

Committee(s)	Dated:
Community and Children's Services – For Information	14/10/2016
Audit and Risks – For Information	08/11/2016
Safeguarding Sub-Committee – For Information	17/11/2016
Policy and Resources – For Information	17/11/2016
Subject: Ofsted review of the effectiveness of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
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Summary

This report provides Members with a summary of the outcome of the recent Ofsted review of the effectiveness of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB), carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013. The CHSCB review was separate but concurrent to the Ofsted inspection of the effectiveness of the City of London's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

The CHSCB is a dual-borough Board, covering both the City of London and Hackney due to the range of organisations covering both areas. The CHSCB received two separate judgements of 'Outstanding' for the effectiveness of its work in the City of London and in Hackney respectively. The CHSCB is the first Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in England to have received an 'Outstanding' judgement out of 110 LSCB reviews completed so far.

This report summarises the key findings of the review, as well as the recommendations for the CHSCB to take forward following the review.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

Under the requirements of the Children Act 2004, a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) must be established for every local authority area.

The LSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how statutory partners co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their local area.

The City of London Corporation and Hackney Council agreed to the operation of a dual-borough Board given the range of organisations covering both areas.

Current Position

1. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) was reviewed separately but concurrent to the Ofsted inspection of the City of London's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers from 4–28 July 2016. This review was carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013.
2. The CHSCB received two separate judgements of 'Outstanding' for the effectiveness of its work in the City of London and in Hackney respectively. It is the first LSCB in England to have received an 'Outstanding' judgement.
3. Ofsted combined the reports for the City of London and the review of the CHSCB in accordance with s.152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Inspection findings for the CHSCB's work in the City of London

4. The CHSCB is a highly accomplished safeguarding Board, supported by solid governance arrangements. The separate City and Hackney Executive Boards ensure that rigorous oversight of safeguarding practice in each local authority area is achieved, while also benefiting from economies of scale created through their shared sub-groups.
5. The Independent Chair provides strong, credible and influential leadership, facilitating a culture of openness and challenge that has positively influenced wider partnership working. Safeguarding is a firm priority for all Board members, demonstrated by consistently good levels of attendance, effective engagement in sub-groups, and a strong culture of constructive challenge and debate.
6. The Board's relationship with City of London leaders is highly effective. Governance arrangements are robust, with clear lines of communication between the Independent Chair of the LSCB, the Director for Children's Services, the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Town Clerk.
7. The productive Safeguarding Inter-Board Chairmen's Meeting links the chairs of the LSCB, the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Adult Safeguarding Board and the Safer City Partnership. It shares annual reports and business plans, which feed into strategic documents. As a result, the Board effectively influences partner agencies and provides persistent challenge, to ensure that safeguarding is a golden thread running through all strategic documents.

8. The CHSCB has influenced and supported the City to maintain a strong focus on the safety and wellbeing of children. The Board and City leaders have worked together to engage more closely with private schools, in order to ensure that safeguarding is their first priority. The addition of lay people to the Board has strengthened links to schools and other settings.
9. The Board has made substantial progress in raising awareness of female genital mutilation, forced marriage and child abuse through faith, belief or culture. The Board has worked closely with public health services to influence and monitor the multi-agency response to female genital mutilation.
10. The Board closely monitors the City's 'Prevent' duty and holds agencies to account for driving their response, including awareness-raising and recognition. The City 'Prevent' co-ordinator post is well established. Designated 'Prevent' leads are in place in each Corporation department. Awareness-raising sessions have been held across agencies, foster carers and community groups, and the co-ordinator links with other boroughs to share information and good practice. Risk assessments include awareness of risks within affluent communities.
11. The LSCB supported the City in its highly effective and innovative 'notice the signs' campaign, utilising a range of communication media to raise staff understanding of the signs of child and adult abuse, including child sexual exploitation. This included blogs, a website and a film. Senior leaders, including the Town Clerk, distributed leaflets. This stimulated many conversations with members of the residential and business communities, schools and other agencies involved with children who live or spend time in the City.
12. Early help remains a firm priority for the Board, with the effectiveness of early help services evaluated through the learning and improvement framework and City sub-group. The City early help sub-group has led to improvements in practice and services. Forty partners attended a multi-agency partnership event in February 2016, which included a presentation covering the strategic objectives and operational priorities for early help.
13. The Board maintains a very strong focus on hearing the views of children and using their experiences to influence developments to improve local safeguarding arrangements. In partnership with the City, consultations with children led to the commissioning of a new children's rights service and training sessions for independent reviewing officers on immigration rights.
14. The Board has created and fostered an effective learning culture that extends to frontline practitioners and embraces the community. Professional relationships across the City are based on a team approach, ensuring excellent communication and an atmosphere of continuous improvement.

Recommendations

15. Ofsted identified one recommendation for improvement:

- Take steps to engage with children and families in all diverse communities within the City, for example through the role of lay members.

16. This recommendation will be taken forward through the workplan of the City Executive and reviewed by the work of the City of London's Service Improvement Board.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

17. The outcome of the CHSCB review supports the Corporation's strategic aims:

- Provide modern, efficient and high-quality local services, including policing, within the Square Mile for workers, residents and visitors.
- Provide valued services, such as education, employment, culture and leisure to London and the nation.

18. It also supports the first priority of the Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) Business Plan:

- Priority one – Safeguarding and early help: Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for responding to safeguarding risks, promoting early identification and support to prevent escalation of issues and keeping children and vulnerable adults safe.

Conclusion

19. The DCCS senior leadership team welcomes the recognition of the outstanding work of the CHSCB in the City of London. We are committed to working with the CHSCB to take forward this recommendation and working towards consistently exceptional outcomes for children and young people across the City of London.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Ofsted review of the effectiveness of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (pp. 33–42).

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