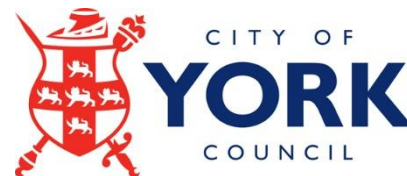


Ofsted Action Plan

City of York Council



Background

Children's Services were inspected by Ofsted in March 2022 under the Inspection of Local Authority Children Services (ILACS) framework.

The inspection report was published on the 4th May 2022 and is available through the Ofsted website¹.

The overall inspection judgement was that York 'Required improvement to be good'. The judgements contributing to this outcome are shown below:

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Requires improvement to be good
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement to be good

This Ofsted Action Plan will be regularly monitored through the council's Children's Service's Assurance and Ambition Board. The dates given in the plan have been set to ensure pace of change for these recommendations. Where the need for further action is identified the plan will be updated to ensure continued progress.

The purpose of the Assurance and Ambition Plan is to oversee and drive service improvement and ensure children and young people have services which understand their lived experience and deliver positive outcomes.

The Assurance and Ambition Board meets on a quarterly basis and is chaired by the Chief Operating Officer and attended by Lead Member for Children, Young People and Education.

Alongside the Assurance and Ambition board there are further weekly and monthly oversight of performance and improvement activity driven by the Corporate Director for Children's Services and the Director for Children's Safeguarding.

Further challenge and assurance will take place through the Executive and Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee as required.

The City of York Safeguarding Children's Partnership will be an important forum to deliver the changes needed across multi-agency partners as well as the Youth Justice board. The work required to improve children's services does not sit in isolation and will be closely linked through the CYSCP to improvement activity undertaken by North Yorkshire Police, health, and partners across the city.

¹ <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50182483>

Version control

Version	Date
1.0 – CEC Scrutiny input	28/06/2022
2.0 – Updates following DLUHC visit	07/07/2022
3.0 – Updated following input from children and young people	13/07/2022

1) The consistency of written records so that they provide an accurate account of decision-making for all children.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
Review Children's Social Care practice standards for the quality of written records. Ensure practice standards reflect the quality of written records expected and how these are shared and agreed with families.	Head of MASH, Head of Safeguarding Interventions DCS	01/07/2022	This action has been completed. The practice standards have been updated and are being rolled out across children's social care.
Develop and deliver Action Learning Sets that drive purposeful home visiting and recording.	Head of QA	01/07/2022	Young people have developed 'top tips' for social workers when updating written records. Action Learning Sets have been delivered since May with successful attendance. Dip sampling to measure progress made is scheduled for October 2022. A schedule of further practice development through Action Learning Sets has been developed.
Review the library of good practice to share examples of good quality written records and clear accounts of decision making.	Head of QA	01/08/2022	This review is currently underway. Once completed other sections of the good practice library will be reviewed and shared.
Identify any system changes required in Mosaic to drive practice and ensure clear and accurate record decision making. Implementation will be taken forward through the Mosaic Governance Group.	Business Intelligence/HoS QA	01/08/2022	This review is currently underway.
We will be assured of improvements through the Quality Assurance framework (auditing, dip sampling and direct feedback from children, young people and families).	Head of QA	Quarterly reporting	The audit framework now specifically requests the auditor to comment on the quality and consistency of written records.
We will ensure external and independent assurance of the progress made against this action as part of programme of regional peer support and commissioned external reviews.	DCS	Ongoing	The schedule for Sector Lead Improvement and regional peer challenges through ADCS Humber and Yorkshire has been recently published.

Expected Outcomes

- Written records are up to date, accurate and show clear accountability of decision making for children and young people.
- That our workforce has the skills, knowledge and capability to maintain high quality written records. This will be evidenced through our Quality Assurance framework.
- Children young people and families are fully engaged, part of the completion of plans and can clearly understand and are involved in decision making.

2) The quality of assessments to ensure that they consistently inform care planning.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
Review Children's Social Care practice standards in relation to assessments. Ensure practice standards set clear expectations for the quality of assessments and how they inform decision making.	Head of MASH, Head of QA DCS	01/07/2022	This action has been completed. The practice standards have been updated and are being rolled out across children's social care.
Refresh practice standards with Service Managers about what constitutes a good, analytical assessment that informs planning. This includes the expectation of management oversight to ensure assessments are of good quality and inform plans.	Head of MASH, Head of QA	01/08/2022	The session materials are currently being developed ahead of standards being shared in July.
To review and strengthen the care plan and planning process and how it is driven by assessment. This includes identifying any changes required in Mosaic to drive improved practice.	Head of Corporate Parenting	01/08/2022	The review of the care plan is underway.
To develop further the practice model for York and the consistent application of the model to inform assessment and planning.	Head of QA	01/09/2022	The Systemic Practice model has been rolled out across York. This is being developed further to support social workers deliver consistently high-quality practice.
We will be assured of improvements through the Quality Assurance framework (auditing, dip sampling and direct feedback from children, young people and families).	Head of QA	Quarterly reporting	The QA framework will report progress to the Assurance and Ambition Board.
We will ensure external and independent assurance of the progress made against this action as part of programme of regional peer support and commissioned external reviews.	DCS	Ongoing	The schedule for Sector Lead Improvement and regional peer challenges through ADCS Humber and Yorkshire has been recently published.

Expected Outcomes

- All assessments are succinct purposeful and written in a language that the child and their family will understand. Clear consistency across all teams. This will be measured through the Quality Assurance Framework.
- The findings of assessments inform the plan for the child with clear expected outcomes. This will be measured through the Quality Assurance Framework.

3) The effectiveness of social work supervision in progressing plans for children and addressing practice shortfalls.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
Continue to drive social work supervision in line with practice standards.	All HoS	Performance reviewed weekly	Compliance with practice standards for supervision are monitored weekly. The DCS leads a monthly support and challenge session with Heads of Service which includes the effectiveness of supervision.
The revised supervision template and process to be reviewed.	Head of Corporate Parenting	01/08/2022	This review is underway and includes involvement from managers and social workers. A new supervision template has been agreed and is now being implemented.
Heads of Service to regularly sample supervisions within their service and act upon their findings. Track the impact of social work supervision through Quality Assurance in line with refreshed practice standards.	Head of QA	Quarterly reporting	Supervision is now included in every audit template including thematic audits.
We will ensure external and independent assurance of the progress made against this action as part of programme of regional peer support and commissioned external reviews.	DCS	Ongoing	The schedule for Sector Lead Improvement and regional peer challenges through ADCS Humber and Yorkshire has been recently published.

Expected Outcomes

- Supervision demonstrates the child's plan is regularly discussed, updated and progress made.
- The risk of drift and delay against the plan is significantly reduced, where delay has occurred this is clearly documented with mitigating actions.
- Heads of Service will have a better understanding of the quality and impact of supervision in their service areas. This will be addressed through the monthly driving practice and performance sessions led by the DCS.
- Staff will be better supported to make planned, timely and meaningful change. We would see improved performance through our Quality Assurance Framework and case tracking system.

4) The analysis of return home interviews.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
Undertake an end-to-end review of our approach to 'missing from home' episodes for all children and young people. As a result of changes introduce a strengthened process and clear expectations for the analysis of missing episodes and how this informs plans.	Head of Service for MASH, Assessment and Targeted Intervention	01/08/2022	The review of the missing from home protocol and analysis is currently underway. Young people have been engaged in addressing this action. Young people have shared thoughts on raising awareness with young people about the process and that the interview is undertaken by an independent person.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
			Action Learning Sets will be used to support social workers use the new protocol and analyse missing from home episodes.
Introduce a regular multi agency review of repeat missing episodes to identify themes and strengthen the response/support available. This will be integrated with exiting mechanisms for exploitation.	Head of Service for MASH, Assessment and Targeted Intervention	01/07/2022	This action has been completed through the Exploitation lead and Multi-Agency Child Exploitation and Missing meetings.
Track the progress of this action through Quality Assurance in line with refreshed practice standards.	Head of QA	Quarterly reporting	Missing from Home and Care is a now thematic item on the QA schedule.
We will ensure external and independent assurance of the progress made against this action as part of programme of regional peer support and commissioned external reviews.	DCS	Ongoing	The schedule for Sector Lead Improvement and regional peer challenges through ADCS Humber and Yorkshire has been recently published.

Expected Outcomes

- A better understanding of why children go missing and the responses that are required.
- A consistent and timely response to all children and young people who go missing.
- Reduced number of repeat missing episodes and a better response to the cumulative impact of harm.

5) Responses to children aged 16 and 17 who present as homeless.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
Extend access to advocacy for this group of young people.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	01/04/2022	This action has been completed. Advocacy for 16- and 17-year-olds who present as homeless is provided by the Speak Up Service (Children's Rights and Advocacy). The DLUHC has reviewed York's advocacy provision in July 2022 and has reflected the strength of the model and will be using it as an example of good practice.
Update the 16- and 17-year-old homeless protocol. This will provide a clear pathway for young people to access independent support and advice.	Head of MASH, Assessment and Targeted Interventions	15/07/2022	The protocol for 16- and 17-year-olds who present as homeless has been updated. The DLUHC has reviewed York's updated housing protocol. The review identified strengths locally in the support available to young people. We will continue to work with the DLUHC regionally to improve further.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
To ensure practitioners across housing and children's social care are aware of the new protocol and their duties and responsibilities.	All HoS	01/08/2022	The roll out of the updated protocol has been completed following positive feedback from the DLUHC.
Work jointly with young people to review and revise the information made available to young people to advise them of their rights.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	01/08/2022	This has now been completed. A new leaflet and online information has been developed. This has been reviewed by the DLUHC and will be shared as an example of good practice.

Expected Outcomes

- These young people will have a full understanding of their rights and access to independent advocacy.
- That the protocol for 16- and 17-year-olds presenting as homeless is fit for purpose.
- That practitioners are delivering their duties as set out in the protocol.

6) The pace of planning for children in unregistered children's homes.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
To establish weekly oversight from the Director of safeguarding and Head of all age commissioning of any children in unregistered placements and to ensure there is a timely and clear plan to move to a registered children's provision or take timely steps to register provision.	DCS	01/04/2022	This action has been completed. Weekly oversight is in place.
Increase our placement finding capacity.	Head of Corporate Parenting	01/05/2022	This action has been completed. We have increased our placement finding capacity and currently in active recruitment.
To review any historic children in unregistered placements in the last two years to identify learning that would have prevented the use of unregistered placements or resolved them in a more timely manner.	Head of QA IRO Service Manager	01/09/2022	This review is being instigated.

Expected Outcomes

- No children in unregistered or unregulated provision. If children are placed, we will ensure robust contractual management and due diligence.
- Sufficient provision to meet demand. A commissioning framework will be in place and flexible to meet need.

7) Children's influence and attendance at the corporate parenting board.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
To continue the pilot of using Corporate Parenting Advisors to support children's influence and involvement at the Corporate Parenting Board.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	Ongoing	Corporate Parenting advisors will be full members. This was recommended at the Corporate Parenting Board in May 2022
To update the council's constitution for Corporate Parenting and to drive children's influence and attendance.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	14/07/2022	This action has been completed. The revised council constitution has been updated and agreed at Full Council in July.
To build on the voice and participation work, is taking place to develop a clear strategy for co-production between children and young people and children's social care.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	01/09/2022	The voice and involvement group is currently developing a co-production toolkit which will also be used to inform development of the next Children and Young People's Plan.
The Corporate Parenting Board to include children and young people from Show Me That I Matter and I Still Matter as well as Corporate Parenting Advisors.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	12/09/2022	Young people have been directly engaged as to how Corporate Parenting Board meetings should be structured and involved in setting the agenda. This will be in place for the next Corporate Parenting Board in September 2022.
The Speak Up Service and Corporate Parenting Advisors to develop and deliver corporate parenting training to all elected members (July 2022 and full roll out following local elections 2023)	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	31/07/2022	The initial training and briefings are due to be delivered on the 27 th July with recorded versions available for those unable to attend. Further briefing videos and training are being developed as planned.

Expected Outcomes

- We are more effective corporate parents and meet the needs of children and young people across the Council and with Partners.
- That children and young people have more influence and control over key decisions and important factors that affect their lives.
- That children and young people's lived experience influences practice. Clear co-production strategy in place to underpin change.