

## PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

**Subject:** OFSTED Inspection of Children, Young People and Families service

**Committee:** Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 13 March 2019

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Sue McDonald (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)  
Councillor Jon Taylor (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation)

**CMT Member:** Alison Botham (Director of Children's Services)

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**Ref:**

**Key Decision:** No

**Part:** I

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### **Purpose of the report:**

This report provides details of the outcome of the single inspection by OFSTED under its ILACS (inspection of the Local Authority Children Services) Framework, of children's social care services, including education and inclusion for children in care and the CYPFS Improvement plan currently in draft.

It is provided for information and scrutiny purposes.

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### **Corporate Plan:**

This report relates to the provision of services for children and young people, with particular emphasis on the overall effectiveness of prevention and early interventions, children in need of help and protection, children in care and care leavers, and has a focus on the impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families. It relates to our priorities as a caring council and the protection of children and young adults.

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### **Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land:**

Financial implications as we seek to implement an improvement care leaver offer under pledge 48.

No other relevant implication other than demand management for CYPFS by maintaining appropriate thresholds for entry into the service and ensuring those areas identified as requiring improvement

are supported to improve in order to ensure that children and families have the right service at the right time.

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**Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:**

The inspection report provided judgement on the quality of the work undertaken by CYPFS staff, with a particular focus on outcomes for children and young people.

The inspection report identified a number of areas of strength as well as improvement which has relevance to Plymouth City Council's approach to child poverty, community safety and risk management.

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**Equality and Diversity:**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

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**Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:**

CYPFS OFSTED improvement plan is currently in draft format and needs to be submitted no later than by 7<sup>th</sup> April 2019. This will form the core elements of the CYPFS Safeguarding Improvement Plan for 2019/20. The progress and delivery of the improvement plan will be overseen by an Improvement Board (chaired by the Service Director of Children, Young people and Families Service). The improvement Board will meet monthly as part of the monitoring framework.

The impact of this plan will be reported quarterly to the Corporate Safeguarding Assurance Meeting, the Plymouth Education and Children's Social care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board.

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**Alternative options considered and rejected:**

Not applicable

**Published work / information:**

Inspection of Children's Social care services <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/879>

**Background papers:**

Not applicable.

**Sign off:**

<b>Fin</b>	Djn.18.19.248	<b>Leg</b>	Lt/32242/1103
Originating SMT Member: Neelam Bhardwaja			
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the content of the report? Yes			

## **1. Introduction**

Between 29 October and 9 November 2018, Plymouth CYPFS was inspected by Ofsted under its ILACS framework of children's social care services, including education and inclusion for children in care.

## **2. Outcome**

Inspectors found that since the single inspection framework (SIF) inspection in 2014 and the focused visit in May 2018, senior leaders have taken clear actions to improve the quality of social work practice and the vast majority of children, young people and families in Plymouth get the right help at the right time.

Unfortunately despite highlighting a number of strengths and areas of improvement we have again been judged as 'Requires improvement to be good'.

### **Headline feedback included-**

The inspection found there has been significant progress in establishing an environment in which good social work can flourish by significantly reducing social workers' workloads, increasing management capacity and providing a wide range of learning and development opportunities.

Significant practice improvements are evident in a number of areas previously identified as weak. The quality of assessments of children's needs has improved substantially and the quality assurance practice by independent reviewing officers (IROs) and child protection conference chairs is well established and effective.

Inspectors however recognised and highlighted a number of areas of good work right across the services we provide including:

- Social workers know their children well, see them regularly and build effective relationships with both children and families to support effective interventions and positive outcomes.
- Children in care are visited regularly and their voices and experiences are captured effectively in order to inform planning.
- Virtual school leaders provide strong strategic leadership and are effective in ensuring that children in care have every opportunity to make good progress and reach their potential.
- As part of child protection enquiries, children are routinely seen and spoken to by social workers, who carefully consider the risks and needs of individual children and correctly apply thresholds
- Assessments are comprehensive and include good analysis; children's experiences are clearly captured, and assessments clearly identify next steps to improve children's experiences
- Numerous examples of purposeful and creative direct work, as well as the use of a variety of tools and techniques to sensitively explore the feelings of children and young people.

### **In terms of areas for improvement -**

Inspectors noted that we are already tackling the areas that need to improve which are:

- quality of strategy discussions, including records of decision-making and action plans
- quality of written plans
- Sufficiency of local placements to meet the needs of older children
- quality of recording of supervision and management oversight
- quality of services to care leavers, including educational, employment and training opportunities
- quality of and learning from auditing of casework