Service Improvement Action Plan

Children's Social Care Team, Department of Community and Children's Service

April 2014 to March 2015

The Service Improvement Action Plan contains recommendations from previous inspections namely the Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspection in 2012 and the Fostering Inspection in 2013, plus themes that have been identified through case file audits completed on cases open to the Children and Families Team. More recently there has been a Strengths Based Learning Review in January 2014 and the recommendations from this review have been included within the Service Improvement Action Plan. Overall the judgement made on Children's Services was good, with some outstanding features, however the City of London is ambitious for its children and young people and therefore the Service Improvement Action Plan is aimed at moving us towards being an outstanding service provider and commissioner, now and consistently in the future.

On 12 May 2014 a workshop was held with the Children and Families Service to follow up on the key themes and recommendations from the 'Strengths-Based Learning Review'. The purpose of the session was for the team to meaningfully reflect upon the recommendations from the review, identify solutions for moving from 'good' services to 'outstanding' services and to feed directly into the Service Improvement Action Plan 2014.

There are 100 actions on the Service Improvement Plan, 38 of the actions are currently green and 62 are amber, the amber actions are currently on track to be completed within timescales, there are currently no red actions.

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Priority One: The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection				
Priorities	**Action**	**Who will lead this**	**Date due**	**RAG Status**
1.0 The Common Assessment Framework is used across departments and with external partners. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Needs Analysis of CAF Training.	EIP Co-ordinator	Complete	Green
	• Training Schedule for City of London Staff.	EIP Co-ordinator	June 2014	Amber
	• New staff to have mandatory CAF Training – to be agreed at CEB.	EIP Sub- Group Chair	May 2014	Amber
	• Partnership day to evaluate progress and promote the use of the CAF.	EIP Co-ordinator	July 2014	Amber
	• Impact analysis of outcomes on EIP cases to be shared with partners at development day.	EIP Co-ordinator	June 2014	Amber
	• Work Plan developed for the delivery of EIP for 2014 /2015.	EIP Co-ordinator	June 2014	Amber
	• Practitioners Forum to encourage joint working and support practice issues, reporting into the EIP sub Group.	EIP Co-ordinator	June 2014	Amber

1.1 Children and young People are engaged and contribute to the Child Protection Process. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Clear contractual arrangements are in place with independent reviewing service on expectations in relation to young people's participation. Contract Meeting is due to take place on 29 May 14.	AD People	May 2014	Amber
	• IRO service to produce child/young person's participation plan on how they will be engaging young people in the child protection process.	IRO Service	June 2014	Amber
1.2 Child in Need and Child Protection plans are timely and clear about desired outcomes and how these results will be achieved. **SBLR – Feb 2014** **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2013**	• IRO service to use '*Think Family*' approach i.e. signs of safety in their engagement with children and families.	IRO Service	July 2014	Amber
	• IRO Service to be fully compliant with the IRO Handbook. This will be monitored through quality assurance framework and contractual performance measures.	IRO Service	May 2014	Amber
	• All Child in Need Plans will be reviewed and signed off by a manager following CIN meetings to confirm clear outcomes.	TM	May 2014	Green

Priority Two: The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence

Priorities	Action	Who will lead this	Date due	RAG Status
2.00 That staff in the Children and Families Team are aware and understand what placements are available and how they are sourced. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Team Manger to produce clear protocols and guidance on sourcing placements for children and young people.	TM	July 2014	Amber

2.1 That Looked After Children and Care Leavers are supported in achieving their full potential**.** **SBLR – Feb 2014** **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2013**	• Virtual Head to review and produce a report with recommendations to improve educational support offer to LAC and Care Leavers.	VH	June 2014	Green
	• Adult Learning will provide advice to care leavers transitioning into higher education evidenced in pathway plans.	V.H	June 2014	Amber
2.2 Personal Education Plans reflect the Child young person progress and predicted attainment and Children are supported in attaining their full potential.. **SBLR – Feb 2014** **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2013**	• Virtual Head to support social workers in knowing what information is required on personal education plans.	VH	May 2014	Green
	• Social workers to receive additional training in order to increase their confidence in challenging targets on personal education plans.	V.H	July 2014	Green
2.3 All children who are looked After will have Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire completed. SDQ's. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Systems are in place to ensure that all Looked After Children have SDQ's completed and evidenced by National Indicators.	TM	July 2014	Green
2.4. That Children and Young People are placed where their individual needs are best met. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Develop a Placement Strategy to ensure that workers have an explicit understanding of the resources available.	CSC Service Manager	July 2014	Amber

Priority Three: Adoption Services

Priorities	Action	Who will lead this	Date due	RAG Status
3.0 There are clear protocols and responsibilities between City and Hackney in regard to the Joint adoption panel	• AD People to sign off agreed joint protocols in regard to the adoption panel and responsibility of Agency Decision Maker in the City of London – a meeting to ratify this is scheduled for June 2014.	AD People	June 2014	Green
	• Adoption Consultant to train staff on operational changes to the Adoption Panel. And also raise awareness in relation to the requirements for presenting cases to the panel.	Adoption Consultant	March 2014	Green
3.1 That Adoption Service offered by the City is outstanding.	• Self-assessment to be completed against grade descriptors.	Adoption Consultant	June 2014	Amber

Priority Four: The experiences and progress of care leavers

Priorities	Action	Who will lead this	Date due	RAG Status
4.0 That every care leave has a Pathway Plans completed to a good standard showing the young person progress towards independence. **SBLR - Feb 2014** **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2013**	• Pathways plans to be completed to a high standard and within timescales. This will be monitored in monthly supervision meetings.	SSW	February 2014	Green
	• Develop protocols to ensure that care leavers have relevant support to make the right choices/decisions in relation to their education.	SSW	June 2014	Amber

4.1 Care Leavers feel connected to the City and feel their achievements are celebrated and supported.	• Consultation event to take place with care leaver to encourage their participation. Joint event with care leavers, City Gateway and the Children and Families Team is planned for May 2014.	SW- ER	May 2014	Green
SBLR – Feb 2014 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2013**	• Residential event to be arranged for care leavers. Arrangements have been made for older LAC and Care leavers to attend the event.	SW -ER	July 2014	Green
	• Care leavers to be consulted on how they want to be involved in shaping future services.	SW-ER	July 2014	Amber

Priority Five: The Leadership, management and governance

Priorities	Action	Who will lead this	Date due	RAG Status
5.0 Have a continuous self-challenging focus which expects the best possible practice.	• Quality assurance framework to be updated to encompasses recommendations from Strength Based Learning Review.	CSC SM	Aug 2014	Amber
	• Multi-Agency tool developed by CHSCB to be used on City specific cases. Arrangements have been made for audits to be completed on City cases using a multi-agency tool.	AD People	July 2014	Green
SBLR – Feb 2014				
5.1 To have increased focus on education for Looked After Children to ensure that they achieve their full potential.	• Appointment of a virtual Head Teacher.	AD People	March 2014	Green
SBLR – Feb 2014	• Virtual Head to review and report on support currently being offered to Looked After Children with recommendation on what improvements are required.	Virtual Head, SM	June 2014	Amber

5.2 Raise the profile of Safeguarding across the City of London Corporation and with partner agencies in Education and Early Years Settings. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Increase and sustain membership of Schools and Nurseries on the City Safeguarding Sub Group.	AD People & SM	June 2014	Green
	• City specific training to be delivered on the LADO role and organisational responsibilities.	SM- LADO	Aug 2014	Amber
	• Through City of London Safeguarding Awareness campaign for staff and residents and the recruitment of safeguarding champions across the organisation.	SM'S CSC & ASC	July 2014	Amber
5.3 Departments and agencies are aware of the importance of the Corporate Parenting Role. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Utilise appropriate publications across the corporation to raise awareness of the Corporate Parenting role.	Communication Manager	July 2014	Amber
	• Meetings involving Looked After Children include information and reporting data for Corporate Parenting.	DLT	July 2014	Amber
	• Corporate Parenting to be included as an agenda item on an established multi-agency children's forum such as CEB or Safeguarding Sub group.	DLT	July 2014	Amber
5.4 There is clarity around strategic lead for EIP, with defined roles and responsibilities between EIP Strategic lead and EIP Sub group. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Terms of Reference for EIP sub group are reviewed and roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. A meeting is booked for June 2014.	AD People	July 2014	Green
	• Information about roles and responsibilities for EIP are disseminated across services and to external partners.	Communication Manager	July 2014	Amber

5.5 Increase the use of escalation within the department to address blocks in service provision at an earlier stage. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• There are clear lines of accountability and staff are aware of how to escalate blocks in services.	DLT	July 2014	Amber
	• Flow chart showing the escalation process is clearly defined through the management process, from Team Manager through to DLT.	Communication Manager	July 2014	Amber
5.6 The City of London Children and Families Team has pride in its achievements and build's on these achievements towards excellence. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Through the workforce strategy and knowledge transfer partnership review potential for staff to receive remuneration for additional work and projects.	A.D People	August 2014	Amber
	• Staff have the opportunity to be involved in research based projects with knowledge transfer partnership.	AD People	July 2014	Green
	• The Children and Families Team achievements are recognised and acknowledged by senior management. DLT met with team to celebrate outcome post SBLR.	DLT	July 2014	Green
5.7 The electronic recording system, Frameworki will have the capability to store all case file information. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Children and Families Team to have one system of recording case information, which will be Frameworki.	TM	August 2014	Amber
5.8 Formal supervision takes place on a monthly basis and both formal and informal supervision is recorded. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Revision of Supervision Policy to with clear guidance on regularity of supervision and structure.	SSW	July 2014	Amber
5.9 There consistency in the documentation on case files. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Clear protocol's to be developed around documentation to be used in the Children and Families Team.	TM	July 2014	Amber

Priorities	Action	Who will lead this	Date due	RAG Status
5.10 There is a procedure in place for Children and Families Team to know where to source a placement. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Clear written procedures for sourcing placements to be produced and be accessible to staff.	TM	July 2014	Green
	• Staff to be made aware of the considerations needed to source an appropriate placement.	TM	July 2014	Green
5.11 Staff have their views listened to and feel they have a voice in shaping services. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Analysis of feedback from Children and Families team is shared with the senior management team.	SM	February 2014	Green
	• Actions identified from feedback are agreed and acted on be senior managers. – Social workers are now able to remote work.	SM	April 2014	Green
5.12 Staff in the Children and Families Team are involved in contributing to the improvement plan. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Overarching improvement plan will be shared with the Children and Families Team. May 2014	SM	April 2014	Green
	• Workshops will be facilitated within the Children and Families Team to identify how key operational priorities will be progressed.	SM.	May 2014	Green

Priority Six: Effectiveness of front-line practice, decision-making and case recording

Priorities	Action	Who will lead this	Date due	RAG Status
6.0 That Social Workers focus on the outcomes achieved through social work intervention.	• Through identifying desired outcomes for children and families following an assessment/review.	SSW	July 2014	Amber
	• Through individual face to face feedback on case closures.	TM	July 2014	Amber

SBLR – Feb 2014	• Utilise reflective practice sessions to discuss outcomes based evaluation of children and families and how this is being achieved.	SSW	July 2014	Green
6.1 That all cases have a recorded rationale for decision, which is clear and specific about requirements.	• All decisions need to demonstrate a rationale for any judgement made, and what action, if any is required.	TM	July 2014	Green
SBLR – Feb 2014	• All decision will be on Frameworki as soon as practicable.	TM	July 2014	Green
6.2 Case recordings evidence all the direct work undertaken by social worker with Children and Families.	• Case recordings reflect all social work intervention and direct work with children. Compliance reviewed through the audit cycle.	SSW	July 2014	Amber
	• There is management oversight on the quality and standard of case recording by line managers and senior managers.	SSW	July 2014	Green
SBLR – Feb 2014	• Learning and development is covered within supervision and reflective practice sessions as to best practice examples.	SSW	July 2014	Green
6.3 Social workers undertake direct work with children and families using a range of methodologies.	• Social workers develop skills to deliver a range of interventions i.e. behavioural methodologies and life story work.	SSW	August 2014	Amber
SBLR – Feb 2014	• Evaluate impact and outcomes of intervention through supervision and reflective practice sessions.	SSW	August 2014	Amber

6.4 Case Recordings will have the following; • Full Chronologies • Views of service user on impact of intervention. • Stand-alone risk assessments • Analytical rather than descriptive case recordings. • Evidence of direct work with children • Reflect user participation in case recordings. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• All case files will have a full chronology that reflects significant events and up to date.	SSW	August 2014	Amber
	• All children and young people's cases will have a stand-alone risk assessment, which will be reviewed and agreed by line manager.	SSW	July 2014	Green
	• Quality of recordings will be reviewed by line managers and senior managers through the audit process.	SSW	July 2014	Green
	• Case work reflects direct work with children and young people.	SSW	July 2014	Amber
	• Evidence that service users have been consulted about assessments and plans.	SSW	July 2014	Amber
6.5 Supervision reflects the level of training that social workers have completed and the impact that this has had on practice. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• All training completed by staff is correlated to practice and is recorded in one to one supervision record.	SSW	August 2014	Amber
	• Evidence of reflective learning sessions in supervision.	SSW	August 2014	Amber
6.6 Supervision challenges practice and behaviours and evidences reflection on case work.	• Supervision structure will be reviewed to enable appropriate constructive challenge that is consistent.	SSW	July 2014	Green

SBLR – Feb 2014	• Build and develop reflective supervision which is consistent across the workforce.	SSW	July 2014	Amber
	• Review compliance and consistency of supervision through the audit process.	TM	July 2014	Amber
6.7 Staff have opportunities to shadow and co- work with colleagues to gain practice experience.	• Staff have opportunities to have practice experience in other local authorities.	TM	August 2014	Amber
SBLR – Feb 2014	• Staff to have opportunities to co-work cases with colleagues from other boroughs. Providing learning opportunities for both practitioners.	TM	August 2014	Amber
6. 8 Assessments, Reports and recording show evidence of clear critical analysis and decision making which is owned by the practitioner.	• Through support for social workers in supervision and reflective practice sessions.	SSW	July 2014	Amber
	• Feedback from line managers on assessments, reports and cases recordings.	SSW	July 2014	Amber
SBLR – Feb 2014	• Case file audits completed with social workers as part of the quality assurance Framework.	SM	July 2014	Green
6.9 There clear links and defined roles and responsibilities between Social Care and Commissioning Service **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• There are clearer lines of accountability between Commissioning and Children and Families Team. A review is in process.	DLT	June 2014	Green

Priority Seven: Effectiveness of service user engagement to inform service improvement

Priorities	How we will do this?	Who will lead this	Date due	RAG Status
7.0 There is evidence that feedback from parents, carers and young people is influencing improvements in service delivery. **SBLR – Feb 2014** **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2013**	• Reviewing the feedback that is currently being received through various sources and ascertain whether there are commonalities that may assist in improving services.	TM	August 2014	Amber
	• Feedback to be obtained from children and families on case closures.	TM	July 2014	Amber
	• Develop opportunities for children and young people to engage with the City so their views are heard.	SW – ER City Gateway	August 2014	Amber
7.1 That children and young people who are Looked After by the City are able to influence and shape the services they receive. **SBLR – Feb 2014** **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2013**	• The City of London has Children in Care Council (CICC) which meets the needs of the City i.e. explores social networking and technology to unite population.	SW –ER City Gateway	August 2014	Amber
	• That children and young people who are looked after or care leavers, who are placed across London feel part of and contribute to services in the City.	SW – ER City Gateway.	August 2014	Amber
	• We can evidence that feedback from Looked After Children has contributed to changes in service delivery.	SW –ER City Gateway	August 2014	Amber

Priority Eight: The effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Sub-committee

Our Objectives/Outcomes	How we will do this?	Who will lead this	Date due	RAG Status
8.0 City of London needs and priorities are clearly discernable within the broader joint business plan of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Board. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Safeguarding priorities to be reviewed for the City and how these priorities fit within the broader joint business plan.	AD People	July 2014	Amber
	• Priorities identified from previous reviews, inspections and quality assurance data will form the basis of the intelligence for safeguarding priorities.	AD People LADO	July 2014	Green
	• Through consultation with members of the City Safeguarding Sub Group and the broader partnership.	AD People	July 2014	Green
	• Revisiting the vision and principles of the joint business plan to ensure that they are representative of the City as well as LB of Hackney.	DCCS & ad People	July 2014	Amber
8.1 Feedback from service users and front line staff contribute to the City Safeguarding Sub Group agenda **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Explore (with members of the safeguarding sub group) how the views of service users can be obtained to inform the sub-group.	AD People	July 2014	Amber
	• Lay person on the Safeguarding Sub Group.	AD People	July 2014	Amber
	• Performance and quality assurance data to be provided to the Safeguarding Sub-Group.	AD People	July 2014	Green

8.2 Safeguarding Sub Group Member feel confident under scrutiny form Ofsted inspectors. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Ensuring Members of the sub group are aware and understand the ToR of the group.	Ad People	July 2014	Green
	• Sub-group members understand their role and responsibility within the wider safeguarding agenda in the City.	AD People	July 2014	Amber
	• Sub-group members are briefed on what to expect in an Ofsted inspection and receive inspection feedback from inspection readiness group.	AD People	July 2014	Amber
8.3 City staff and partners are aware of what to do should the suspect child sexual exploitation. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• City of London staff and partners have access to and attend training on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). Training has been provided by City of London Police and is available from CHSCB.	LADO	July 2014	Green
	• Consideration to be given on how the protocols on CSE can be disseminated across the partnership.	AD People	July 2014	Amber
8.4 Staff and partners know and understand the role of the LADO in the City. **SBLR – Feb 2014**	• Communication to staff and partners about the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) through exiting mediums being used by the City; i.e. appropriate publications, intranet.	LADO	July 2014	Amber
	• Through individual communication with agencies and commissioned services through the auditing process.	LADO	July 2014	Amber
	• Safeguarding Awareness campaign with City of London staff and residents of the City.	LADO	June 2014	Amber

Abbreviations

SBLR- Strengths Based Learning Review
EIP – Early Intervention and Prevention
CAF- Common Assessment Framework
CEB- Children's Executive Board
IRO – Independent Review Officer
LAC- Looked After Children
SDQ- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
TM- Team Manager, Children's Social Care
VH – Virtual Head
CSC- Children's Social Care
SSW- Senior Social Worker
SW – Social Worker, followed by initials of Social Worker
SM-Service Manager
ASC- Adult Social Care
LADO- Local Authorities Designated Officer
DLT- Departmental Leadership Team