended Hours Service:** undertakes effective edge of care work with children aged 10 to 15. Last year, the service worked with 224 children, of whom only 18 became looked after.



Next steps

- Development of a skilled and experienced children's workforce.
- Recruitment and retention of social workers.
- Management development - with a specific focus on social care managers.
- Embedded enhanced quality assurance.
- Reducing caseloads.
- Clarification of future models of service delivery.
- IT solutions to support tracking, monitoring and other manual data and performance tasks.
- Refresh of the early help approach.
- Development of a countywide partnership Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) across the lifecycle, which supports the early help and safeguarding continuum.
- Joining up strategic plans.



Ofsted improvement framework

- Report published 3 June
- Formal action plan - 70 working days
- Requirement to establish an Improvement Board
 - This may require a review of current arrangements and membership.

