

# Report of the Strategic Director Children's Services to the meeting of Executive to be held on 9 January 2024

# AD

---

## **Subject:**

Ofsted Monitoring Visit of Children's Social Care

## **Summary statement:**

This report will provide an update on the Ofsted Monitoring Visit of children's social care which took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

## **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:**

An Equality Impact Assessment is not applicable. However, this report will provide an update on the Monitoring Visit concerned with those children and young people subject to Child in Need and Child Protection Plans and are therefore amongst those in the highest need in the district with regard to consideration of equality and diversity.

---

Marium Haque  
Strategic Director Children's Services

## **Portfolio:**

**Children & Families**

Report Contact: Picklu Roychoudhury  
Phone: (01274) 436064  
E-mail: [picklu.roychoudhury@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:picklu.roychoudhury@bradford.gov.uk)

## **Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

**Children's Services**

## **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report will provide an update on the Ofsted Monitoring Visit of children's social care which took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Ofsted carried out a Monitoring Visit of children's social care services delivered by the Bradford Children and Families Trust, which took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023. The theme of the Monitoring Visit was those children and young people subject to Child in Need and Child Protection Plans.

## **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 A number of Monitoring Visits had taken place since the previous full inspection in 2018 leading up to the November 2023 inspection.
- 3.2 Since the full inspection of Local Authority Children's Services in November 2022, this is the second Monitoring Visit to have taken place and was on the theme of Child in Need and Child Protection.
- 3.3 The first Monitoring Visit since the November inspection took place in July 2023 and was focused on the Integrated Front Door (IFD). Inspectors found that the IFD response to concerns had continued to improve since the last inspection and the introduction of the conversations approach to contacts. Inspectors made very positive statements in the Monitoring Visit letter about practice, multi-agency working, quality assurance, management oversight, decision making, recording, and application of thresholds.
- 3.4 For this Monitoring Visit, Ofsted Inspectors undertook a deep dive on work with six children subject to either a Child in Need or a Child Protection plan. This focus was alongside a review of the quality assurance process and associated quality assurance reports.
- 3.5 In general, feedback indicated that there are green shoots of progress, of further improvement.
- 3.6 Inspectors found that the Trust has a detailed understanding of the issues that need improvement which is enabling more targeted and recent improvement activity. The detailed self-evaluation of the current situation and future improvement plans for children in need and those subject to child protection planning mirrored what inspectors found during the visit.
- 3.7 Although inspectors highlighted thematic audits and dip sampling to supplement case file audits, they noted that the numbers of routine audits remain low and that more could be done to include social workers in the audits to enhance their learning.

- 3.8 Inspectors stated that work with disabled children has improved:  
*‘There has been improvement since the last inspection in the response to disabled children subject to child in need and child protection planning.’*
- 3.9 Inspectors found improvements of management oversight of child in need and child in need and child protection assessment and planning since the last inspection; however, there is more to do to improve supervision and move away from compliance to driving forward the child’s plan.
- 3.10 When inspectors met social workers, they found that they reported positively about working for Bradford and felt more settled, and better supported with their work.
- 3.11 Ofsted did not refer back any children’s case work, which was the first time in all of the Monitoring Visits which have taken place since 2018.
- 3.12 Ofsted will publish the letter on their website on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

#### **4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

- 4.1 Whilst Children’s Social Care services locally & nationally continue to face financial pressures, there are no particular financial issues arising as a result of this report.

#### **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

- 5.1 This report highlights the content of the Monitoring Visit and the full report is now available to the public.

#### **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

- 6.1 There are no legal issues arising from this report.

#### **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

##### **7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

##### **7.2 TACKLING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

##### **7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

##### **7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

The quality of children’s services can have implications for a number of rights protected by The Human Rights Act 1998 including the right to respect for private and family life.

## **7.5 TRADE UNION**

Not applicable.

## **7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

There are no specific ward implications as this report relates to all wards in the District.

## **7.7 AREA COMMITTEE LOCALITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

## **7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

All the implications in this report are concerned with children and young people. The Local Authority and The Trust with its respective officers should make themselves aware of the issues raised in the letter.

## **7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT**

Not applicable.

## **8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

Not applicable.

## **9. OPTIONS**

9.1 Not applicable. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the Ofsted Monitoring Visit held in November 2023.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 It is recommended that:

- The contents of Ofsted letter and the progress made are noted.
- We continue to work with the DfE appointed Commissioner to support the work of the Trust and, where possible, to accelerate improvements in line with the Children's Social Care Improvement Plan.

## **11. APPENDICES**

11.1 The Ofsted Monitoring Letter of the visit which took place on 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

## **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

12.1 Not applicable.