

Appendix B

HMICFRS Child Protection Re-Inspection Feedback Overview

The HMICFRS Child Protection Re-Inspection took place at the City of London Police (CoLP) 6th – 10th December 2021. On the 10th the inspection lead gave a HOT debrief to the Chief Officer Team (including the Commissioner) as well as Senior Members of the Specialist Operations Strategic Development and the lead Member for Vulnerability and Safeguarding. The inspection lead praised the officers and staff for their openness and willingness to discuss cases. The information below is a summary of what was discussed in the debrief. Therefore, there is a caveat that between the debrief and the publishing of the report the inspection team can change their opinion on the Force's performance.

Six recommendations were presented in the 2019 report. Overall improvements and strengths were found for all six of them. At the debrief no indication was given by the Inspectorate of whether any would be closed as complete or remain open for further improvement.

During the inspection the team completed 26 case audits, which resulted in 9 = Good, 15 = Require Improvement and 3 = Inadequate. This was a positive change from the results of the 2019 inspection that found 15 cases to be Inadequate.

They found that supervision is far more effective, and cases are less likely to drift and investigation actions to be delayed. Investigating officers for non-internet cases are skilled and all officers are much better at identifying risk to children and making timely referrals. However, work is needed to be done to make sure officers record the voice of all children effected by incidents and crimes with meaningful detail. The inspection team felt more work was needed to improve the way internet cases were dealt with and Peer to Peer Sharing (sexting).

They also found that children in police custody were having to wait longer than expected for the arrival of Appropriate Adults. This is a contracted service which the Force has little direct control over. The Force has already discussed this with the relevant Member of the Police Authority Board.

The inspection team acknowledged that the Force understands the importance of training its workforce and the Learning and Organisational Development team are working to make sure training is provided across the force and that there is a continual learning environment. With being a small force with a small residential population there are a low volume of Child Protection cases, therefore officers need to keep their skills refreshed.

The inspection found that the Police Protection Unit (PPU) had highly motivated staff and are dedicated to their work. There was some concern about the staffing levels and the specialism of some of the supervisory responsibilities. However, the inspection did take place during a time when there had recently been staff promotion and internal movement and PPU were waiting for a new DI to start.

The Areas for Improvement that were discussed in the debrief are being added to our current Child Protection Action Plan so that the relevant teams can start working on those improvements in advance of the full report being published.

The full 2019 HMICFRS Child Protection Inspection Report can be found here-
<https://www.justiceinspectories.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/city-of-london-national-child-protection-inspection/>