



BROMLEY CIVIC CENTRE, STOCKWELL CLOSE, BROMLEY BRI 3UH

TELEPHONE: 020 8464 3333

CONTACT: Keith Pringle
keith.pringle@bromley.gov.uk

DIRECT LINE: 020 8313 4508

FAX: 020 8290 0608

DATE: 06 September 2016

EXECUTIVE 14TH SEPTEMBER 2016

CARE SERVICES PDS COMMITTEE 13TH SEPTEMBER 2016

Please see the attached Part 1 report for the above meetings.

Members are requested to bring their copy of the report with them to the above meetings (and also to the Executive and Resources PDS Committee meeting, 7th September 2016, which will consider certain items on the Executive agenda)

5 OFSTED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES (Pages 3 - 104)

Copies of the documents referred to above can be obtained from
<http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/>

This page is left intentionally blank

Report No.
CS17036

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: PRE DECISION SCRUTINY BY CARE SERVICES PDS
13TH SEPTEMBER 2016

**EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL**

Date: Wednesday 14 September 2016 Monday 26th September 2016

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Key

Title: OFSTED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Contact Officer: Doug Patterson, Chief Executive
Tel: 020 8313 4354 E-mail: doug.patterson@bromley.gov.uk,

Chief Officer: Doug Patterson, Chief Executive

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 The Council's services for children in need of help and protection and children looked after were inspected by Ofsted inspection between the 11th April and 5th May 2016. At the same time, a linked inspection of the Bromley Safeguarding Children's Board (BSCB) took place (the full Ofsted inspection report Appendix 1).
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the inspection findings, the actions taken immediately to respond to the findings and the Council's plans for further improvement as set out in the draft improvement action plan (Appendix 2).
- 1.3 To understand the potential funding requirements resulting from the draft improvement action plan and seek the relevant Council approvals.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Care Services PDS are asked to comment and feedback on the report to Executive on the most recent Ofsted inspection of children's social care services.
- 2.2 The Executive are asked to:

- i. Agree the actions set out in the draft Children's Services Improvement Plan which will be submitted to Ofsted (subject to any comments received at the meeting).**
- ii. Request that the Constitution Improvement Working Group is requested to support the Director of Corporate Services in developing and delivering any necessary constitutional changes required by the Improvement action plan;**
- iii. Recommend to Full Council the approval of funding for the posts included in Phase One and Phase Two which have already been committed, that total £949k in 2016/17 with a full year effect of £1,471k as set out in para 6.3 of this report.**
- iv. Subject to approval by Full Council that the appointment of any posts included in Phase Three (as set out in para 6.3) are delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, Portfolio Holder for Resources, Portfolio Holder for Care Services, Director of Finance as previously agreed.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy: Further Details
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People Excellent Council:
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated Cost: £2.3m in a full year
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost: £2.3m in a full year
 3. Budget head/performance centre: New Funding being requested
 4. Total current budget for this head: £0
 5. Source of funding: Supplementary Estimate
-

Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 34 ftes (excluding Eclipse Funded post)
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement:
 2. Call-in: Applicable
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Approx. 300 CLA, 230 subject to a child protection plan and 2000 children in need
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 The Council was inspected against the latest version of Ofsted's Framework for Inspection 11 April 2016 to 5 May 2016. This framework is substantially different to the previous inspection framework used when the Council's services were last inspected in 2012, with intense scrutiny and challenge of individual cases. Within the inspection framework there is a four point grading scale of outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

3.2 The inspection framework makes the following judgements in relation to the Council's services:

- **Overall effectiveness** of services and arrangements for children looked after, care leavers and children who need protection.

The overall effectiveness judgement is a cumulative judgement derived from:

- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection
- The experiences and progress of children looked after (CLA) and achieving permanence with graded sub-judgements on:
 - Adoption performance
 - The experience and progress of care leavers
- Leadership, management and governance.

3.3 Since the new, inspection framework was introduced in November 2013 106 Local Authorities have been inspected: 2 were judged outstanding, 26 judged as good, 53 require improvement and 25 were judged inadequate overall.

3.4 Bromley's Inspection Process and Outcomes

3.4.1 The focus of the inspection was on quality of frontline practice and management and the 'child's journey' and experience of services. In particular inspectors seek to establish the impact and pace of services on individual children and young people starting with early help and moving on to the effectiveness of child protection and how the Council cares for, and supports, its children who are looked after.

3.3.2 There were 7 inspectors in the Ofsted team, plus 2 shadow inspectors, a data analyst and QA manager. The inspection methodology is based on the analysis of individual cases, with the inspectors selecting over 20 cases for in-depth auditing and engagement, and a further 20 cases for themed scrutiny. While partners and senior officers were involved in discussions with the inspectors, and there was some observation of direct practice, the main focus was front line delivery of services by social work staff and managers. Visits were also undertaken to children's centres, an independent living providers and inspectors were keen to meet with parents, carers and especially young people.

3.5 Ofsted Judgements

3.5.1 The Ofsted report was published on 27th June 2016 and is attached at Appendix 1, this report details the following judgements:

Overall Judgement	Inadequate
1. Children who need help and protection	Inadequate
2. Children looked after and achieving permanence	Inadequate
2.1 Adoption performance	Inadequate
2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Inadequate
3. Leadership, management and governance	Inadequate

3.5.2 The Chief Executive, Interim Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Lead Member have confirmed it accepts the findings on behalf of the Council.

3.5.3 The separate inspection of the Bromley Safeguarding Children Board is also included within the main report Appendix 1.

3.6 Appointment of the Department for Education Commissioner

- 3.6.1 The Secretary of State for Education after considering the Ofsted's report, is satisfied that the Council is failing to perform to an adequate standard, some or all of the functions to which section 497A of the Education Act 1996 is applied by section 50 of the Children Act 2004 ("children's social care functions"). In response the Secretary of State has appointed Frankie Sulke as Commissioner for Children's Services in Bromley.
- 3.6.2 In line with the recommendations set out in the Ofsted report on children's social care and the Department's intervention policy, the Children's Services Commissioner is expected to take the following steps to:
- 1) make recommendations for the immediate improvement of children's social care and to recommend any additional support required to deliver improvement.
 - 2) review the Council's leadership and management capacity and capability to drive forward the changes necessary to achieve the required standard.
 - 3) make a recommendation to the Secretary of State as to whether alternative delivery arrangements are the most effective way of securing and sustaining improvement, and if so, to recommend the form those alternative delivery arrangements should take.
- 3.6.3 The Commissioner will provide her report to the Secretary of State by 30 September 2016.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/530578/Bromley_direction.pdf

3.7 Summary of Inspection Outcomes and Findings

- 3.7.1 The inspection identified some strengths within the service, including:
- Children and their families receive the help that they need quickly when they first approach Bromley for support. A good example of this is the Bromley children's project.
 - Children who are looked after by the local authority live healthy lifestyles and do well in their education. Staff work closely with health and educational professionals to help children and young people to do well with their studies and to stay healthy.
 - Children looked after receive good-quality care while living with foster carers. Leaders and managers understand that they need to recruit more foster carers and they will need to work hard to keep the current number of carers who foster children and young people for Bromley.
 - The Living in Care Council (LinCC) meets often with senior managers and leaders, who listen to and take its views and opinions seriously. This helps to shape children's services, taking into account the things that children and young people would like to see happen.
 - The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Local Authority Designated Officer Service are working well.
- 3.7.2 The main weaknesses identified within the inspection were lack of management understanding and oversight and critical enquiry coupled drift and delays in key elements of the child's journey. These were summarised in the report as:
- Senior managers and leaders in Bromley do not have a good understanding of what works well to protect vulnerable children and young people. Since Ofsted last inspected Bromley, services have got worse for children and young people.
 - The local authority has not given enough help to children in care and those who need to be adopted. Social workers are too slow at finding permanent places for children and young people to live.
 - Senior managers do not ensure that staff receive appropriate support and guidance. This is important to ensure that staff make the right decisions about children's and young people's lives.
 - Managers in Bromley do not get good enough legal support in court. Because of this, childcare cases are not well prepared and do not always support plans for children's and young people's futures.

- There is a lack of safe and suitable housing available for care leavers. The local authority regularly places these young people in bed and breakfast accommodation, and this is not appropriate.
- Caseloads are too high to ensure quality social work.

3.8 Immediate Action Taken

3.8.1 During the inspection Ofsted identified a number of weaknesses which the Council acted immediately to address these actions included:

3.8.2 Social Worker and Management Capacity has been increased

- Resources have been prioritised in a number of key areas which includes the recruitment to the role of Executive Director for Education, Care and Health Services who is also the DCS, an additional Head of Service for the Referral and Assessment service, Group Managers for Care Leaving Team, Adoption and Special Guardianship teams, (who will focus on improving practice standards across the service) and eight Senior Practitioner and Advanced Practitioner Social Worker posts (2 in the Referral and Assessment Service and 6 in the Court Team), two social work assistant posts and an administrator to track and support return interviews for children missing from care.
- A Court Team focussing on all Court work has been setup, with the aim of reducing the caseloads held by practitioners in the Safeguarding and Care Planning teams. Recruitment to this team has been successful and four social workers are in post the team will be fully operational by the beginning of October 2016.

3.8.3 Delays in achieving permanence

- The 'Early Permanence Panel' has been set up to review all CLA aged 0 – 16 years old in week 6 to ensure that every child has a parallel permanency plan in place and to check that cases do not experience drift or delay. Meetings chaired by the interim Director of Children's Social Care.
- Written instruction to IRO's and CP Chairs that cases where issues that could cause drift and delay are identified and escalated to Head of Service immediately. There has already been an increase in escalations which have led to improved standards.
- All S20 cases (aged up to 16 years) were reviewed to identify cases that should be in PLO or Care Proceedings. 43 out of 54 cases reviewed showed plans on track with 26 in proceedings.

3.8.4 Thresholds

- A review of all open CIN cases to identify any that need to be escalated to child protection (CP) has been undertaken. Of the 313 cases examined 9 cases (4 families) were stepped up to CP and 8 cases (5 families) were stepped down.
- A tracking and monitoring process has been put in place for all CIN cases stepped up or stepped down. All cases are monitored and reviewed by Group Manager(s) and Head of Service.
- All CP plans to be reviewed Audit cases to confirm review outcomes. Of the 216 CP plans reviewed 54 plans were amended.
 - Worry/Danger Statements and Safety Statements have been added if missing.
 - All actions are now linked to a relevant Safety Goal so that it is clearer to parents and professionals what the actions are trying to achieve.
 - Plans have been amended and simplified removing any language which was felt to be too complex, in line with the Signs of Safety.
 - All CP Chairs and minute takers have been reminded of the clear expectations how they need to reflect the Signs of Safety model.
 - All CP plans are now being reviewed at 9 months by Group Manager(s) and Head of Service

3.8.5 Children missing from home and placements

- System to check Emergency Duty Team missing children lists daily put in place, to ensure that follow up action is taken by allocated worker (i.e. return to home interviews are arranged, take place and are recorded).
- Review the commissioned service monitoring data and ensure that all information relating to return home interviews is being recorded appropriately.

3.8.6 Young people placed in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation

- A review of all young people in B&B accommodation (post 18 years) was undertaken and all were moved into more suitable accommodation. Pathway plans were updated to ensure appropriate support was being provided in relation to health and education needs.
- A full strategic needs assessment of Bromley's young people's accommodation needs funded by DCLG has been commissioned from St Basils (a specialist service in young people's housing) to inform future decision making and help streamline the housing pathway.

3.8.7 Legal Support

- Written instruction issued to all relevant CSC staff outlining the escalation process for handling difference of opinion (between CSC and legal) about threshold for holding a legal planning meeting on commencing care proceedings.
- Monthly meetings set up between Legal Services and CSC to review cases where there has been a dispute over legal planning meetings.
- A review of PLO cases (over six weeks) was undertaken to ensure that child is safe or whether care proceedings should be initiated. Of the 25 children subject to PLO for more than 6 weeks 22 children are going into care proceedings and 3 are being stepped down. The Court Team Manager continues to monitor all cases and any identified as not progressing are discussed in the weekly tracking meeting with Head of Service.

3.9 Governance and Oversight of the Improvement Process

3.9.1 The Leader of the Council (Lead Member for Children's Services) setup Multi- Agency Improvement Board in June 2016 to oversee the improvement process including the development of the improvement action plan.

3.9.2 The Board meets fortnightly and from September will be taking a thematic approach to the monitoring of the improvement actions focussing initially on the services that assessment and support children in need of protection and the management oversight of frontline practice.

3.9.3 Reporting to the Improvement Board is a multi-agency officer group which is leading on workstreams identified in improvement plan. This group will also monitor the improvement actions and performance measures to ensure progress is reported to the Improvement Board.

3.10 Children's Services Draft Improvement Action Plan

3.10.1 The draft children's services improvement action plan is attached as Appendix 2. The Council had 70 working days from publication of the Ofsted report to agree a final improvement plan with DfE. The draft plan needs to be submitted before the 26th September 2016.

3.10.2 Ofsted made 23 recommendations within the inspection report (18 across children's services and 5 for the Bromley Safeguarding Children's Board). The improvement action plan has 10 themes which clearly identify the relevant Ofsted recommendation and the area to which it relates.

3.11 Ofsted Monitoring Visits

3.11.1 The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) believes that all children who use children's social care services are entitled to services that are good or better. Where local authority children's services are judged to be inadequate, Ofsted will carry out monitoring visits and report on the progress made by the local authority, to support them to improve further.

- 3.11.2 Where local authority children's services are judged inadequate, Ofsted will carry out a programme of monitoring activities, including quarterly monitoring visits, to report on the progress made by local authorities.
- 3.11.3 All local authorities judged to be inadequate will receive an action planning visit, a programme of quarterly monitoring visits and a re-inspection. The first monitoring visit will be November 2016.
- 3.11.4 The latest guidance has been published in August 2016 and can be viewed at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/544539/Monitoring_and_re-inspection_of_local_authority_childrens_services_judged_inadequate_inspectors_handbook.pdf
- 3.11.5 Ofsted hosted the required action planning meeting on 26th July 2016 which was positive in terms of understanding of the issues and the work underway to make the required improvements. However, the Lead Inspector emphasised that these would be fully tested during the first monitoring visit scheduled for November 2016 (dates to be confirmed).

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 The full content of this report impacts on needs of vulnerable children and the required actions necessary to improve the services delivered.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 All actions within the draft improvement action plan are set in the context of the Building a Better Bromley Key Priorities for 2016—2018 by being ambitious for all our children and young people through:
 - Fulfilling our duty of care to ensure the health, wellbeing and achievements of our vulnerable children.
 - Provide the best possible service to deliver appropriate support to all children and young people. By ensuring the best possible future for the children and young people of Bromley, with a clear focus on supporting the most vulnerable through:
 - Safeguarding children and young people within schools and the community.
 - Listening to the views of children and young people to influence the decisions that are made about them.
 - Encouraging excellent educational opportunities from the early years through to further and higher education for all Bromley children and young people including those with Special Educational Needs.
- 5.2 These aims are covered by the both the Care Services and Education Portfolio Plans which are reported to the relevant PDS committees for approval (September/ October 2016) and monitoring January / March 2017.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 At the meeting on 20th July 2016, Executive were advised of the Ofsted report which included significant issues of practise and areas where resources are not being used effectively. The report conclusions required immediate action to reverse the deterioration in services for Children's safeguarding, children looked after, care leavers and children requiring adoption.
- 6.2 Executive agreed the release of interim funding of £950k in 2016/17 and that the utilisation of part or all of these monies is undertaken by the Chief Executive with the agreement of the Leader of the Council, Care Services Portfolio Holder, Resources Portfolio Holder and the Director of Finance.
- 6.3 The costs identified as part of the resource implication of the Improvement Plan are detailed below:-

EXPENDITURE AS A RESULT OF OFSTED

	<u>FTE</u>	<u>2016/17</u>	<u>2017/18</u>	<u>Full year</u>	<u>P/work</u>	<u>Rec.</u>	<u>Comment</u>
		<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>Comp</u>	<u>to Post</u>	
<u>PHASE ONE</u>							
Children's Social Care							
Director ECHS	1	83	200	200	Yes	Yes	From Nov 2016
Head of service	1	60	90	90	Yes	Yes	
Safeguarding and Care Planning							
DM Post	1	34	52	52	Yes	Yes	
6 Advanced Practitioner Posts	6	207	310	310	Yes	4 of 6	
Referral and Assessment							
2 Senior Practitioner Posts	2	64	96	96	Yes	Yes	
Care and Resources							
Group Manager Leaving Care team	1	43	64	64	Yes	Yes	
Group Manager Special Guardianship	1	43	64	64	Yes	Yes	
Group Manager Adoption	1	43	64	64	Yes	Yes	
2 Social Work Assistant (Special Guardianship)	2	49	74	74	Yes	Yes	
Quality Improvement Team							
Administrator	1	20	30	30	Yes	Yes	
Strategic and business support	1	32	48	-	Yes	Yes	18 mth post
Child Protection Minute Taker	1	16	24	24	No	Yes	
Child Protection Independent Chair	1	37	55	55	No	Yes	
TOTAL PHASE ONE RESOURCES REQUESTED	20	731	1,171	1,123			
<u>PHASE TWO</u>							
6 Senior Practitioner roles	6	158	288	288	No	Yes	From May 2016
Quality Audit Manager	1	60	60	60	No	Yes	From Sept 2016
TOTAL PHASE TWO RESOURCES REQUESTED	7	218	348	348			
<u>PHASE THREE</u>							
Head of service	1	60	90	90	No	No	From January 2017
Safeguarding and care planning - DM Post	1	13	52	52	No	No	From January 2017
Safeguarding and care planning - 3 social workers	3	10	123	123	No	No	From January 2017
Recruitment and retention of social workers from 2017/18		-	300	300	No	n/a	
Quality Audits		38	150	150	No	No	From January 2017
Commissioning - Placement Officer	1	10	40	40	No	No	From January 2017
Commissioning - Monitoring Officer	1	10	40	40	No	No	From January 2017
TOTAL PHASE THREE RESOURCES REQUESTED	7	141	795	795			
TOTAL RESOURCES REQUESTED	34	1,090	2,314	2,266			

Note: The funding for the Eclipse Business Lead costing a total of £69k is not included in the table above as this will be met from the Social Care Capital Grant.

- 6.4 Officers identified in the first phase costs in a part year on £731k, increasing to a full year effect of £1,123k. These are highlighted in phase one of the above table. The last two child protection posts were envisaged to be funded from existing resources, however, due to the budget monitoring position being an overspend, this is no longer realistic and will have to be funded from the interim funding.
- 6.5 Since then to ensure the stabilisation of the service, additional resources were agreed by the Chief Executive for seven posts totalling £218k 2016/17, with a full year effect of £348k. These are highlighted in phase two of the above table. It is assumed for these purposes that the expenditure in this area will be ongoing, but will be reviewed within a year.
- 6.6 The last section (phase three) of £141k in year, £795k in a full year, will be reviewed by the new Executive Director when they join the organisation. In this phase it is proposed that any expenditure will be agreed as per the delegation given for phase one.
- 6.7 The funding set out in the table above is potentially required to meet the key priorities as detailed within the Improvement Action Plan. The Executive Director when they join the Council will review these spending plans and posts and update on the position and effectiveness of these posts on a regular basis.
- 6.8 As you can see the table above identifies costs pressures of £1,090k in 2016/17 increasing to full year cost pressures in the region of £2.3m.
- 6.9 Executive can only approve a supplementary estimate to the value of £1m in a full year so this additional funding of £2.3m will need to go to Full Council for approval. It should be noted that even if phase three is not agreed there is already a full year commitment of over £1.4m that needs approval by Full Council.
- 6.10 The Eclipse Business lead post can be funded from existing resources. This can be funded through the Social Care capital grant and is part of the wider implementation of the new Eclipse information system. They will work with the existing Project Manager and will free up some of the resource of existing social care managers so that they can focus on service improvement plan.
- 6.11 It is essential that the effectiveness of the use of these additional resources are continuously reviewed to ensure the required outcomes are achieved.
- 6.12 It should also be noted that the latest Budget Monitoring report for 2016/17 reported to the meeting of the Executive on 20th July 2016 identified a projected overspend of £1.7m on children's social care and this position will be monitored closely. A recent increase in Looked After Children is expected to increase the potential costs further. An update will be provided in the next Budget Monitoring 2016/17 report to the Executive.
- 6.10 In comparing Bromley costs against its statistical neighbours there are opportunities in the future to make better use of existing funding through the redirection of resources away from more expensive residential placements. There will be a need to review the allocation of resources within the next two years.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Secretary of State has extensive powers under the provisions of Section 497 A where a local authorities performance in the delivery of Children's services is deemed to be inadequate. The Secretary of State has issued a Direction under this provision appointing a Commissioner who is charged among other things to make recommendations for the improvement of children's services at Bromley and the provision of children's services and recommending to the Secretary of State whether those services should continue to be provided by the Council.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 As stated in para 3.7.2 above, the immediate response to the recruitment challenges arising in part from the additional staffing has been relatively successful for example, the new Court Team of 6 new Senior Practitioner posts has been recruited into in a timely manner. The Executive Director, Education, Care & Health Services recruitment and selection process was recently completed within a relatively tight timeline, recognising the strategic importance of the role in the recovery journey.
- 8.2 Human Resources is working well with a number of employment agencies and in particular the Council's agency link contractor (Adecco) to improve the speed and quality of applicants/candidates for qualified/experienced children's social care staff. The Council's Recruitment and Retention package for children's social care staff is being further reviewed and benchmarked to ensure Bromley Council remains competitive in the labour market and the preferred destination for suitably qualified social workers.
- 8.3 Unarguably, staff retention is equally as important as attracting the right number of qualified social workers to the right roles at the right time. Hence, HR is working with managers to improve the retention rate. For example, there is a 'No Quit Policy' aimed at persuading quality staff from leaving the Council. Some of the push factors such as caseloads, motivation etc are being addressed. Better exit data and feedback from leavers is being analysed and shared with management to improve the retention rate.
- 8.4 Additionally, on the job support is being developed including coaching and mentoring support for qualified social workers to improve their motivation and quality of practice/decision-making. Ultimately, all qualified staff in the service at every level, from the Director to frontline staff will have a Career Development Plan, based on the nationally agreed competencies clustered around the following:
- Value-based competencies i.e. what is our vision for children and young people in the Borough?
 - Leadership competencies i.e. ability to lead and manager.
 - Functional/operational competencies i.e. the non-negotiable core skills for individual roles.
- 8.5 In summary, the recruitment and retention of qualified staff is a real challenge but HR is working well with Children's Social Care managers and employment agencies to improve the recruitment and retention rates.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Procurement Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	

This page is left intentionally blank

London Borough of Bromley

Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers

and

Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board¹

Inspection date: 11 April 2016 to 5 May 2016

Report published: 27 June 2016

Children's services in Bromley are inadequate		
1. Children who need help and protection		Inadequate
2. Children looked after and achieving permanence		Inadequate
	2.1 Adoption performance	Inadequate
	2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Inadequate
3. Leadership, management and governance		Inadequate

¹ Ofsted produces this report under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This report includes the report of the inspection of local authority functions carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the report of the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013.

Executive summary

There are widespread and serious failures in the services provided to children and families in Bromley. Senior leaders and managers do not have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the services that they provide for vulnerable children and young people. Since the Ofsted inspections of 2010 and 2012, there has been significant deterioration in services for children's safeguarding, children looked after, care leavers and children requiring adoption.

This is a corporate failure by the local authority that leaves too many children in neglectful and abusive situations for too long. Weak practice includes the poor identification and reduction of risk, a lack of understanding and application of thresholds, and cases stepped down too soon from child protection to child in need on insufficient evidence that progress is being made or sustained. Some children wait too long before becoming looked after and there is a lack of urgency in progressing permanency plans.

Senior managers do not have sufficient understanding of the issues to take appropriate action to improve performance and practice. Oversight of cases is weak, ineffective and not systematic. Performance management information is used insufficiently to improve practice. Quality assurance arrangements are inadequate and case auditing does not demonstrate rigour to review the quality of work. Independent reviewing officers (IROs) and conference chairs do not provide sufficient challenge to frontline social workers or their managers. Neither are they sufficiently robust in escalating concerns.

The response to children missing or at risk of child sexual exploitation is inconsistent and uncoordinated. The local authority lacks understanding about the prevalence or level of risks for individual children and young people, and their collective profile.

There is evidence of better practice in early help services through the Bromley children's project, where the work of family support is well embedded. Assessments for early help intervention are timely and lead to a range of appropriate services. The borough commissions an extensive range of effective early help and statutory services for children and families.

An appropriate range of colocated professionals work effectively together in the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH). Roles and responsibilities are well understood, and referrals to children's social care are dealt with promptly.

Those children and young people who need to be looked after wait too long before coming into care. Some children experience significant delays in decision making before plans for permanence are progressed. Comprehensive weaknesses in the quality of legal advice mean that local authority lawyers are not sufficiently experienced to advocate for children in complex care proceedings. Cases are not prepared thoroughly enough for court, and social work evidence is too often not

strong enough to support the local authority's plan.

There is a lack of urgency in progressing permanency plans. Not all children are considered for adoption when they are unable to return to their birth parents, and many are not considered soon enough. This means that too few children are adopted and, for those that are, the process takes longer than is necessary.

Good arrangements are in place to maintain and improve the health of children and young people looked after. The designated nurse, located within the looked after social work team, helps to ensure a coordinated approach to children's and young people's health. There is good support for their emotional health and well-being through dedicated looked after children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) provision.

The majority of children looked after are placed within good-quality foster placements and receive a good level of support from their carers. Most children looked after go to a good or better school, and personal education plans are generally of a high quality as a result of effective work undertaken by the virtual school. The virtual school team knows the circumstances of individual children well. It routinely monitors their progress, including the progress of those children and young people causing concern and that of those who are living outside of the borough.

The local authority recognises that it does not have sufficient foster placements for older children, and for children and young people from an ethnic minority background. Proposals to change allowances for foster carers are having a negative effect on the local authority's ability to retain foster carers.

The current Living in Care Council (LinCC) is representative of the diverse needs and circumstances of children looked after. It is well supported by dedicated participation and engagement workers to express their views, and to influence service quality and development.

There is an insufficient range of safe and suitable housing available for care leavers. The local authority routinely places a significant number of care leavers in bed and breakfast accommodation, which is not appropriate. As such, arrangements are not risk assessed and managers cannot assure themselves of the safety of young people. Local authority staff do not effectively engage with more challenging young people who are reluctant to take up offers of help.

For those children and young people with disabilities, a clear referral pathway ensures effective joint working with safeguarding, and referral and assessment teams, when there is a concern.

Contents

Executive summary	2
The local authority	5
Information about this local authority area	5
Recommendations	7
Summary for children and young people	9
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	10
The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence	17
Leadership, management and governance	29
The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)	35
Executive summary	35
Recommendations	36
Inspection findings – the Local Safeguarding Children Board	36
Information about this inspection	40

The local authority

Information about this local authority area²

Previous Ofsted inspections

- The local authority operates no children's homes.
- The last inspection of Bromley's arrangements for the protection of children was in July 2012. The local authority was judged to be adequate.
- The last inspection of Bromley's services for children looked after was in April 2010. The local authority was judged to be adequate.

Local leadership

- The interim director of children's services (DCS) has been in post since October 2015.
- The chair of the LSCB has been in post since April 2015.

Children living in this area

- Approximately 71,500 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in Bromley. This is 24% of the total population in the area.
- Approximately 15.5% of the local authority's children are living in poverty.
- The proportion of children entitled to free school meals:
 - in primary schools is 11.4% (the national average is 15.6%)
 - in secondary schools is 8.4% (the national average is 13.9%).
- Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 15.9% of all children living in the area, compared with 14% in the country as a whole.
- The main minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Black/African/Caribbean/Black British and Asian/Asian British.
- The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language:
 - in primary schools is 13.2% (the national average is 19.4%)
 - in secondary schools is 8.5% (the national average is 15%).

² The local authority was given the opportunity to review this section of the report and has updated it with local unvalidated data, where this was available.

Child protection in this area

- At 1 March 2016, 1,785 children had been identified through assessment as being formally in need of a specialist children's service. This is a reduction from 2,258 at 31 March 2015.
- At 1 March 2016, 229 children and young people were the subject of a child protection plan. This is an increase from 220 at 31 March 2015.
- At 1 March 2016, nine children lived in a privately arranged fostering placement. This is an increase from six at 31 March 2015.
- Since the last inspection, one serious incident notification has been submitted to Ofsted and one serious case review has been completed or is ongoing at the time of the inspection.

Children looked after in this area

- At 1 March 2016, the local authority was looking after 281 children (a rate of 39.8 per 10,000), an increase from 265 (37 per 10,000 children) at 31 March 2015.
 - 147 (or 55.9%) live outside the local authority area
 - 21 live in residential children's homes, of whom 18 live outside the authority area
 - eight live in residential special schools,³ all of whom live outside the local authority area
 - 192 live with foster families, of whom 84 live outside the local authority area
 - three live with parents, one of whom lives outside the local authority area
 - 16 children are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- Since 1 April 2015:
 - 19 children have been adopted
 - 12 children became subject to special guardianship orders
 - 119 children ceased to be looked after, of whom 4.2% subsequently returned to be looked after
 - 23 children and young people ceased to be looked after, and moved on to independent living
 - four children and young people ceased to be looked after, and are now living in houses of multiple occupation.
- The local authority uses 'signs of safety' as its social work model for child intervention work.

³ These are residential special schools that look after children for 295 days or fewer per year.

Recommendations

1. Ensure that the director of children's services has the authority and capacity to respond to deficits in children's and young people's services, and to drive forward change and improvement.
2. Review and improve all quality assurance arrangements to ensure that senior managers and elected members understand performance, in order that they may robustly improve the quality of social work practice.
3. Improve management oversight of frontline practice to ensure that decision making, assessment and planning for children and young people is both timely and focused to meet their needs. This is to include the work and involvement of conference chairs and independent reviewing officers.
4. Review workforce capacity in order to reduce social work caseloads in the referral and assessment, and safeguarding teams, to enable staff to carry out good-quality direct work with children.
5. Ensure that thresholds are understood and consistently applied in response to risk, so that appropriate actions are taken when risks or concerns escalate or diminish.
6. Ensure child protection, child in need, children looked after and pathway plans are informed by assessment, focused on the needs of individual children and young people, and specific about the outcome to be achieved and the timescale for change. Contingencies should be explicit.
7. Improve the arrangements to reduce the risk to children of sexual exploitation and episodes of missing from home and care, by:
 - ensuring that risks to sexually exploited children and young people, and those who go missing, are routinely assessed and understood by strategic managers who take timely action to address concerns
 - developing suitable arrangements to share and analyse information from child sexual exploitation risk assessments and 'return' interviews to reduce future risks for individual children and young people, and to inform partnership prevention and disruption activity.
8. Review the cases under the public law outline and in care proceedings to ensure that robust plans are in place and that cases are progressing at a pace that matches children's needs.
9. Improve the quality of legal advice to social workers and their managers to enable confident and effective presentation of care plans in court, to achieve the right outcomes for children and young people.

10. Ensure priority is given to considering achieving permanency, including adoption, at the earliest possible point for children, and that there are effective systems to track and monitor the progress of this work.
11. Improve the sufficiency and choice of placements within the borough to meet current needs, to strengthen placement planning arrangements and to ensure increased support to foster carers.
12. Ensure that robust assessments are undertaken when considering alternative permanency options for children with connected persons.
13. Ensure that children and young people who are placed out of the borough are sufficiently supported by their social worker and have access to services to meet their needs where they are living.
14. Ensure through direct work with children that they have the opportunity at their own pace to explore their history, identity and reason for becoming looked after, and that their voice is heard in plans which affect them.
15. Ensure that children looked after in Year 12 are effectively supported and encouraged to remain in education.
16. Increase the range of suitable accommodation available for homeless 16- and 17-year-olds and care leavers, so that they are safe and feel safe where they live.
17. Integrate children's commissioning arrangements corporately, to ensure that safeguarding children and young people is understood and prioritised.
18. Evaluate services that support children and families living with domestic violence, drug and alcohol misuse and parental mental ill health to ensure that these are making a difference and improving circumstances for children and young people.

Summary for children and young people

- Senior managers and leaders in Bromley do not have a good understanding of what works well to protect vulnerable children and young people. Since Ofsted last inspected Bromley, services have got worse for children and young people.
- The local authority has not given enough help to children in care and those who need to be adopted. Social workers are too slow at finding permanent places for children and young people to live.
- Senior managers do not ensure that staff receive appropriate support and guidance. This is important to ensure that staff make the right decisions about children's and young people's lives.
- Children and their families receive the help that they need quickly when they first approach Bromley for support. A good example of this is the Bromley children's project.
- Managers in Bromley do not get good enough legal support in court. Because of this, childcare cases are not well prepared and do not always support plans for children's and young people's futures.
- Children who are looked after by the local authority live healthy lifestyles and do well in their education. Staff work closely with health and educational professionals to help children and young people to do well with their studies and to stay healthy.
- Children looked after receive good-quality care while living with foster carers. Leaders and managers understand that they need to recruit more foster carers and they will need to work hard to keep the current number of carers who foster children and young people for Bromley.
- The Living in Care Council (LinCC) meets often with senior managers and leaders, who listen to and take its views and opinions seriously. This helps to shape children's services, taking into account the things that children and young people would like to see happen.
- There is a lack of safe and suitable housing available for care leavers. The local authority regularly places these young people in bed and breakfast accommodation, and this is not appropriate.

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Inadequate
<p>Summary</p> <p>Services for children in need of help and protection are inadequate. Serious and widespread weaknesses in the identification and management of risk to children and young people mean that the local authority is failing to ensure that the most vulnerable children in need of help and protection are safeguarded. Such failings are characterised by weak managerial oversight, and the absence of authoritative and timely casework interventions. This contributes to drift and delay in too many cases. Thresholds are neither consistently applied nor understood, and cases are stepped down too soon from child protection to child in need on insufficient evidence of progress being made or sustained.</p> <p>Senior managers do not have sufficient understanding of the issues to take appropriate action to improve performance and practice. Other managers neither set clear actions and timescales for social workers, nor provide sufficient review and challenge. This means that plans are not progressed as quickly as they should be, and children and young people are left in neglectful and abusive situations for too long. Child protection chairs do not provide sufficient challenge and scrutiny to ensure that plans are effective in keeping children safe.</p> <p>Of the cases considered by inspectors, none was compliant with statutory guidance. Strategy discussions are not held soon enough and, in the majority of child protection and child in need plans, the presenting risks do not fully inform the plan, and actions are not specific enough and lack clarity about the outcome to be achieved.</p> <p>The identification of risk is not always prominent in the majority of assessments, which are too descriptive and lacking in analysis. Insufficient weight is given to children's histories, and chronologies are poor and incomplete. Tools to consider neglect and assess and understand risks are underutilised.</p> <p>Roles and responsibilities are well understood in the MASH, and referrals to children's social care are dealt with promptly. Early help intervention through the Bromley children's project and the work of family support is well embedded. Early help services offer a range of effective support services for children and families.</p> <p>The response to children missing or at risk of child sexual exploitation is underdeveloped, inconsistent and uncoordinated. Delays in police notifications mean that it is not clear when children first go missing and when they return.</p> <p>Homeless 16- and 17-year-olds are sometimes placed in bed and breakfast accommodation, which is unacceptable practice.</p>	

Inspection findings

19. The application of thresholds, and the identification and management of risk are inadequate in Bromley. In cases seen by inspectors, risk is not consistently recognised, and past history and concerns are given insufficient consideration. In too many cases when risks have escalated, the local authority has not had the confidence to intervene robustly and in a timeframe that is optimal for children and young people. At the time of the inspection, 12 children had been subject to a child protection plan for over two years, seven of whom are in care proceedings. In these cases, parents have failed to engage in assessment and with support services to reduce risk. Children have been left in neglectful situations by the failure of the local authority to convene or review timely legal planning meetings and to consider public law outline procedures soon enough. This is clearly detrimental to their welfare. (Recommendation)
20. Child protection cases are stepped down too soon to child in need, with insufficient progress made in key areas at the point of transfer. For example, in some cases, parents have only just started to engage in work to address domestic violence or drug and alcohol misuse, and their ability to change and to sustain improvement has not been tested. Cases seen where risks had escalated were appropriately stepped up from child in need to child protection. The number of children subject to repeat child protection plans has risen significantly from 13% in 2014–15 to 21% currently, which is well above comparators. For this group of 48 children, the previous plan has closed too soon or the work completed has been ineffective. This means that children's and young people's safeguarding needs are not met in a timely or comprehensive manner. (Recommendation)
21. Strategy discussions are not being held soon enough when concerns are first identified, and are not compliant with statutory guidance. All strategy discussions are solely between police and children's social care, without direct involvement by health or other agencies, despite a range of multi-agency professionals being present in the MASH. Professionals contribute information, but are not actively involved in decision making and the planning of section 47 enquiries. This means that important child protection decisions are not informed by the widest possible range of multi-agency views and information available.
22. As a result of an audit of MASH contacts in September 2015 that identified a lack of formally recorded discussion with partner agencies, the use of conference calls is being explored to improve effectiveness. It is too early to measure the impact of this proposed initiative.
23. Numbers of strategy discussions, section 47 enquiries and initial child protection conferences remain lower than comparators. The local authority has not undertaken sufficient analysis to understand the reasons for this. The proportion of initial child protection conferences completed within 15

days of the decision to begin an investigation has improved on the previous year, from 67% to 83%. Review conferences are timely, with the local authority reporting a current performance figure of 96%.

24. Some more recent assessments demonstrate effective use of the local authority social work model, but others are too descriptive and lack sufficient analysis. In stronger cases, children's and families' views are clear and include a thorough assessment of risks with clear actions. In weaker cases, tools to consider neglect and assess risks are underutilised. Chronologies do not provide a succinct and clear history to inform assessments. The individual needs of children and young people are routinely considered together in a single assessment. This means that the individual needs of children and young people are not clearly recognised and are in danger of becoming lost. Research is rarely used to inform analysis in assessments.
25. Although not evident in all cases, inspectors saw evidence of some direct work with children. Tools such as 'three houses' are used to engage children and to elicit their views, which are reflected in the assessment. The use of words and pictures in one case helped a child to understand the worries of professionals and what is to happen to ensure the child's safety and well-being.
26. Young people aged 12 years and over are routinely asked if they would like the services of an advocate to assist in their views being considered. Support is provided to parents and young people by an externally commissioned advocacy service. Between November 2015 and January 2016, this service supported 29 young people to attend initial or review child protection conferences. Inspectors observed child protection conferences where advocates sensitively engaged and supported children and parents to ensure a clear understanding of the seriousness of the concerns.
27. The majority of child protection plans and child in need plans are not specific enough and, in too many cases, risks do not inform the subsequent plan. In most cases, it is not clear what outcome is to be achieved and by when. For example, despite a positive parenting assessment, it was recommended that a mother attend a parenting course, yet the plan did not specify what areas she needed to work on and why. Parents spoken to during the inspection showed an understanding of the local authority's concerns, but were not always clear about what changes they had to make to address these. Brothers and sisters being considered together on shared plans inhibits the identification of individual children's needs. Contingency planning is not specific enough for families to understand the consequences, if progress is not made to address child protection concerns. (Recommendation)
28. Bromley commissions a number of services to assist families where domestic violence, substance misuse or parental mental ill health cause concern. This includes Bromley adults' substance misuse service, victim support services and Bromley and Lewisham MIND, an organisation that works alongside

people with mental health needs and dementia. During the past year, conference monitoring has shown that, of 457 conferences, domestic violence has affected 279 families, mental health 170, alcohol misuse 136 and drug misuse 158. Too often, plans recommend parents' engagement or re-engagement with services without considering how effective these services are. (Recommendation)

29. Managers do not set clear actions and timescales for social workers, and do not provide sufficient review and challenge. This means that plans are not progressed as quickly as they should be. Child protection chairs do not provide sufficient challenge or scrutiny and, in the past year, have only escalated 10 cases for formal resolution. (Recommendation)
30. Child in need cases are not considered within the monthly performance digest, as this data is not systematically captured. Instead, cases are recorded on individual managers' spreadsheets. This means that the local authority does not have reliable data to assist managers to oversee the quality and timeliness of work within these cases, to monitor trends or to understand the profile of this group of children and young people. (Recommendation)
31. High numbers of cases for the social workers in the referral and assessment, safeguarding and care planning teams inhibit high-quality social work. Some social workers with 25 or more cases report that they do not have sufficient time to undertake positive direct work with children and families, or to reflect with managers on the progress of their work. (Recommendation)
32. Children who go missing or who are at risk of child sexual exploitation receive an inconsistent response from agencies. Delays in notifications from the police mean that children's social care is not always aware at what point children go missing or the date when they return. This means that the offer of a return home interview is delayed, and children may be unable accurately to recall and reflect upon incidents leading to 'missing' episodes. In most cases seen, it was not possible to be assured that a return home interview had been offered or completed. The local authority is currently neither collating nor analysing this data sufficiently well to understand the profile of missing children and the links to child sexual exploitation. (Recommendation)
33. Assessments considered in cases where mothers had undergone female genital mutilation identify concerns appropriately with parents and seek their views regarding this practice. A protocol and update to the threshold document is being developed to support midwives and general practitioners to refer cases appropriately. However, the local authority is yet to collate performance data to ensure that it understands the number and nature of all cases seen.
34. The local authority is more effective in tracking and identifying children and young people missing education. At the time of the inspection, there were

nine children missing education, with staff demonstrating tenacity and determination in locating them. They liaise effectively to undertake relevant checks with other agencies such as revenue and benefits, schools and other local authority services to establish children's whereabouts. Of 199 referrals, only one child could not be traced. Most return to school or join a new school.

35. The local authority has a good understanding of the reasons why parents choose to home educate their children, and holds good information on children's individual circumstances. A multi-agency panel oversees elective home education (EHE). There is effective work between the children missing education officer and the EHE adviser. The adviser undertakes routine home visits and checks on the suitability of the education of the vast majority of children. Effective working with the MASH team and children's social care ensures that children's welfare needs are known. Those children moving into Year 11 after being home educated receive effective help on their next steps from the targeted youth support service.
36. Early help intervention and family support is well embedded and delivered effectively through the Bromley children's project. Thresholds for early help are appropriate and, in the majority of cases, considered as step-up or step-down processes that meet the respective threshold criteria. Assessments for early help intervention are timely and lead to a good range of services being offered. These include an early intervention programme supporting children who have witnessed domestic violence. Five of the six family centres hold early parent education classes, and 'parenting plus' has been offered since March 2015. Family support and parenting practitioners offer a range of workshops and one-to-one support regarding domestic violence, parenting, housing, employment and access to education. Examples of work seen demonstrate that knowledgeable staff assist parents to focus on practical skills and solutions.
37. The early help service has undertaken three common assessment framework (CAF) quality audits during 2015 for primary and secondary schools, health visitors and midwives. All have resulted in appropriate action plans and further review. Consequently, the number of CAFs rose to 706 in 2015 from 603 during the previous year. This was the highest ever figure, and schools completed a third of the CAFs, indicating their commitment to the early help process.
38. The troubled families initiative is reported by the local authority to have been successful, with turnaround of the first 490 families. This has resulted in Bromley successfully achieving targets as part of the Early Start for year one of phase two of the programme.
39. A range of professionals including police, health and education are colocated within the MASH, and all report effective working relationships. Roles and responsibilities are well understood, and referrals to children's social care are

responded to promptly. A shared database ensures that requests for information are followed up swiftly and in priority order, according to risk. Out of normal office hours, the emergency duty team deals effectively with referrals. In cases considered by inspectors, the response was appropriate. The information subsequently passed on to the MASH was detailed and clear.

40. There is evidence that consent is routinely sought, when required, and persistent attempts are made to engage with families to ensure that this takes place. Qualified social workers within the MASH make decisions that are countersigned by consultant practitioners or group managers. Referrers do not always receive feedback following the making of a referral, which does not assist them to contribute to or monitor the progress of cases referred.
41. Multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) are well attended by a nucleus of key professionals, including from children's social care. Members attend with relevant information, and good joint working ensures that there are effective safety plans. Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) meetings are similarly well attended, with agencies reporting an appropriate response from children's social care. Thorough scrutiny of cases identifies risks, and effective joint working ensures that safety plans are established.
42. Sixteen- and 17-year-old homeless young people are assisted by a housing options officer and a housing senior practitioner, who are based part-time in the MASH under a joint protocol between children's social care and housing. Assessments completed are of good quality, with the views of young people, their families, and other agencies being well recorded. Young people are aware of their entitlements as care leavers, and are offered mediation work to facilitate a return home. Young people are also referred or signposted to other support services appropriately.
43. At the time of the inspection, one young person was in bed and breakfast accommodation and had been there for a week with no plan to move on. This accommodation is not thoroughly risk assessed and no additional supports are in place for the duration of this stay. The use of bed and breakfast is an accepted part of Bromley's provision for 16- and 17-year-old homeless young people, yet the local authority is not ensuring that these premises are safe and appropriate. This is a significant failing.
(Recommendation)
44. The lack of basic safeguarding practice for children who are privately fostered means that the local authority cannot be assured that they are safe. Not all of the five cases sampled had a completed Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, and in one case the arrangement had been in place for several months. Children from abroad living with host families do not always receive timely visits. Awareness raising regarding private fostering is beginning to have an impact. Within the 'Private fostering annual report

2014–2015' it is noted that, for the first time, the number of notifications from non-language schools and other ethnicities is increasing. At the time of the inspection, there were nine children privately fostered.

45. An effective designated officer and a well-resourced service follow up children who are subject to allegations of professional abuse. Complex strategy meetings are held, when necessary, with clear monitored actions to ensure the well-being and safety of children subject to allegations. Good multi-agency systems and relationships ensure that communication and actions are clear. There is also evidence of training and awareness raising regarding the designated officer role and findings from cases.
46. For those children and young people with disabilities, a clear referral pathway ensures that there is effective joint working with safeguarding and referral and assessment teams when there is a concern. Young people with disabilities are well supported in their transition into adult services.
47. Where there is a risk of a child or young person being radicalised, staff proactively engage with partners in this work. They raise awareness in schools, and successfully intervene to prevent an escalation of concerns. For example, recent cases demonstrate the excellent multi-agency work when the local authority was proactive in taking a matter to court, successfully securing wardships for three children.

The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence	Inadequate
<p>Most children and young people wait too long before becoming looked after, and authoritative management action is not taken soon enough to safeguard children and young people. Some children and young people have experienced significant delay in being offered help, and there is a lack of urgency to secure permanence for them. There are significant weaknesses in the quality of the legal advice available to social workers and their managers. The public law outline (PLO) process is not used effectively, leading to too many children experiencing significant drift and delay in achieving permanence.</p> <p>When children do become looked after, their needs are not formally reassessed. Ongoing risk is not always recognised or supported well enough. Care plans for children and young people are not routinely updated and, in many cases, it is difficult to understand what progress has been made. There is limited evidence of social workers carrying out direct work with children and young people, or undertaking life-story work to help them to understand their family history and the reasons for them becoming looked after.</p> <p>IROs do not provide sufficient challenge to the work of frontline social workers and their managers. They are not robust enough in escalating their concerns. Managerial oversight is weak. There is little evidence of effective scrutiny or challenge to the social work practice taking place to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people, including when children and young people return home from care episodes.</p> <p>Procedures for monitoring and supporting children and young people who go missing from care are ineffective. Risks to children in relation to child sexual exploitation and child trafficking are not well understood. Neither are the needs of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children thoroughly assessed.</p> <p>Adoption is not considered soon enough for all children who are unable to return to their birth parents. This means that too few children are adopted and, for those who are, the process takes too long. Children wait too long to find permanence, while unrealistic assessments are often undertaken of birth parents and the wider family.</p> <p>There is an insufficient range of safe, suitable housing available to vulnerable care leavers. They are placed in bed and breakfast accommodation for extended periods of time. The local authority does not know the risks posed to young people by other residents, as these are not assessed.</p> <p>The quality of foster care is good, and the work of the Living in Care Council (LinCC) is a considerable strength.</p>	

Inspection findings

48. At the time of inspection, Bromley looked after 287 children and young people. Inspectors did not find any child for whom the recent decision to become looked after was inappropriate. However, some children who have experienced neglect waited too long before coming into local authority care.
49. Of 287 children looked after and young people, 101 are looked after under section 20 voluntary arrangements. The vast majority (70) of these arrangements are over six months' duration and a further 48 are over 12 months' duration. While the local authority recognised in December 2015 the need to review these arrangements, this review had not taken place by the time of the current inspection. Concerns raised with senior managers during the inspection resulted in the local authority taking action, and a significant number of children's cases were reviewed when it was identified that there was drift and delay. The level of concern was such that the local authority convened an urgent legal meeting to review seven cases, of which one was subject to an urgent legal planning meeting. (Recommendation)
50. The public law outline (PLO) process is not being used effectively to consider what further evidence or assessments are needed to make early decisions about care plans. There are significant weaknesses in the quality of legal advice available to social workers and their managers, and this sets a threshold for intervention that is too high. This results in a lack of confidence in their analysis of risk and professional judgement. Consequently, there are delays in convening and reviewing legal planning meetings, and issuing proceedings. Letters before proceedings do not help to ensure that families are fully aware of the local authority's concerns, expectations and the potential consequences of care proceedings. The length of time to decide care proceedings has risen from 27 weeks to an average of 35 weeks over the past year, which includes one complex case that took 84 weeks. (Recommendation)
51. The local judiciary reports that local authority lawyers are not sufficiently experienced to advocate for children in complex care proceedings. Some lawyers do not prepare cases thoroughly enough before representations in court, and social work evidence is often not strong enough to support the local authority's plan. This results in the court, legal representatives for children's parents and the children's guardians influencing some children's care plans and requesting additional assessments. As a result, some children have experienced significant delay in their care plans being progressed. The local authority's evidence, in a small number of cases, lacks analysis and confident presentation in court. This results in a change of care plan and children being returned to parents when it may not be in their best interests. (Recommendation)
52. Not all children who become looked after have clear and timely pathways to permanence. Senior managers do not consistently authorise assessments

and decisions regarding children and young people returning home to their parents prior to this taking place. This means that the local authority does not know if the risks which led to the child becoming looked after have been ameliorated, or that safe enough care can be sustained. (Recommendation)

53. For those children and young people who require legal permanence through adoption, special guardianship orders (SGOs) or child arrangement orders, there is a lack of urgency in progressing their plan. In a large number of cases there have been delays in holding permanence planning meetings, in one child's case for 14 months after becoming looked after and 10 months after a recommendation from the IRO that it should take place. Similarly, a small minority of children under the age of 10 (16) have been subject to a care order for a number of years, some dating back to 2006, but who have not been considered for permanence. The local authority recognises the need to improve in this area, and in December 2015 it established a performance monitoring process to track the progress of children when they first become looked after. However, this system is very new and underdeveloped, and is therefore not yet having an impact on those children who have been looked after for more than six months. The local authority is yet to demonstrate effective scrutiny and challenge to the quality of social work assessment in relation to permanence planning. (Recommendation)
54. Managerial oversight of practice is a serious area of weakness at all levels. There is no senior manager with a single line of sight or overall responsibility for the progress of all children looked after. There is little evidence of appropriate challenge by group managers taking place to improve practice and outcomes. Managers do not regularly scrutinise children's plans or the impact of social work interventions, and the focus of supervision of social workers is on sharing information rather than the progress and impact of children's plans. (Recommendation)
55. When children can no longer live with their families, approved foster carers meet their needs. Placement stability is better than that in comparator authorities, with only 8% of children having moved placement more than three times in the year. This is an improvement from 2014–15, when it was 11%. The majority of children looked after (61%) are placed with good-quality foster placements. The quality of support that children and young people receive in their placements is good and, to some extent, this mitigates some of the short-term impact of delay in planning for their longer-term needs.
56. The recruitment of foster carers complies with key aspects of regulations. All foster carers had received an annual review which was well recorded and detailed, and this provides evidence of training attended. A good range of training is available for foster carers, as well as a duty system and a well-attended support group, which is positively received. Generally, foster carers spoken to were positive about their supervising social worker. However, many report feeling undervalued by the local authority and do not feel that

they are considered as part of a professional team supporting children and young people.

57. The local authority recognises that it does not have sufficient foster placements for older children and for children from ethnic minority backgrounds. A new recruitment strategy with an accompanying action plan has yet to be implemented. It has been delayed by recent proposals considering the reduction of some foster care allowances. This has created much uncertainty among foster carers regarding their future with Bromley. It is also affecting the progress of children's plans with their current carers and of those children waiting to be matched. These new proposals are having a direct effect on the council's ability to retain foster carers and may affect its ability to recruit, both now and in the future. The local authority has identified that it needs to recruit 22 foster families a year to meet continued demand, although last year it had a net loss of 11 families.
(Recommendation)
58. A draft process for finding families has yet to be introduced. However, comprehensive searches are undertaken to ensure a good long-term match for children. This includes the use of Internet profiling and independent fostering agencies where in-house carers cannot meet the needs of the child. The council has 16% of children placed with independent fostering providers and, if the placement is an appropriate match, it is committed to supporting children in these placements long term. Matching reports vary in quality. Most contain information about the child's needs and the skills of the foster carers, although the amount of detail and the level of analysis could be improved. The voice of the child is not clear in most of the reports seen by inspectors. There are delays in long-term matches going to panel when children have been settled in a placement for many months, often well over a year. This makes it difficult to see the foster panel's impact on the quality and timeliness of placement matching.
59. The number of special guardianship orders is decreasing, and 23 children left care on a special guardianship order last year, compared with 12 this year. Some foster carers report that they are reluctant to make an application for children for whom they are caring, because of the lack of clarity about future support, including financial arrangements. Assessments for matching children to connected persons vary in their quality. In most cases, there is a lack of a comprehensive exploration of the risks and vulnerabilities of the placement. When issues arise about a carer's background, there is too often a lack of professional curiosity and insufficient exploration into the impact of this on the carer's ability to meet the needs of the child. Too many reports are overoptimistic about the carer's ability to parent the child into adulthood. The wishes and feelings of children are not often considered in sufficient detail.
(Recommendation)
60. The small number of children and young people who live in private residential children's homes outside the borough (21) live in homes that are

judged good or better by Ofsted. However, insufficient checks are made with host authorities as to whether the local area has the appropriate health and education provision required for the child, or whether the placement location presents a child sexual exploitation risk. (Recommendation)

61. The local authority is currently supporting 19 unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. In most cases, assessments of need and risk are insufficiently robust to ensure that the placements provided are safe and suitable. Issues around culture, ethnicity and religion are recognised by social workers, but are not always fully reflected in assessments or case records.
62. Contact between children and their family members is not sufficiently risk assessed or managed. Insufficient consideration is given to the potential negative impact of very frequent contact and associated travel for children and their attachment behaviour. Contact records are not sufficiently analytical and do not inform case planning well. The local authority has already identified the weaknesses in this service and is undertaking a review.
63. While statutory visits to children are mostly within the local authority's required timescale, it is not clear how visits are contributing to the progress of children's plans. Children and young people do benefit from continuity of social workers within the looked after social work team, and social workers know the children well. However, many children's cases are allocated within the safeguarding and planning service. These teams have experienced a high turnover of staff, with frequent changes of social workers. High caseloads mean that there is insufficient time to undertake this work. (Recommendation)
64. The majority of placement plans seen do not contain the information that carers require to understand the arrangements for children's care. In a small number of cases, carers have not received this information for a number of weeks after children are placed. Placement plans and care plans are not always updated when children move, and delegated authority was not explained or recorded in any placement plans seen by inspectors. (Recommendation)
65. Most looked after children reviews (93.4%) are carried out within the required timescales. IROs do endeavour to see children and young people before their reviews, but this is not always possible for those children who live out of area or some distance from home. Most children are supported to attend their reviews and complete consultation documents. IROs are not always effective in ensuring that children's plans are progressed through the recommendation of specific actions. While they do raise concerns when case planning is drifting, this is not evident in all children's cases and there are too few formal escalations recorded, with little evidence of the difference that this has made for the child or young person. (Recommendation)

66. Although children and young people have access to an independent advocacy service and there is no waiting list, advocacy is not well promoted in children's reviews or by their social workers. However, children looked after do benefit from a well-established independent visitor service. Children reported to inspectors that they value these relationships. Effective processes for responding to children's complaints are in place.
67. Good arrangements are in place to maintain and improve the health of children and young people looked after. All initial and review health assessments and corresponding health plans are carried out by a dedicated community paediatrician. The number of assessments completed within the required timescale has been maintained at last year's rate of 88%. The vast majority of children are up to date with their immunisations (86.8%) and dental assessments (82.6%). The designated nurse located within the looked after social work team helps to ensure a coordinated approach to children's and young people's health. There is good support for their emotional health and well-being through dedicated children looked after CAMHS provision, and currently there are no children or young people looked after waiting for a service. There is ongoing work to develop the use of the strength and difficulties questionnaires that provides an opportunity to identify early concerns about their emotional health. Information for 2014–15 shows that the average score is 14.1, which is similar to comparators.
68. Appropriate support is available to educate children and young people about the risks of drug and alcohol misuse. A single point of access to children's well-being services ensures timely assessment, support and intervention. Two young people successfully completed treatment in the fourth quarter of last year and have maintained abstinence. There are currently no children looked after receiving treatment for substance misuse. Improved working relationships between children's social care, the youth offending service and wider partners have reduced the number of children looked after involved in offending behaviour from 19 in September 2015 to 13 at the time of the inspection.
69. Most children looked after go to a good or better school. Their attendance at school is generally good and compares well to children looked after in similar areas. There have been no permanent exclusions of children looked after since 2008, and the number of those who are subject to a fixed-term exclusion is reducing well. The small number of children placed in alternative provision are generally having their educational needs well met.
70. Personal education plans seen by inspectors were generally of good quality, due to the effective work undertaken by the virtual school to improve the quality of information used to plan children's next steps in education. This helps carers, for example, to take action to support children's specific learning and development needs. The pupil premium is mostly used effectively to support their progress and attainment through individual tuition and, increasingly, to support their social and emotional well-being.

71. The virtual school team knows the circumstances of individual children well and routinely monitors their progress, including those children and young people who are causing concern and those who are living outside of the area. It intervenes quickly where outcomes for children start to decline. As a result, children looked after receive timely and effective help that enables them to stay in school and achieve well. The achievements of children and young people looked after are celebrated on an individual level by education professionals and their carers, and also at an annual celebration evening where children receive recognition for their efforts. This is valued by children and young people, as it promotes their self-esteem.
72. A high proportion of children looked after have special educational needs, and most make good progress from their starting points. In 2014/15, at age seven, a third of children looked after achieved age-related expectations in reading and mathematics, and half did so in writing. Most make the progress expected of all children between the ages of seven and 11, when nearly two thirds achieve age-related expectations in English and mathematics. The progress that they make from age 11 to 16 is significantly better than children looked after nationally. In 2014/15, a quarter of 16-year-olds achieved five GCSEs including English and mathematics. These are the best results ever for children looked after in Bromley, narrowing the achievement gap with other Bromley pupils. An increasing proportion of young people who start Year 12 in education remain in education, reflecting the early identification of young people who are at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training). However, in this academic year the proportion of young people dropping out in Year 12 has increased. The virtual school currently lacks capacity in the team to support this cohort. (Recommendation)
73. Procedures for monitoring children and young people who are missing from care are ineffective. Of 287 children looked after, 11% (32) children had at least one 'missing' episode in the past 12 months. Overall, there were 184 'missing' episodes. Only 13 children were offered 'return' interviews with an independent provider. This means that risks to children and young people are not well understood. Information is not gathered either to inform prevention and support plans for individual children or to inform wider strategic planning in relation to specific risks, such as sexual exploitation and child trafficking. (Recommendation)
74. The current Living in Care Council (LinCC) is comprised of a group of children and young people of differing ages, ethnic backgrounds, genders and abilities. This cross-section of Bromley's children looked after population ensures that the views of a diverse range of children and young people help to shape children's services. Children and young people have regular meetings with key senior managers of children's social care, elected members and executives of the working party for safeguarding and corporate parenting to help to influence service development, policy and practice. They undertake practical tasks to enhance the positive experiences

of children looked after, including developing the LinCC website, and the design and production of a welcome pack for children newly looked after. Dedicated participation and engagement workers ensure that information is communicated to children looked after through their carers and social workers. This includes information about keeping safe online and support in relation to bullying.

<p>The graded judgement for adoption performance is that it is inadequate</p>
--

75. Children who are unable to return to their birth parents are not always considered for adoption, and too many are not considered soon enough. This means that too few children are adopted and, for those that are, the process takes too long.
76. Only 10% of children leave care in Bromley through adoption, which is considerably below the England average of 16%. The current three-year average time in Bromley for children to be placed with their adoptive parents after entering care is 686 days. This shows a worsening performance compared to the published 2012–15 average, which was 659 days, and is 66 days slower than the England average for the same period.
77. The three-year average time for children to be matched with adopters, following the granting of a placement order, is 252 days for 2012–15. While there has been a small recent improvement in this measure, the three-year average is worsening and currently stands at 260 days. This is considerably slower than the Department for Education threshold of 121 days.
78. In Bromley, the reasons for this poor performance are not well understood by managers. Performance is deteriorating. Managers suggest that the reduction in the number of children adopted is due to an increase in special guardianship orders being granted. However, there have been fewer this year (12) than last year (23). This belief has inhibited scrutiny and systematic exploration of the data. Although welcomed, the recent work by the local authority concentrated entirely on the characteristics of the children waiting to be adopted rather than the reasons behind the delay.
(Recommendation)
79. The delay experienced by children is characterised by overoptimistic assessments of birth parents and families. This means that many children are not considered for adoption or other permanence options soon enough. Managers and IROs are not effectively challenging the delay. Inspectors reviewed cases where even very young children had come into care, yet adoption had not been considered at the earliest opportunity.
80. The local authority lacks the confidence and ability to evidence effectively to court when adoption is the preferred plan. Inspectors considered cases where a plan for adoption had been changed or was not considered while

assessments of wider family members were undertaken, even when these were not likely to lead to a successful placement. A multi-agency working group, involving managers from the local authority, representatives from the court and Cafcass, has been ineffective in addressing this issue. Cases evidenced parents being given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their parenting ability before decisive action was taken, resulting in some children remaining uncertain about their futures for too long. For adopted children, this means that they do not settle into their 'forever' families until they are older.

81. In the vast majority of cases, children remain with the same foster carers after entering care until they move in with their adoptive families. The local authority has only very recently started to consider fostering-to-adopt, and only one child has been placed in a fostering-to-adopt placement via agency adopters.
82. Once a plan for adoption is confirmed, family finding is thorough, detailed and sensitive to the needs of the child. However, too few children reach this stage. In a small number of cases, there is delay as a result of social workers spending too long identifying an ethnic match, rather than concentrating on a search for parents who could best meet the needs of the child.
83. There are more approved adopters waiting for a child than children waiting to be adopted, meaning that Bromley adopters can consider children from outside the borough. This does not inhibit family finding, and inspectors saw evidence of considerable efforts to achieve the right match for the child.
84. Adopter assessments are thorough, but they often take too long to complete and performance on this measure is worsening. Initial contact to the assessment commencing currently takes 136 days, compared to 82 days nationally. The duration of assessment is currently 272 days, up from 260 days last year and above the national average of 231 days.
85. Prospective adopter reports (PARs) considered by inspectors were all of an adequate standard. Strengths and vulnerabilities are appropriately identified, although the quality of the analysis could more effectively reflect prospective adopters' ability to overcome their vulnerabilities. Adopters spoken to were positive about their reception and assessment by Bromley, and considered that they had been very well prepared for the experience of parenting an adoptive child. Child permanence reports (CPRs) detail the family history and give a clear picture of the child. However, in some cases, better analysis of how the trauma experienced by children might affect them into adult life would better inform the assessment for post-adoption support services. Where brothers and sisters have a plan for adoption, there is evidence of appropriate 'together or apart' assessments.
86. Once family finding begins, children and families are thoughtfully matched and there have been no placement breakdowns pre- or post-order for more

than two years. Matching reports comprehensively consider why parents have been chosen to adopt the child, and how their skills and experiences will enable the child to flourish. Adopters are offered the opportunity to meet with a range of professionals involved in the child's life in order to build a clear picture of what the child is like. The medical adviser speaks to parents about the implications of any health issues in caring for the child, ensuring that parents are well prepared and able to make realistic decisions about their ability to offer a home to a child.

87. Introductions are managed well. Children are appropriately prepared for moving in with their adoptive parents. Experienced foster carers know the children well, and advise and support adopters during the transition period. In many cases, they have continued to maintain contact after the child has moved. This means that children who are adopted are helped in the early stages to develop safe and secure attachments to their new parents. A dedicated post-adoptive support team offers support to all families with adoptive children who live in Bromley, assessing and addressing any difficulties that the family may experience. Staff have a range of skills including family therapy, 'theraplay' and safebase training. This team also offers support in maintaining contact between brothers and sisters, as well as support to birth parents. Currently, 22 birth parents are receiving counselling through the service. Inspectors saw some effective arrangements to ensure that contact with family members was maintained, including where brothers and sisters had been adopted by different families.
88. Life-story books seen during the inspection lacked some critical information and are not always completed in a timely way. In some cases, considerable delays mean that children do not have access to information that will help them to understand their histories. Later-life letters are generally thoughtfully crafted, and they provide a detailed and honest exploration of the child's early life and how they came to be living with adoptive parents.

<p>The graded judgement about the experience and progress of care leavers is that it is inadequate</p>

89. There is an insufficient range of safe and suitable housing available for care leavers. The local authority regularly places a significant number of care leavers in bed and breakfast accommodation, and has done so for several years. Managers do not consider the risks that other residents may pose to young people or assure themselves of the safety of care leavers placed in bed and breakfast accommodation. During the inspection, two female care leavers were moved to new accommodation following a disclosure that the landlord had made inappropriate comments via text.

90. Too many young people stay in bed and breakfast accommodation unnecessarily and for too long. At the time of the inspection, over a third of the 16 young people in bed and breakfast accommodation, all aged 18 years old or over, had been in this type of accommodation for more than six months. Young people placed in these settings are frequently the most vulnerable, live chaotic lifestyles and have exhausted all other housing options available to them. Often, they do not engage well with the leaving care team or other support that is available, placing themselves at unacceptable risk and significantly decreasing their chances of securing good outcomes for their futures.
91. Social workers and young people's advisers find it difficult to maintain regular and meaningful contact with young people who repeatedly move in and out of temporary accommodation. Young people find it difficult to settle in one place, obtain the help that they need to move forward in their lives, manage their health, and achieve their educational and career goals. However, the local authority is successful in promoting foster care as an option for young people beyond their 18th birthday. In the last year, all those in foster care placements who turned 18 years remained in stable placements with their foster carers. Local authority staff fail to engage effectively with more challenging young people. While young people's advisers and social workers know of young people's needs, they struggle to engage a significant minority of young people who have more challenging behaviour or are reluctant to take up offers of help. Managers do not intervene quickly enough when outcomes for young people are not improving or when young people do not engage.
92. In most cases considered by inspectors, young people had an up-to-date pathway plan. However, plans are too often insufficiently detailed regarding the specific steps to be taken for young people to achieve their goals. Too many plans are reliant on vague initial actions and, too often, there is no effective contingency plan on what to do if this first step proves unsuccessful. As a result, some more vulnerable care leavers do not engage with the leaving care team or support services for long. In these cases, social workers, young people's advisers and managers do not know enough about young people's circumstances to be able to plan their next steps. For those aged over 18 years, the offer of help to them is considered sufficient, regardless of whether young people take up this offer. (Recommendation)
93. When young people do engage, the majority have good support from social workers and young people's advisers. They make good progress and take increasing responsibility for themselves. Staff act as effective advocates for young people with other agencies to ensure that they receive their benefits and entitlements. However, some care leavers who are in settled accommodation say that infrequent contact with their advisers leads to them feeling isolated and lonely. When young people receive support from a mentor, this helps to alleviate these feelings.

94. A specialist adviser supports young people into education, employment and training (EET), which is a comparable number to care leavers in similar areas. Inspectors saw good examples where work experience builds young people's readiness for work and leads to permanent employment opportunities. However, almost a third of care leavers aged 19 years are not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET), and this has been the case for the last three years. The proportion of care leavers who move into higher education is slightly lower than those in similar areas, despite appropriate financial support being available to them.
95. Inspectors saw some examples where young people's advisers provided some useful support to care leavers in helping them to prepare for living independently and managing their own affairs. An example is through providing practical help with budgeting and developing plans to repay rent arrears. A 'moving on' workshop is available to care leavers to help them to understand their responsibilities when they secure their own tenancies. However, some felt that the workshop took place too far in advance of them living independently, and they had forgotten what they had learned by the time they had moved in. There is a sufficient range of funding available to support care leavers as they move towards independence. For example, funding is provided for essential books for those in further education, clothing grants are made and young people receive a £2,500 allowance when they obtain their first tenancy. Young people said that they are aware of their entitlements, but told inspectors that not having access to the full 'setting up home' allowance prior to moving in meant that their first home was not fully equipped when they took up their tenancies.
96. All care leavers are offered a face-to-face meeting with the looked after children's nurse before leaving care to receive their health history, recorded on a health passport. However, only around half of the young people spoken to by inspectors were aware of their health history, and none knew about the health passport. The appointment of a dedicated nurse is intended to develop new ways of sharing health information with care leavers and to ensure that they have access to information to help them to manage their own health as they become more independent.

Leadership, management and governance	Inadequate
<p>Since the inspections by Ofsted in 2010 and 2012, failures of senior leadership and weak management have resulted in a deterioration of services for children's safeguarding, children looked after, care leavers and children requiring adoption. Elected members, the chief executive and senior leaders across the local authority do not have a good enough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their services for vulnerable children in need and those requiring protection. They were unaware of the extensive deficits identified in this inspection.</p> <p>Political leaders and chief officers state that vulnerable children are a top priority for the council. This is not evident corporately or in service provision. While the senior leadership of the council, the corporate parenting group and partner agencies express high ambitions for children and young people in their care and those leaving care, the services for these children and young people are inadequate.</p> <p>The interim DCS and her senior management team have continually absorbed additional responsibilities in response to the local authority's financial pressures. This has led to reduced capacity across all areas of service, contributing to the lack of managerial scrutiny and the identification of poor practice.</p> <p>Weak management oversight of cases at all levels, including by senior managers, is ineffective and not systematic. Performance management information is insufficiently used to improve practice. There is an absence of critical enquiry. Quality assurance arrangements are inadequate, and case auditing does not demonstrate rigour in scrutinising the quality of work. Supervision does not consistently take place in accordance with the local authority's own stated policy.</p> <p>Strategic managers do not routinely assess risks to those at risk of sexual exploitation, and to children and young people who go missing.</p> <p>The implementation of the current social work model is beginning to have an impact in identifying risk in the MASH, and in the quality of some children's assessments in both the referral and assessment, and the safeguarding teams. Staff report that this model is helping to bring clarity to their work.</p> <p>The local authority and partner agencies work well together to provide good, early, targeted support in children centres. The integrated troubled families project (Bromley children's project) is helping many families with entrenched difficulties to improve their care and parenting.</p> <p>The workforce development strategy is effective in attracting and supporting newly qualified social workers.</p>	

Inspection findings

97. The lead member, the chief executive and the interim director of children's services (DCS) do not have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of children's services. They were unaware of the significant deficits identified in this inspection. These included inconsistent responses to identifying child protection risks, drift and delay in progressing work for children looked after, poor management oversight and inadequate quality assurances processes. Throughout the inspection, in response to these failings, managers have taken action, demonstrating a commitment to addressing such weaknesses. An example is the immediate changes to ensure compliance with child protection procedures, and the devising of an action plan to address concerns about the inconsistent quality of practice for sexually exploited and missing children.
98. While there are clear lines of accountability and governance arrangements between political, strategic and operational roles, this is not framed within a shared strategic plan. Services for vulnerable children and their families are given insufficient priority across the local authority. Senior officers, corporately, do not work collaboratively enough to ensure that the needs of Bromley's vulnerable children are championed. Elected members engage with the children's agenda and are active participants on the Bromley Safeguarding Children Board, Safer Bromley Partnership, Corporate Parenting, and Health and Wellbeing Boards. However, this is not leading to effective collaboration or service improvement. Proposals by members to address financial pressures lack sufficient analysis and understanding of the underlying complexities and impact on children's services, including the risks. This inhibits the effectiveness of those with lead responsibility for children's social care in improving outcomes and sustaining longer-term change.
99. With the departure of the previous DCS in April 2015, interim arrangements were made to delegate the statutory functions to the assistant directors (ADs) for children and education services, supported by the chief executive. The AD for children is the named statutory interim DCS. However, she has limited authority corporately to lead, share or drive forward change. These interim arrangements have continued for too long. At the same time, the DCS and her senior management team have absorbed extensive additional responsibilities as part of the council's financial pressures. This has reduced capacity across all areas of service, contributing to poor managerial scrutiny and management failures. (Recommendation)
100. Management oversight of cases, including scrutiny by senior managers, is ineffective. As a result, managers do not routinely monitor and assess progress and risk to all children. Social work caseloads in the referral and assessment, and safeguarding teams are too high and do not create an environment where social workers can do their job properly. Practice is not consistently robust and, in too many cases, assessments and plans are not of

a good enough quality, leading to significant drift in progressing work.
(Recommendation)

101. Available performance management information is used insufficiently to drive practice. There is a lack of critical enquiry by senior managers and leaders, and a failure to interrogate data. For example, there is no data on children in need, the largest cohort of children receiving the support of children's services. Quality assurance arrangements are inadequate, as case auditing does not demonstrate rigour in the work carried out. Escalation processes are not routinely utilised by IROs or conference chairs to alert senior managers to the impact of the significant deficits in practice that are identified in this inspection. (Recommendation)
102. The quality and frequency of formal case and professional supervision are not of a consistently adequate standard. There are some examples of supervision records utilising the local authority social work model, but the large majority did not meet this standard. The supervision template is very clear about what is to be achieved, but too few actions identified in previous supervisions are reviewed. The better supervision records give clear management direction, with timescales and rationale for decisions. However, many records lack evidence of reflective practice and challenge. Actions are not tracked between sessions, leading to drift in progressing plans for too many children.
103. Placement stability for children looked after in foster care is strong, with a high proportion living in family placements. At the time of inspection, proposals by elected members to change the level of support to foster care was causing considerable fragility in the system. Foster carers told inspectors that they did not feel valued. The importance of ensuring that there are sufficient local placements for children is a stated priority for the local authority. The lead member for children and leader of the council gave assurances to inspectors that children's placements would not be destabilised or children left at risk.
104. The corporate parenting strategy group, chaired by the interim DCS, and the member-led corporate parent executive working group have had success in improving health and educational outcomes for children looked after. However, overall the pace of change has been too slow in fundamental areas for too many children in care and care leavers. For example, in 2015 a task and finish group was established to prevent homelessness and reduce the number of care leavers in unsuitable accommodation. At the time of the inspection, inspectors found that senior leaders were aware of the routine practice of placing vulnerable care leavers in bed and breakfast accommodation for extended periods. This is not acceptable. Inspectors found that services for children looked after, care leavers and those requiring adoption are inadequate.

105. Strategic arrangements for understanding, analysing and evaluating outcomes for children at risk of sexual exploitation are underdeveloped. Prior to the inspection, the local authority in partnership with police colleagues revised the function of the multi-agency sexual exploitation (MASE) group. They recognise that work is required to assess the profile of perpetrators and victims, and to understand the circumstances and environments that make children and young people more vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Plans to disband the monthly multi-agency case-focused planning meeting were withdrawn when inspectors raised concerns about the need to have a holistic response that links children across agencies. (Recommendation)
106. Missing children procedures and protocols are not routinely followed. Instead, there is a piecemeal approach. Too many children in care are not being offered a return home interview. In cases seen of children missing from home, the quality of the return home interviews by the teenage and parenting support service (TAPSS) is good, with a holistic approach to understanding family pressures and provision of effective intervention following 'missing' episodes. Inspectors were advised that this team was being disbanded to find financial savings. Currently, there is no corporate system for aggregating or cross-referencing information from return home interviews with those children at risk of, or being, sexually exploited or involved in gang activity.
107. Safeguarding and children looked after information is included in the joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA). For example, there is comprehensive analysis on the emotional and educational needs and outcomes for children looked after. The JSNA highlights that health measures tend to be of processes (for example, the number of health checks or dental checks), rather than qualitative information on actual levels of health. There are significant gaps in the JSNA for some groups of vulnerable children, for example the high number of children known to early help services and children's social care as a result of parental domestic abuse, mental health and substance misuse. There is no reference to child sexual exploitation or those missing from home or care. Consequently, this limits senior leaders' understanding of prevalence, and impacts on local priority decisions by leaders and their evaluation of whether resources could be commissioned to ameliorate such issues.
108. The chair of Bromley's Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) acknowledged that it is still learning how to utilise the JSNA to best effect. Key priorities of the HWB strategy include promoting the emotional well-being of children and countering childhood obesity. The board's agenda is both demanding and predominantly adult focused. The LSCB chair is a member, and ensures that the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children is discussed. The interface with senior officers in children's services is less apparent. However, holding combined meetings with adult, children and health committees is reducing 'silo working', and has been effective in improving the health and educational

outcomes of children looked after. There is little evidence that safeguarding is a key focus for the HWB.

109. Bromley commissions an extensive range of early help and statutory services for children. A number of senior managers corporately share responsibility, leading to a lack of cohesion in approach, conflicting priorities and the fragmented evaluation of services. The local authority has successfully reviewed and recommissioned a single, targeted service for children with emotional and mental health problems. There is evidence of effective work with the clinical commissioning group, for example in jointly commissioning residential services for disabled children. However, the DCS accepts that more work is required if children and their families in Bromley are to benefit from a carefully planned, dedicated and child-centred commissioning strategy. (Recommendation)
110. The workforce strategy is comprehensive and ambitious. The local authority has invested in access to good-quality training. This is reducing attrition among qualified social work staff. There is a comprehensive and well-established training programme for 15 newly qualified social workers. This is linked to local universities and is moderated independently, in partnership with other local authorities. The implementation of the current social work model is beginning to have an impact on identifying risks, and staff report that this model is helping to bring clarity to their work. There is an effective strategy to develop the skills and knowledge of senior practitioners. However, the local authority recognises that its workforce strategy also needs to focus on the development of its middle and senior managers.
111. Complaints are managed well by a designated complaints manager. Heads of service and team managers receive a weekly update on all active complaints. Learning from complaints is cascaded to managers and elected members on a quarterly basis. There was an increase in complaints to children's social care, with 73 formal complaints in 2015–16 compared to 55 in 2014–15. These relate mainly to children's cases before the courts. Commissioned independent advocates support children, resulting in most complaints made by children being resolved informally.
112. Bromley proactively delivers in line with the Prevent duty, raising awareness in schools and successfully intervening to prevent the escalation of concerns. For example, recent cases demonstrate excellent multi-agency work when the local authority was proactive in taking the matter to court, successfully securing wardships for three children. The counter-terrorism unit expressed considerable appreciation of the local authority's open and professional approach to this complex work.
113. The judiciary expressed significant concern about the quality of the children's services' legal representation in court. The local authority does not instruct sufficiently experienced lawyers in complex cases. Representations have been made by the judge to the local authority on a number of occasions,

with little impact or improvement. Evidence is not prepared well. There is a lack of understanding about what constitutes good evidence. Consequently, the PLO is implemented neither effectively nor quickly enough. Senior managers do not have a system to assure the quality and timeliness of decisions. This results in drift and delay in children achieving legal permanence.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

The Local Safeguarding Children Board requires improvement

Executive summary

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in Bromley requires improvement to be good. Bromley's LSCB complies with its statutory responsibilities and the requirements of 'Working together 2015'. The chair of the board and its members work closely together. Since the chair was appointed in April 2015, there have been a number of improvements to board organisation and a greater focus on safeguarding priorities. However, the board needs to develop a more critical overview of practice and performance to understand fully the quality of practice in safeguarding services, and the experiences of children and young people in Bromley.

The LSCB's understanding of the extent and prevalence of child sexual exploitation and associated risks, particularly when young people go missing, is compromised by poor data and poor qualitative information on practice.

There is insufficient overview by the LSCB of the introduction and effectiveness of the local authority social work model of risk assessment. This is a key area of practice improvement in Bromley, and the board needs to ensure that it has oversight of its implementation, its impact on assessing need and the service response to minimising risk to children.

The LSCB's engagement with young people needs focus, and the board has not yet ensured that it hears the opinions of young people clearly and in a systematic way. This presents as a missed opportunity to understand and respond to their needs.

A comprehensive multi-agency training programme ensures that a wide range of staff benefit from key training in safeguarding issues. The programme is evaluated for effectiveness, and it responds to the development needs of staff.

A multi-agency auditing programme looks at areas such as neglect and domestic violence, as well as ensuring, through its S11 agency audit, that safeguarding procedures are in place in all agencies working with children in Bromley. The board conducts serious case reviews and case management reviews to identify issues. It ensures that these are published and lessons learned.

The LSCB is active in ensuring that policies and procedures are in place, and that it influences the development of practice. These procedures include on the issue of female genital mutilation, ensuring that there is a child sexual abuse strategy in place, and that children and families receive early help through the effective operation of Bromley's early intervention model.

Recommendations

- 114. The LSCB should establish a performance dataset that ensures that it can measure progress against its key priorities.
- 115. The LSCB should ensure that there is critical enquiry and challenge in relation to the core safeguarding activity undertaken by all agencies.
- 116. The LSCB should actively seek the views and opinions of children and young people, and engage them in a systematic manner in order to ensure that it is aware of and benefits from their experiences.
- 117. The LSCB should ensure that multi-agency arrangements for the oversight of children missing and at risk of sexual exploitation are underpinned by effective information sharing, performance monitoring and action planning, and are strategically coordinated and monitored by the board.
- 118. The LSCB should ensure that the arrangements for children privately fostered comply with statutory guidance, and that they are safe and that their health and well-being are properly promoted.

Inspection findings – the Local Safeguarding Children Board

- 119. Bromley Safeguarding Children Board complies with its statutory responsibilities as defined in 'Working together 2015'. It is appropriately constituted and includes two lay members. Since the appointment of a new chair in April 2015, the LSCB has been restructured and has reorganised its sub-groups to focus more closely on priority areas such as vulnerable children, and the development of policy and procedures. Although a relatively recent development (autumn 2015), only one sub-group (training) is now chaired by a social care manager, with others being chaired by senior members of partnership agencies, including education and health. This strengthens the collaborative commitment of all partners. LSCB members consider that they work well together and that the creation of a leadership group of sub-group chairs in autumn 2015 gave clear direction to the work of the board. The chair acknowledges that the changes made reflect a need for a greater level of practice focus and critical enquiry. (Recommendation)
- 120. The LSCB's business plan for 2015–18 identifies five key priority areas, together with appropriate performance measures, including milestones and rating of progress. However, it does not identify the implementation of the current social work model across Bromley as a key measure to improving the identification and minimisation of risk, and as an area that the LSCB should monitor for effectiveness. This means that the board does not have sufficient focus on a key area of practice that was introduced to make a difference to children in Bromley.

121. Governance arrangements are not all yet in place to ensure that partners, such as the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) and the Children's Board, are fulfilling their responsibilities to help, protect and care for children and young people. A written partnership agreement has recently been proposed between the LSCB and the HWB, setting out the nature of their relationship and mutual expectations. However, the LSCB has kept the HWB aware of issues, including raising self-harm and homelessness as topics for the HWB to consider in their current review of partnership strategy. The chair of the LSCB does not attend the Children's Board and this is a gap, given that this group has a focus on outcomes for children at risk in the community. This means that the LSCB is not as influential as it should be in scrutinising and challenging safeguarding activity.
122. The chair of the LSCB meets on a regular basis with the chief executive and the DCS. The director of adult services also attends, in recognition of the chair of the LSCB's additional role as chair of Bromley's adult safeguarding board. This provides continuity across both safeguarding agendas. The chair meets with elected members at board meetings and separately.
123. The board is provided with a dataset from individual agencies, including the police, health and social care. However, the information provided has not yet been tailored to the board's needs and omits key information, particularly in relation to child sexual exploitation. There is no reporting of the total number of young people missing, apart from those in care and those missing education, and no data on the timeliness of 'return' interviews or the prevalence of domestic abuse. This means that the board cannot have a clear picture of all relevant safeguarding activity. While some of these gaps have been filled by other means, for example a recent report on missing young people looked after provided to the vulnerable children sub-group, the LSCB does not yet have a sufficiently focused set of performance data to rely upon. (Recommendation)
124. The LSCB has a comprehensive multi-agency training programme. It ran 18 courses in 2014–15, with 535 people attending and a further 1,955 undertaking a variety of e-learning modules. There is an established evaluative process, including post-course evaluation three months after the event, and all training sub-group members observe training courses to assess the quality of content and delivery. Feedback from learning is used to inform future commissioning of training, together with an analysis of need undertaken by the training sub-group. However, the annual training evaluation report could be more informative in relation to the effectiveness of courses, better to inform the board of the experiences of staff.
125. The LSCB undertakes regular monitoring of frontline activity. It has a multi-agency audit programme, which considered reducing the risk of child sexual exploitation, the response to MASH contacts and practice on domestic abuse. An audit in relation to practice on neglect in 2014 has an ongoing action plan, last updated in January 2016. As a result, the LSCB has been able to

produce a detailed improvement action plan based on audit outcomes, and has a comprehensive overview of progress. A 2016–17 multi-agency audit programme proposes a focus on the effectiveness of core groups and a review of MASH effectiveness. However, it has not yet agreed how this activity is to be funded to ensure that there is an appropriate level of independence, and the board has identified this as an ongoing risk to the auditing programme.

126. The LSCB has undertaken a range of activity to ensure that it both influences and understands child sexual exploitation in Bromley. A review undertaken at the end of 2014, supported by a further multi-agency audit in January 2015, assessed whether risk had been reduced in child sexual exploitation cases. The policy and procedures sub-group is currently ratifying an updated protocol to counter child sexual exploitation. The LSCB also receives information on disruption activity and cases that are considered at the multi-agency sexual exploitation (MASE) panel. However, the understanding of the extent and prevalence of child sexual exploitation and associated risks, particularly of young people who go missing, is compromised by poor data and poor qualitative information on practice. To date, the LSCB has not demonstrated sufficient critical enquiry in these areas to ensure that it has a robust overview of risk and practice.
127. A programme of section 11 audits on a two-yearly basis is overseen effectively by the LSCB, with agency returns considered at a section 11 review panel. The current 2014–16 audit cycle is now complete, with only one instance of agency non-compliance. The LSCB can evidence challenge when audits have not met an appropriate standard through an action log, updated at six-monthly intervals. This log is an effective measure of progress and implementation. The LSCB has also sought to ensure that schools complete section 175 audits, with a current completion rate of 63%. There is recognition that some schools lack an understanding of the purpose of either the audit or the function of the LSCB. On such occasions, the board has sought to engage with them, on an individual level, to ensure compliance.
128. The LSCB has a local learning and improvement framework for statutory partners, which sets out how it will monitor and review practice, and learn lessons. It conducted and published a serious case review (SCR) regarding Child E in February 2015 and oversaw a subsequent action plan monitoring the progress of actions identified across the partnership. There has been dissemination of lessons learned through single-agency briefings, a joint social care and health seminar, and four multi-agency briefings. The LSCB conducts multi-agency reviews of cases which do not meet the threshold for a serious case review yet where there are safeguarding concerns. Wider learning from SCRs is included in the LSCB training offered across a range of courses, including those concerning domestic abuse and neglect.
129. The child death overview panel (CDOP) produces an annual report on activity and a comprehensive analysis identifies trends. It is active in promoting

issues to improve awareness, including the dangers of co-sleeping and encouraging resilience among young people to prevent self-harm.

130. The LSCB is active in ensuring that policies and procedures influence the consistency and quality of practice. In December 2015, the threshold document 'The child's journey in Bromley' was revised, setting out threshold criteria, referral pathways, and the role of early intervention and the use of the CAF. The LSCB receives regular updates on numbers of CAFs and trends. This supports a partnership understanding of the framework and the importance of early joint working. Together with the Bromley adult safeguarding board, the LSCB has also recently agreed and published a multi-agency intervention framework for identifying, assessing and responding to female genital mutilation. It has also put in place and updated a protocol for escalating concerns and resolving professional differences. The LSCB's domestic abuse audit has been influential in ensuring that domestic abuse is a priority in the 2016–18 community safety plan.
131. A challenge log has recently been implemented formally to evidence challenge in relation to practice, including the timeliness of initial health assessments for children looked after, lack of engagement by some schools in completing section 175 returns, and the use of missing and return home interviews. Evidence of challenge is not always well recorded in LSCB meeting minutes, or in sufficient depth in relation to practice.
132. The LSCB does not have a plan to engage with young people and has not met with members of the Bromley Living in Care Council (LinCC). The LSCB has not yet ensured that it hears the opinions of young people clearly and in a systematic way. There is recognition that this is a gap, and the chair has ensured that meetings are held in venues such as schools. This offers an opportunity to meet with young people. A more planned approach is needed to ensure that the LSCB is informed of young people's views and that they are offered an opportunity to contribute to the board's work.
(Recommendation)
133. The board publishes a detailed report annually. It considers a wide range of LSCB activity, including the work of its sub-groups. It identifies and reflects on the outcomes of multi-agency audits, including areas for development. The report appropriately identifies business plan priorities, but could better identify progress against these in order to offer a measure of its performance. The LSCB does not sufficiently monitor the arrangements for children and young people who are privately fostered. (Recommendation)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences of children and young people who have needed or still need help and/or protection. This includes children and young people who are looked after, and young people who are leaving care and starting their lives as young adults.

Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children, young people and families. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with families and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the local authority knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

The inspection of the local authority was carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board was carried out under section 15A of the Children Act 2004.

Ofsted produces this report of the inspection of local authority functions and the review of the local safeguarding children board under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The inspection team consisted of seven of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from Ofsted.

The inspection team

Lead inspector: Marcie Taylor

Deputy lead inspector: Brenda McLaughlin

Team inspectors: Karen Wareing, Tracey Metcalfe, Anji Parker, Jon Bowman, Peter McEntee

Shadow inspectors: Alison Smale, Sandra Jacobs-Walls

Senior data analyst: Judith Swindell

Quality assurance manager: Sean Tarpey

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk
© Crown copyright 2016

This page is left intentionally blank

DRAFT London Borough of Bromley

Children's Service Improvement Action Plan June 2016 – October 2017

1. Introduction

This improvement action plan has been developed in response to the formal recommendations and improvement areas highlighted by Ofsted during their Bromley *'Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers, and review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board'* which took place from 11 April 2016 to 5 May 2016. This action plan sets out the improvement journey we need to make to transform our social care services for children, young people and their families from inadequate, to good quality.

We aspire to deliver good and outstanding services that keep children and young people safe and give them the right help, at the right time in their lives. We are fully committed to this plan, and in working closely with our multi-agency partners. We are determined to deliver good quality, consistent services that achieve positive outcomes for children and young people in Bromley. In doing this, we will show strong leadership, we will challenge performance, and we will build a culture of continuous reflection and improvement. Members of the Children's Services Improvement Board have signed up to the actions within the plan and are committed to delivering, monitoring and reporting through the appropriate organisational governance structures. During this financial year work will be undertaken to review the current children and young people's partnership framework with the development of a broader multi-agency plan to sustain improvement and delivery of children's services in Bromley.

2. Improvement priorities

This plan is designed around ten key improvement priorities that support delivery of our aspirations to provide good services –

- Priority One - Leadership and governance
- Priority Two - Management oversight and quality assurance
- Priority Three - Bromley Safeguarding Children Board – a partnership response
- Priority Four - Safeguarding – better help and protection
- Priority Five - Supporting children looked after
- Priority Six - Supporting care leavers
- Priority Seven - Adoption services
- Priority Eight - Tackling child sexual exploitation, children missing and gangs
- Priority Nine - Strategic commissioning
- Priority Ten - Legal services

3. Measuring our success

Delivery of this plan will be overseen by the Children's Service Improvement Governance (CSIG) Board, chaired by the Lead Member for Children's Services. Each priority will be overseen by a senior manager who is responsible for attending the Board meetings to report back on progress, risks and issues. Each action has a designated lead officer who is responsible for delivery. They are required to engage with other staff and partner agencies to ensure the action is undertaken effectively and in a joined up way. They will be required to provide regular updates to senior managers and the Service Improvement Team (SIT) formally, on a monthly basis. The SIT will coordinate a monthly highlight report to update progress against each action, including RAG status. The monthly highlight report, including any risks or issues, will be reported to the Children's Service Improvement Governance Board.

A set of performance indicators have been developed to measure the impact of this plan (see Appendix one). Alongside this, a full thematic audit will take place at regular intervals, to test out all practice elements of this action plan to ensure they have been implemented and embedded.

Key to abbreviations used in action plan “lead” column

Abbrev.	Full Title
CEX	Chief Executive
DCS	Director Children’s Services
DPH	Director of Public Health
DCOs	Director of Corporate Services
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (Steering Group)
Corp Comms	Corporate Communications Officer
HOS QI	Head of Service Quality Improvement
P&I Officer	Performance & Information Officer
PM	Project Manager
BSCB	Bromley Safeguarding Children’s Board
HOS S&CP	Head of Service Safeguarding & Care Planning
GM IRO	Group Manager Independent Reviewing Officers
GM CP Chairs	Group Manager Child Protection Chairs
DHR	Director of Human Resources
DED	Director of Education
CSC	Children’s Social Care
HOS EI&FS	Head of Service Early Intervention and Family Support
CAF Manager	Common Assessment Framework Manager
HOS C&R	Head of Service Care and Resources
L&D	Learning & Development
AD Housing	Assistant Director Housing
AD SBSS	Assistant Director Strategic Business Support
DCom	Director of Commissioning
PP&S	Public Protection & Safety Partnership
HO LS	Head of Legal Services
LBB	London Borough of Bromley

Priority One: Leadership and Governance

Supporting vulnerable children and young people and keeping them safe must be our top priority in Bromley. Through stronger leadership and an ambitious shared vision, we can make the change that is needed. Strong collaboration and partnership working needs to be encouraged and promoted at all levels of the organization, and modelled from the top.

Ofsted Recommendations:

Recommendation 1 - Ensure that the director of children's services has the authority and capacity to respond to deficits in children's and young people's services, and to drive forward change and improvement.

Recommendation 2 - Review and improve all quality assurance arrangements to ensure that senior managers and elected members understand performance, in order that they may robustly improve the quality of social work practice.

Identified issues we need to address:

- The interim arrangements for the Director of Children's Services role are not effective and must be resolved as a matter of urgency. Leadership resilience is needed to drive forward the extensive improvements required.
- There is a lack of shared vision, strategic plans, strategies and needs analysis across the council and partnership for achieving good children's services.
- Partnership and leadership collaboration across the Council and wider children's partnership is underdeveloped with a culture of distrust and silo working.
- Performance management information lacks analysis and critical information, and it is not used to challenge practice.
- Quality assurance systems have not provided an accurate assessment of the quality of casework, leading to a general lack of understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in practice.
- Resources have not been adequate to deliver a quality service consistently across the department.
- The role of the Principal Social Worker is underdeveloped.

Expected impact and outcomes of this plan:

- Children's social care services are prioritised by the whole council and key partners, and there is a shared vision that is embedded into borough, corporate and strategic plans
- Children's services are led by an experienced Director of Children's Services who sets a clear vision that is understood by staff at all levels and promotes a culture of continuous improvements
- Quality assurance and performance management processes are rigorous, robust and analytical
- Critical challenge is provided by senior leaders and elected members, based on accurate analytical performance reports
- Strategic service planning and commissioning is evidence based and reflects the priorities of children in Bromley
- The life chances of children are good in Bromley and children report a good experience of the services provided.

Lead officer: Director of Children's Services (DCS)



Priority One: Leadership and Governance

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
1.1	Senior leadership capacity at Director of Children's Services (DCS) level needs to be resolved as a matter of urgency to provide leadership resilience for the extensive improvements required to improve the life chances and choices for children in Bromley. Para 99 Rec 1 & 2	1.1.1 Review and refine the DCS role, job description, person specification and structure in line with statutory requirements, ensuring the role carries senior authority in the Council. (completed) 1.1.2 Undertake a rigorous recruitment process and appoint an experienced, permanent DCS. 1.1.3 Develop an in-depth induction programme for the new DCS. 1.1.4 Re-establish the meetings between the DCS, Chair of the BSCB and LBB Chief Executive. 1.1.5 Undertake an independent assurance test of the DCS role.	Sep 16 April 17	CEX	N/A
1.2	Capacity within Bromley children's services needs to be increased to achieve the level of service improvement needed. Para 99 Rec 1 & 2	1.2.1 Undertake a review of capacity within the children's social work service with recommendations to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing senior management capacity - Recruiting an additional interim Head of Service to give capacity to the Safeguarding Service - Recruiting an additional interim senior manager to take on both the Quality Assurance function and Principal Social Work role; with a direct reporting line to the DCS (completed) - Restructuring front-line social work service, in particular front door, referral & assessment and court team (completed) - Increasing capacity within frontline services to reduce caseloads - Recruit an improvement, programmes and projects lead to work directly to the DCS 	Jun – Sep 16	DCS	N/A
1.3	Senior management understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of front-line services needs to be a priority. Para 97 Rec 1 & 2	1.3.1 Develop a line of sight framework for the DCS, lead member and Chief Executive to include a regular programme (with dates and times) for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receiving key reports including performance data reports (including complaints), quality assurance reports and staff survey results. - undertaking case audits (linking to BSCB multi-agency audits) - visiting frontline social work teams - observing front-line practice - visiting children with social workers - attending the children in care council forum - attending key staff forums including management forums - hearing the voice of children receiving services. 1.3.2 Undertake an independent assurance test of the 'line of sight framework'	Dec 16 Apr 17	DCS CEX	N/A IND DCS
1.4	A shared vision and ambition must be developed and a strategic plan owned by all to drive forward the vision and improvements with clear, specific, ambitious targets and outcomes, rigorously performance managed, to achieve good and outstanding outcomes. Para 98 Rec 1 & 2	1.4.1 Develop a cross-cutting multi-agency Children and Young People's plan (CYPP) that sets out a clear vision, values, priorities and strategy for the partnership. The plan is to set out ambitious targets that prioritises children, and demonstrates how their needs will be met and promoted by the borough. The CYPP is to include an early help response, the 'every child matters' framework themes, and a joint approach to commissioning services strategically. 1.4.2 Develop a clearly defined multi-agency performance data set for regular reporting and communicate this to partners. 1.4.3 Develop a clear information-sharing protocol with partners to encourage collaboration and joint working. 1.4.4 Develop a detailed communication plan for the CYPP and shared vision, values and objectives, which include dates for delivery, and a partnership event to launch the CYPP. 1.4.5 Review and revise all relevant strategic council-wide and partnership plans to ensure these make reference to the Bromley CYPP and are fully aligned, to include the Bromley council strategic plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy	By Sep 17	DCS	Task & Finish Group LBB Health Police Probation
1.5	Partnership-working is to be improved with better strategic and leadership	1.5.1 Undertake a full review of the governance arrangements around partnership work in Bromley Children's Service to support the delivery of the children and young people's strategic plan (CYPP) and improved outcomes for children. The final review	By Apr 17	DCS	Task & Finish Group

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
	collaboration and governance arrangements needed across the Council, and wider children's partnership. Para 98, 105, 108, 109 Rec 1 & 2	<p>report to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clarity and recommendations around each group's role and responsibilities - structure of each group and relationship with each other - terms of reference - cross cutting responsibilities. <p>The following boards and strategic bodies are to be included in the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children's Board (Lead Members) - Health and Wellbeing Board - Corporate Parenting Board - Safer Bromley Community Partnership - Local Safeguarding Children Board - Adult Safeguarding Board - Youth Offending Service (YOS) Board - Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). <p>1.5.2 Set up joint-chairs cross-cutting strategic group with the chair person from each of the above boards (1.5.1), with clear terms of reference drafted with reporting arrangements, membership, objectives and draft forward plan.</p> <p>1.5.3 Develop a data set to support the functions of the Children's Partnership and outline a clear programme for reporting.</p>	<p>By Apr 17</p> <p>By Sep 17</p>		LBB Health Police Probation
1.6	The impact of the scrutiny function is to be improved through better analysis and understanding of the underlying complexities of children's services, including the risks. Para 98 & 104 Rec 1 & 2	<p>1.6.1 Undertake a review of the Bromley Council Scrutiny committees and Executive group to include recommendations and a revised terms of reference, with full consideration of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - role and responsibilities of each committee - objectives - governance and line of sight - chairing, decision-making - data set and analysis that is required - reporting mechanisms, quality assurance, complaints monitoring - forward plan of reports that should be prioritised and timescales - how the voice of service users will be included meaningfully? - issues and risks - impact of financial decisions on children. <p>1.6.2 Review the committee report template for all children's reports to committees and the executive, to ensure an impact assessment is included, by the DCS, on all reports where a financial decision will impact on children and/or services provided to children.</p> <p>1.6.3 Develop a forward-plan programme of refresher training for elected members on early intervention, safeguarding, their role as corporate parents, and their role in effective collaboration and service improvement.</p> <p>1.6.4 Deliver the first refresher training session for elected members.</p> <p>1.6.5 Develop a system for monitoring member attendance at training and ensure 100% attendance of members on committee to complete the training.</p>	<p>By May 17</p> <p>By May 17</p> <p>By Oct 16</p> <p>Oct 16</p> <p>Oct 16</p>	DCOs	LBB DCS
1.7	Engagement sessions for senior leaders and managers across the partnership to encourage a culture of joint working and collaboration across agencies. Para 98, 100 & 101 Rec 1 & 2	<p>1.7.1 Devise a development programme for all senior leaders and managers that sets out the culture, values and ambition of children's services and how to model this to staff; building a culture of high expectations, high support and challenge.</p> <p>1.7.2 Undertake an annual staff survey and respond to findings with an action plan to address concerns of staff. Commencing January 2017.</p> <p>1.7.3 Write a 'what has changed' communication to be disseminated to all staff within 6 months of the staff survey.</p> <p>1.7.4 Set up a social work advisory group, chaired by senior managers, to obtain the voice of front-line staff and social worker</p>	<p>Apr 17</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Jun 17</p> <p>Oct 17</p>	DCS	LBB Dir Human Resources

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
		input on key service improvement projects.			
1.8	The understanding of prevalence is limited due to significant gaps in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for some groups of vulnerable children in Bromley which impacts on local priority decisions and commissioning. Para 107 Rec 1 & 2	1.8.1 The JSNA to be updated to address the gaps for vulnerable groups including children's safeguarding, children known to early help services, social care as a result of parental domestic abuse, mental health and substance misuse, child sexual exploitation and missing from home/care.	Oct 17	DPH	JSNA Steering Group
1.9	Communications across the Council and partnership need to be improved to ensure that staff see and hear from leaders and managers at all levels of the organisation particularly with respect to the vision, improvement plan, and the changes leaders want to see made for children. Para 97-100 Rec 1 & 2	1.9.1 Devise a detailed two-year communications plan and identify a lead to oversee and deliver on this, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular staff bulletins with key updates from senior management, Principal Social Worker and service improvement messages; - Regular team meetings - Road shows - Staff Forums - Annual staff survey - User Engagement mechanisms including the LiNCC (as part of the CYP engagement strategy and framework) 1.9.2 Team meeting policy to be devised and implemented by all front-line teams setting out minimum expectations for team meeting practice standards.	By Oct 16	DCS	LBB Corp Comms
1.10	The overall pace of change for children in care and care leavers to be improve. Para 104 Rec 1 & 2	1.10.1 Review and revise Corporate Parenting Board forward plan prioritising reports that address the inadequacies identified within the Ofsted inspection findings report. 1.10.2 Review and revise the Corporate Parenting Strategy and agree the ambitions and priorities for the next two years. 1.10.3 Launch the Corporate Parenting Strategy with partners.	By Oct 16 By Apr 17 Jun 17	DCS	Education Health

Priority Two: Management oversight and quality assurance

All managers need to have a good line of sight over practice to ensure there is robust and timely child-centred case work planning. Critical enquiry and quality assurance is needed at all levels of practice, from front-line staff, to managers, to independent reviewing officers, multi-agency partners and senior managers. All plans must be SMART, with rigorous oversight and follow up to drive forward the continuous cycle of service improvement and good quality practice, leading to better outcomes for children and families.

Ofsted Recommendations:

Recommendation 2 - Review and improve all quality assurance arrangements to ensure that senior managers and elected members understand performance, in order that they may robustly improve the quality of social work practice.

Recommendation 3 - Improve management oversight of frontline practice to ensure that decision making, assessment and planning for children and young people is both timely and focused to meet their needs. This is to include the work and involvement of conference chairs and independent reviewing officers.

Recommendation 4 – Review workforce capacity in order to reduce social work caseloads in the referral and assessment, and safeguarding teams to enable staff to carry out good quality direct work with children.

Recommendation 8 - Review the cases under the public law outline and in care proceedings to ensure that robust plans are in place and that cases are progressing at a pace that matches children's needs.

Identified issues to be addressed:

- Management oversight is weak and does not provide authoritative and timely intervention, which leads to drift and delay on cases.
- Children in need cases and children and young people subject to s20 arrangements are not monitored centrally by senior managers.
- Casework supervision does not consistently set targets and timescales. Line managers need to review previous actions agreed in supervision sessions in order to maintain oversight of progress, and to review and challenge sufficiently.
- Challenge from Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) and Child Protection (CP) Chairs is not robust enough, and escalations have not been used effectively to challenge poor practice and concerns on cases.
- The quality assurance framework is weak and does not drive rigorous performance management or improve the standards of social work practice and casework.
- The service has experienced difficulties in recruiting to vacancies in key posts and in frontline teams. As a result of this, current caseloads are too high for social workers to undertake good quality work.
- Performance management processes are not used sufficiently to drive improvement and there is lack of critical enquiry at senior management level.

Expected impact and outcomes of this plan:

- Consistently good quality practice which is child centred, timely and evidence based
- Social workers are supported by their managers and receive reflective supervision that is frequent, outcome focussed, with clear actions and timescales, and where previous actions are reviewed regularly.
- IRO and CP chairs challenge poor practice without hesitation
- Performance monitoring and scrutiny is undertaken at all management levels and is used to drive improvements.
- Practice standards are clear to all staff and drive minimum standards of practice. Poor practice and competency issues are challenged robustly.
- The quality assurance framework is holistic, with a clear programme of audits will be used to inform managers of performance issues and themes for children in Bromley and performance will be improved.
- All cases have clear plans that prevent drift and delay. Social workers have manageable caseloads and time for good quality direct work with children.

Lead officer: Director of Children's Services (DCS)

Priority Two: Management oversight and quality assurance					
ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
2.1	Quality assurance arrangements need to be reviewed and improved so that senior managers and elected members understand current performance in order that they can robustly improve the quality of social work practice. Para 101 Rec 3.	<p>2.1.1 Undertake a full review of the Quality Assurance framework and publish a revised version that sets out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An overarching strategy. - A statement of how audit findings will be used to drive practice improvements. - Detailed SMART audit forward plan with key dates and designated officers to lead these. - Audit toolkit with revised audit tool. - Forward plan of audit finding reports with deadlines and plan to be produced. - Governance arrangements – how audit findings will be communicated to managers, senior managers and elected members and the frequency of this. - A set of performance indicators for measuring the number of audits undertaken, success of audits and percentage judged as good, requires improvement and inadequate. - Multi-agency audit plan and timetable. - Programme of thematic audits to be included – casework, supervision, thresholds, neglect, child sexual exploitation, violence against women and girls, domestic and abuse, drug and substance misuse, parental mental ill health. - Devise framework for practice improvement weeks involving all layers of management. To be carried out on six monthly basis. Starting between Jan – Mar 17. <p>2.1.2 Review the current Bromley audit tool and implement a more outcome focussed tool</p> <p>2.1.3 Include an objective in each front-line team manager's and HOS's appraisal to ensure full compliance with the new audit schedule.</p> <p>2.1.4 Devise a programme of multi-agency audit staff training events to share practice issues identified in both single agency and multi-agency audits.</p> <p>2.1.5 Audit of "selected" cases post the inspection (CIN, CP and step up and down cases) in advance of monitoring visit in November 2016</p>	<p>Oct -Dec 16</p> <p>Jan – Mar 17</p> <p>Sep 16</p> <p>Oct 16</p>	<p>HOS QI</p> <p>BSCB Auditor QI Audit Manager</p>	<p>BSCB Chair & Members</p>
2.2	Additional capacity is needed within the service to lead and implement the new quality assurance framework. Para 99 & 101 Rec 3.	<p>2.2.1 Scope a specification for externally commissioned quality assurance audits including objectives, role and responsibilities, work plan and cost, and obtain funding approval.</p> <p>2.2.2 Undertake the procurement process and have a quality assurance service in place</p>	<p>Sept. -Dec 16</p>	<p>DCS</p>	
2.3	<p>The reporting of performance information needs to be improved in order to ensure that all key players are engaged and all relevant information is included. Para 101 Rec 3.</p> <p>Current IT system is out of date and not easy to use</p>	<p>2.3.1 Review and revise the Bromley Performance Digest framework and write a short report setting out the changes to be made including how CIN children and caseloads will be included, frequency of reporting, how the digest is to be shared and used by individuals, teams, managers and senior managers/elected members, and the level of analysis expected.</p> <p>2.3.2 Publish the updated monthly Performance Digest with all CIN children and monthly trend data for numbers of children and caseloads.</p> <p>2.3.3 Devise a forward plan of performance trend analysis reports to be undertaken using performance data.</p> <p>2.3.4 Develop a system to aggregate and/or cross reference information from return home interviews with those children at risk of, or being, sexually exploited or involved in gang activity.</p> <p>2.3.5 Continue to implement the Eclipse platform upgrade (full project documentation available).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eclipse forms developed making recording of actions which need follow-up and tracking clearer. - Recruit a GM in CSC to lead the implementation phase of the Eclipse upgrade. 	<p>Jan – Mar 17</p> <p>Sep – Mar 17</p>	<p>DCS</p>	<p>LBB All HOS P&I Officer Eclipse PM</p>

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
2.4	Review the cases under the public law outline and in care proceedings to ensure that robust plans are in place and that cases are progressing at a pace that matches children's needs. Rec 8. Case tracking of early intervention, children in need and child protection cases is needed to ensure that step up and step down happens in a timely way, based on a re-evaluation of risk. Para 109 Rec 3.	2.4.1 Undertake a review of all cases under PLO and care proceedings to check robust SMART plans are in place and that they are progressing/no drift and put together action plan for any action needed.(completed) 2.4.2 Write an overview of new case tracking framework and a forward plan/timetable for review of cases. 2.4.3 Draw up a flowchart of case tracking reporting. 2.4.4 Review a sample of children in need (CIN) cases by the Quality Improvement team. 2.4.5 Review a sample of child protection cases and plans by the Quality Improvement team. 2.4.6 Set up weekly case tracking meetings to be chaired by the Head of Service (HOS) Safeguarding, to be attended by all team managers of Early Intervention, Referral and Assessment, Safeguarding & Care Planning and Court teams. 2.4.7 Monthly case tracking (cases under PLO and care proceedings) summary reports to be reported to the Senior Management Team and DCS.	Jun 16 Jan –Mar 17 End Oct 16 Sep 16 Oct 16	HOS S&CP	LBB HOS EI&FS
2.5	Improve the escalation processes so that these are routinely utilised by Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) and Child Protection (CP) Conference Chairs to alert managers to the impact of deficits in practice. Para 101 Rec 3.	2.5.1 Review the CSC escalation policy for IROs and CP Chairs that sets out all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Threshold for escalation. - Process for escalation and how this will be managed. - Reporting and follow up processes and requirements for individual cases. - Monthly escalation summary and analysis report and analysis by the IRO/CP Chair services to SMT. - Monthly escalation summary and analysis report and analysis by the IRO/CP Chair services to the Bromley Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB). - Collated themes of escalation to be included in key annual reports (BSCB and list any others), line of sight reports and annual service improvement plans. - Escalation summary report to the Corporate Parenting Board bi-annually starting Dec 16 - Themes are to be fed back to staff through SMT/HOS quarterly from Oct 16 	Sep 16	DCS	LBB GM IRO GM CP Chairs
2.6	The quality and frequency of formal case and professional supervision needs to be improved, and previous actions need to be reviewed in every supervision session to measure progress made. Para 100 & 102 Rec 3&4.	2.6.1 Revise the supervision policy for staff setting out a minimum frequency for formal case supervision and draft agenda template expected to be covered in each session. 2.6.2 Revise the case supervision template to include clear tasks, timescales and follow up action sections and pre-populated actions for LAC and CP cases. Links to 4.4.5 2.6.3 Management briefing to be held with all frontline managers on the new supervision policy and template. 2.6.4 New supervision template to be embedded within practice by all front-line managers by and assessed by an assurance test. 2.6.5 Quality Improvement team to undertake a programme of audits of supervision to assess frequency and quality, with all supervisor's cases to be sampled, with a full report to SMT. 2.6.6 Procure a programme of mandatory training for all managers and supervisors on reflective task-centred supervision and management oversight. The training is to include an overview of the revised supervision policy, performance management framework, quality assurance policy and management oversight expectations to ensure managers know what is expected of them. (completed)	Jan –Mar 17 Sep – Nov 16	HOS QI	N/A
2.7	Management oversight of frontline practice to be improved to ensure decision making, assessment and planning for CYP is both timely and focused to meet their needs. Para 102 Rec 3.	2.7.1 Write an overview of management oversight expectations outlining how actions are to be tracked by managers between supervision sessions to avoid drift and challenge any poor performance. The document is to be included within the revised supervision policy. 2.7.2 Assurance test of management oversight to be undertaken via case audits and review of cases by Quality Improvement team in (insert month).	Oct 16	HOS QI	N/A

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
2.8	Practice standards to be revised to ensure consistency of care and minimum standards across all services. Para 100 Rec 2& 3	2.8.1 Review and update the practice standards document to reflect “what does good look like” prioritising within the document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment - care plans - risk assessment - home visits - CSE and Missing - neglect - VAWG - parental mental ill health, drug and substance misuse 2.8.2 Launch new practice standards with and distribute to all social workers and supervisors across the department. 2.8.3 Social work staff to attend mandatory practice standards workshops to revisit ‘what a good assessment/care plan looks like’.	Oct 16 Oct 16 Nov 16	HOS QI	N/A
2.9	Minimum practice standards expected of staff at all levels needs to be clearly defined, with policies and procedures up to date. Para 100 Rec 3& 4.	2.9.1 Review status of all policies and procedures in the online Children's Social Care Procedure Manual. 2.9.2 Provide a summary report to SMT outlining what policies and procedures need updating and anticipated timescale to review and update documents. 2.9.3 Review and update identified policies and procedures: 2.9.4 Write up a programme of training events to communicate new policies and any changes to practice.	Nov 16 Dec 16 Sep 17	HOS QI	N/A
2.10	Social work caseloads in the referral and assessment, and safeguarding teams are too high and do not create an environment where social workers can do their job properly. Para 100 Rec 4	2.10.1 Develop a Caseload Management Policy (including a financial business case) to be agreed by Senior Management and Members in order to ensure that social workers and Early Intervention caseworkers' caseloads are manageable. Caseloads are reduced <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safeguarding no more than 15 children (CP/CIN plans) - R&A no more than 20 children. (Assessments) - Court team no more than 10 children. - For EIFS no more than 20 families - For CLA no more than 12 children - For care leavers no more than 15 children - For IROs (in line with IRO protocol –no more than 60 children) 2.10.2 Recruit an additional social work team to specialise in court work. Advanced practitioners to be appointed to undertake court work for children looked after to permanence and to promote adoption at an early stage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointment of Group Manager, Deputy Manager and Six Advanced Practitioners to the Court Team. 	Oct –Dec 16 Oct 16	DCS	N/A
2.11	The workforce strategy is comprehensive and ambitious. Although it needs to focus on the development of its middle and senior managers. Para 110	2.11.1 Review and update LBB Recruitment and Retention Strategy (workforce strategy) to set out how middle and senior managers are developed and supported. To include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support and retention of existing members of staff. - Update recruitment webpages - Refresh branding and key messages 2.11.2 Introduce virtual web tools	Dec – Mar 17	DHR	N/A

Priority Two - Management Oversight and Quality Assurance - performance measures (see appendix 1 page 46 for performance indicators)

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source	Bromley 2015/16	Target 16/17	Target 17/18
DCS, CSC AD and HoS GM's DGM's to undertake X case file audits per month						
2a	Number of case file audits completed - of these	Quality	Audits	New	TBC	TBC
	% audits where overall judgement is good/ outstanding	Quality	Audits			
	% of cases audited where good management oversight is evident	Quality	Audits			
	% and number of cases audited have evidence of effective direct work with children and young people good standard.	Quality	Audits			
	% of all audit actions that have not been completed by the deadline	Quality	Audits			
2b	Number of supervision records sampled	Quality	Sample	New	TBC	TBC
	% of supervision records sampled that are not up to standard	Quality	Sample			
2c	% and number of CIN cases reviewed after 9 months	Quality	Audits	New	TBC	TBC
	% and number CIN cases recommended for step up, step-down or case closure following 9 month review	Quality	Audits			
Thematic audits (3 per quarter)						
2d	Number of audits completed	Quality	Audits	New	TBC	TBC
2e	By Dec 2016 % audits where overall judgement is Good/ outstanding	Quality	Audits			
External QA of case file audits						
2f	External independent case file audits (5 – 10 per month) to validate %age of cases that are good/ outstanding	Quality	Audits	30	60 -120	TBC
CP Chairs/IRO Monitoring forms (XX due each month)						
2g	Number of CP Chairs/IRO Monitoring audits completed	Quality	Audits	New	TBC	TBC
2h	By Dec 2016 % audits where overall judgement is good/ outstanding	Quality	Audits			
Caseloads						
2i	Maximum caseload per team (FTE workers)			Children	Children	Children
	Referral and Assessment	Capacity	MI Report	New	20	TBC
	Safeguarding and Care Planning Combined (East & West)	Capacity	MI Report	New	15	TBC
	Court Team	Capacity	MI Report	New	10	TBC
2j	Caseload range per team (FTE workers)					
	Referral and Assessment	Capacity	MI Report			
	Safeguarding and Care Planning Combined (East & West)	Capacity	MI Report			
	Court Team	Capacity	MI Report			

Priority Three: Bromley Safeguarding Children Board - A partnership response

The Bromley Safeguarding Children Board is committed to keeping vulnerable children in Bromley safe through a strong partnership approach, with all agencies in Bromley working together, to share information and co-ordinate activities. Where agencies are not able to do this, the BSCB will act in the interest of the Bromley Child to ensure non-compliance or poor performance is challenged and escalated to the highest levels, until safe outcomes are assured. Bromley children and young people will feel listened to and their views valued as agencies work together to improve the lives of local children. The children's workforce will benefit from the experiences of children and young people and services will improve.

Ofsted Recommendations:

Recommendation 19 - The LSCB should establish a performance dataset that ensures that it can measure progress against its key priorities.

Recommendation 20 - The LSCB should ensure that there is critical enquiry and challenge in relation to the core safeguarding activity undertaken by all agencies.

Recommendation 21 - The LSCB should actively seek the views and opinions of children and young people, and engage them in a systematic manner in order to ensure that it is aware of and benefits from their experiences.

Recommendation 22 - The LSCB should ensure that multi-agency arrangements for the oversight of children missing and at risk of sexual exploitation are underpinned by effective information sharing, performance monitoring and action planning, and are strategically coordinated and monitored by the board.

Recommendation 23 - The LSCB should ensure that the arrangements for children privately fostered comply with statutory guidance, and that they are safe and that their health and well-being are properly promoted.

Identified issues to be addressed:

- The Bromley Safeguarding Children Board needs to develop a more critical overview of practice and performance to understand fully the quality of practice in safeguarding services, and the experiences of children and young people in Bromley.
- The performance dataset is too large and therefore lacks focus. It misses some key measures particularly around total number of missing children, timeliness of Return to Home interviews, and prevalence of domestic violence.
- There is a lack of monitoring of the implementation of the Signs of Safety model in LBB Children's Social Care.
- The dataset does not adequately match the Business Plan priorities. There is not enough challenge and escalation to resolve issues in a timely way, particularly challenge of practice.
- The BSCB should be more influential in scrutinising safeguarding activity.
- The BSCB should better monitor multi-agency arrangements for most vulnerable groups. There is no systematic way of engaging with young people.

Expected impact and outcomes of this plan:

- The BSCB rigorously scrutinises relevant performance management information and robustly challenges agencies to ensure children and young people are safe and achieve the best outcomes.
- Multi-agency audits of cases closed and open are undertaken to ensure consistent practice standards are being maintained and that thresholds are being applied appropriately. Managers and teams in all agencies learn from audits to improve practice.
- Multi-agency arrangements for the most vulnerable children and young people, those at risk of sexual exploitation and those who go missing, will be underpinned by effective planning, performance monitoring and effective information sharing, and closely monitored by the BSCB
- The views of children and young people are captured routinely and used to inform service development across agencies in Bromley. Children and young people feel confident and comfortable in providing their views and feel that their input makes a positive difference.

Lead officer: Independent Chair, Bromley Safeguarding Children Board

Priority Three: Bromley Safeguarding Children's Board - A partnership response					
ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
3.1	The LSCB should establish a performance dataset that ensures that it can measure progress against its key priorities. Para & Rec 114	3.1.1 Review the Annual BSCB Business plan to meet statutory requirements 3.1.2 Create a revised multi-agency performance information data set, with greater focus on the Board's Business plan priorities and including all key factors. - Board Performance Report to reflect the reality of services provided and identifies where services are and are not meeting standards. 3.1.3 Timetable regular Performance Report to Board.	Apr 17 Nov 16	Business Manager/ BSCB Chair and Members	BSCB Members
3.2	The LSCB should ensure that there is critical enquiry and challenge in relation to the core safeguarding activity undertaken by all agencies. Para & Rec 115	3.2.1 Work and minutes of the Board will evidence where agencies have challenged data and performance to deliver key actions. - Terms of reference - Clarity in a document around roles and responsibilities of the Board, and cross cutting responsibilities. - Development of a data set to support. 3.2.2 Set up a "Partnership Board" across the education landscape to focus on the vulnerable groups that could be missed: - look to close the gap on attainment and outcomes; - examine permanent exclusions; - analyse attendance data from schools - develop/ oversee broader exclusion agenda 3.2.3 Multi-agency staff can evidence they escalate and challenge other agencies where there is disagreement about a child's safety and welfare and are confident to seek a resolution. 3.2.4 New bi-annual multi-agency staff survey to be introduced from April 2017 to test that staff are confident in escalating and challenging.	Dec16 Oct 16 Apr 17	BSCB Members DED	BSCB Members
3.3	The LSCB should actively seek the views and opinions of children and young people, and engage them in a systematic manner in order to ensure that it is aware of and benefits from their experiences. Para & Rec 116	3.3.1 Develop an action plan/ strategy to ensure that children and young people's views are utilised and to include: - Developing a Safeguarding Children's forum to champion and challenge the work of the Board. - Review capacity to audit work being completed. - Assess and give the Board reassurance. - Ensure children and young people's views are used to inform service improvement.	Jan 17	Business Manager	BSCB Members
3.4	The LSCB should ensure that multi-agency arrangements for the oversight of children missing and at risk of sexual exploitation are underpinned by effective information sharing, performance monitoring and action planning, and are strategically coordinated and monitored by the board. Para & Rec 117	3.4.1 BSCB receives and monitors quarterly reports on a range of issues to monitor and scrutinise work streams. To include: - CSE - Missing from home, care or education - Gangs - Domestic Violence - PREVENT - FGM - Neglect 3.4.2 BSCB QAPM Group to undertake a programme of themed audits on each issue to include neglect and CSE in this year's audit programme. 3.4.3 MASE to hold a list of children and a dataset and to report trends and patterns to the Vulnerable Children's Sub Group. 3.4.4 Terms of reference and governance of CSE/Missing strategic and operational boards to be published in the CSE protocol. 3.4.5 Information from the Vulnerable Children's Sub Group to help inform the strategy and business plan for BSCB.	Dec 16	Chair BSCB Chair Vulnerable Children' Sub Group	Multi-Agency Working Group

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
		3.4.6 BSCB Business Managers to contribute to CSE/Missing/Gangs working group, chaired by Deputy Borough Commander. 3.4.7 Vulnerable Children Sub Group to provide challenge to slow moving actions. 3.4.8 Host a multi-agency CSE day for front line staff to publicise CSE/Missing functions and protocol.	Oct 16		
3.5	The LSCB should ensure that the arrangements for children privately fostered comply with statutory guidance, and that they are safe and that their health and well-being are properly promoted. Para & Rec 118	3.5.1 Private Fostering Annual report to be presented to BSCB in order to assess effectiveness of Foster Services to meet the needs of children privately fostered. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information on the numbers of children being privately fostered presented to and scrutinised by Board; - the identities of children and young people are known to the relevant agencies and agencies are able to report their health, education and care needs are being met. - Report includes percentage of foster carers and adults in household with DBS. 3.5.2 BSCB to work with CSC to promote Private Fostering Awareness campaign.	Sep 16	Business Manager	CSC and Health Agencies
3.6	The LSCB has a comprehensive multi-agency training programme. Para 124	3.6.1 Research appropriate neglect tools available to the service including the NSPCC Graded Care Profile. Other options to be considered by Learning and Development with a paper to be presented at SMT. 3.6.2 Staff to receive training on assessing neglect. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All social workers will use the Graded Care Profile tool to improve the quality of assessments - All social workers will receive refresher training on programmes available to families (caring for your child) 3.6.3 All parents of children on a plan where neglect is a feature are to be referred onto Caring for your Child programme. Uptake to be monitored and reported to SMT. 3.6.4 Develop a specialist multi-agency programme of training and development events focused on CSE/Missing and Gangs. 3.6.5 Arrange a multi-agency training session for managers to discuss strategy meeting standards and expectations. 3.6.6 Health providers safeguarding training needs identified and programme of events arranged to deliver include a practice oversight group led by Bromley CCG	Sep 16 Apr 17 Sep 16 Apr 17 Dec 16	BSCB Business Manager HOS QI	BSCB Partners Workforce Development

Priority Three: Bromley Safeguarding Children's Board - A partnership response

A full data set is being revised see action 3.1.2

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source	Bromley 2015/16	Target 16/17	Target 17/18
3a	X% of staff in each partner agency states that they are confident or very confident to escalate and challenge (MA staff survey)	Satisfaction	Survey	N/A	TBC	TBC

DRAFT

Priority Four: Safeguarding – better help and protection

Children and young people must experience timely and effective multi-agency help and protection through risk-based assessment, authoritative practice, planning and review that secures change. Thresholds will be appropriate, understood and operate effectively. Records of action and decision will be clear and up to date. Children and young people will be listened to and heard. Risk will be well understood, managed and regularly reviewed.

Ofsted Recommendations:

Recommendation 5 – Ensure that thresholds are understood and consistently applied in response to risk, so that appropriate actions are taken when risks or concerns escalate or diminish

Recommendation 6 - Ensure child protection, child in need, children looked after and pathway plans are informed by assessment, focused on the needs of individual children and young people, and specific about the outcome to be achieved and the timescale for change. Contingencies should be explicit.

Identified issues to be addressed:

- Thresholds are not consistently applied and/or understood.
- Analysis of risk is weak (risk tools are underutilised) which means that cases are often closed or stepped down too early and timely actions are not taken when risks or concerns escalate or diminish. Chronologies are not being used as an effective assessment and analysis tool – they are not succinct and clear.
- Strategy discussions do not comply with statutory guidance – they are happening too late, not often enough and without full involvement of the range of multi-agency partners.
- Children's wishes and feelings are not properly explored and there is inconsistency of direct work to support children to express their views.
- There is insufficient contingency planning and parents are not sufficiently clear about what they need to do and the consequences of not working with the local authority.
- Children remain on child protection plans for too long without robust action being taken. IROs and CP Chairs do not sufficiently challenge and scrutinise to ensure that plans are working. Numbers escalated in year are low.
- Practice standards and expectations have not been explicitly set and communicated to frontline social workers.
- Management oversight is weak and does not provide authoritative and timely intervention leading to drift and delay in taking action needed. Supervision does not set targets and timescales effectively, and previous actions are not reviewed or challenged sufficiently.
- Children's social care does not have a robust audit schedule in place to monitor regularly and identify practice issues.
- The front line teams have experienced difficulties recruiting to vacancies in key posts. Social worker caseloads are too high (25 for help and protection) and this is impacting in the quality of work with children.

Expected impact and outcomes of this plan:

- Good quality chronologies, assessments and analysis lead to appropriate child in need, early help and child protection plans, which are SMART and clearly linked to assessed risk and need.
- Decisions to step up or step down are appropriate, accord with thresholds and are based on a thorough understanding of the child and families' needs.
- Strategy meetings will be held when the local authority needs to assess whenever a child is at risk of significant harm and will involve all the right partners.
- Social workers spend time with children, undertaking direct work to understand their experiences, views, wishes and feelings.
- Children and their parents will understand the plan and will contribute to planning.
- Contingency plans will be on all children's care plans, and they will be clear and specific about what the alternative plan is for the child if things don't go to plan.
- Supervision will be reflective and task focussed, setting out clear actions and timescales, and reviewing progress against actions.
- Where cases are not progressing then they will be stepped up authoritatively at the right time.
- IROs & CP Chairs will use the escalation procedure to raise alerts and challenge practice where children's plans are not progressing appropriately.
- Senior managers will review and scrutinise all cases that are not progressing effectively to challenge practice and ensure the right plan is put in place promptly.
- Homeless 16 and 17 year olds will be placed in safe and appropriate housing accommodation.
- Children in private fostering arrangements are safe and monitored appropriately.

Lead officer: Head of Service Safeguarding and Care Planning

Priority Four – Safeguarding - better help and protection					
ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
4.1	Thresholds (CIN and CP): The application of thresholds, and the identification and management of risk are inadequate Para 19 Rec 5	4.1.1 Devise a communication plan to re-launch thresholds document with all key multi-agency partners and front-line staff, to include thresholds training for multi-agency partners, and implement immediately. 4.1.2 Mandatory training on risk identification and analysis to be provided to all front line social workers and managers within six months. 4.1.3 Draft a protocol on how Children in Need plans will be independently chaired by Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) to achieve consistent application of thresholds on these cases, and implement immediately. 4.1.4 Draft a protocol on how Early Intervention Family Support cases will be audited and reviewed by managers and implement immediately. The protocol to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EIFS assessments and goals will be reviewed at each supervision and during case management discussions - All Senior Family Support Parenting Practitioner will complete at least one deep dive audit per Family Support Parenting Practitioner per month - Each FSPP & SFSP to complete at least four case practice discussion audits with EIFS SMT monthly. - Undertake a full review and audit on all Early Intervention Family Support (EIFS) cases to ensure risk assessments and thresholds have been accurately completed and there is no drift. 	By end Sep16 then quarterly prog By end Nov 16 By Dec 16 By Dec 16	All HOS	Health Police Schools BSCB
4.2	Strategy Discussions and planning (CIN and CP) Strategy discussions are not being held soon enough when concerns are first identified, and are not compliant with statutory guidance. Numbers of strategy discussions, section 47 enquiries and initial child protection conferences remain lower than comparators. Para 21 & 23	4.2.1 Mandatory training on child protection procedures for all front line staff and managers within six months 4.2.2 Review and launch procedures on how strategy discussions will be handled, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RAS to clearly identify cases requiring strategy discussions at the point of transfer and to undertake daily monitoring to be maintained by the HOS safeguarding. - Head of Service weekly meeting with Group Manager to review all strategy discussions and outcomes in Referral and Assessment to monitor the timeliness of strategy discussions, quality of decisions and to review partner attendance. 4.2.3 Operational issues relating to strategy discussions and meetings (partner involvement) will be escalated through management reporting lines initially (as appropriate), through the MASH steering group and themes to the BSCB.	Aug – Feb17	HOS S&CP	N/A
4.3	Assessments (CIN and CP) Some assessments are too descriptive and lack sufficient analysis. Tools to consider neglect and assess risks are underutilised. Chronologies do not provide a succinct and clear history to inform assessments. Research is rarely used to inform analysis in assessments. The individual needs of children and young people are routinely considered together in a single assessment. Para 24 Practice is not consistently robust, in too many cases, assessments are not of a good enough quality, leading to significant drift in progressing work. Para 100 Rec 7	4.3.1 Mandatory training to be delivered to all front line staff and managers in on assessment, research in practice, risk analysis and use of assessment tools in practice. 4.3.2 Devise an implementation plan for the roll out of Signs of Safety to key partner agencies including health colleagues, schools, police and the youth offending service, to embed this into multi-agency practice. 4.3.3 Child Protection chairs to deliver training on the Signs of Safety model of case conferencing. 4.3.4 Draft policy guidance to be shared with all front line social workers and managers on chronologies, setting out the minimum practice standards required. 4.3.5 All case files chronologies to be reviewed by line managers and discussed with social workers within supervision over the next 3 months. 4.3.6 Social workers to set time aside each week to update the child's chronology. Training and Development to commission training on chronologies and organise a bi-monthly workshop as part of the contract. 4.3.7 Review and revise the current assessment document. 4.3.8 Publicise the "Making Research Count" subscription which enables social workers to look at online research.	By end Sep16 then quarterly prog By Dec 16 By Oct 16 By Nov 16 From Aug 16 By Nov 16 Oct 16	DCS and Chair of BSCB	LBB Health Police YOS

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
4.4	Risk Management (CIN & CP) The majority of CP and CIN plans are not specific enough and in too many cases risks does not inform the subsequent plan Para 27 Rec 6	4.4.1 Agree standards of SMART plans for Child in Need and Child Protection cases. 4.4.2 Line Managers to review all open CIN and CP cases and ensure the plans are SMART and of good quality, and work with social workers to improve these (e.g. take off old actions that have been completed, make sure the actions are specific and address the risks, and make sure there are clear timescales for existing actions). The review to also include identifying the contingency plan for each case and clearly recording this. 4.4.3 The revised practice standards document to include a requirement for all CP and CIN plans to have a contingency plan and that the plan is easily understandable to the families. 4.4.4 Develop a user-friendly risk analysis template for front-line staff. 4.4.5 Supervision policy to be updated to include a requirement that the QI GM audits 3 CP plans as part of every monthly supervision with CP chairs; to be implemented with immediate effect. Links to 2.6	End of Sep16	HOS QI	N/A
4.5	Risk Management (CIN & CP) Child protection cases are stepped down too soon to child in need Para 20 Rec 5	4.5.1 A full audit of all Child in Need cases to be undertaken by deputy managers and GMs to re-evaluate the risks and urgently escalate any cases that meet the threshold to child protection.(completed) 4.5.2 Review protocol on management oversight of EIFS, CIN and CP cases to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managers to review all decisions to step up, step down or close cases - GMs to audit any cases recommended for step-down or closure - All decisions to take children off a plan are quality assured by QI team - All CIN cases to be reviewed in a weekly tracking meeting. - Review of all CIN cases after 9 months to see if need to step up. 4.5.3 Set up a weekly CIN tracking meeting, chaired by HoS SG & CP.	By Jun 16 Dec 16	HOS S&CP	N/A
4.6	Direct work (CIN & CP) Some social workers with 25 or more cases report that they do not have sufficient time to undertake positive direct work with children and families, or to reflect with managers on the progress of their work. Para 31Rec 14	4.6.1 Practice standards to be updated to reflect the requirement that assessments are only signed off by managers when there is evidence that a child's views are included and that the assessment demonstrates the lived experience of the child i.e. what life is like in the family. Links to 2.8 4.6.2 Supervisors oversee and discuss this work in supervision and see evidence of the work undertaken and outcomes. 4.6.3 The Principle Social Worker leads on embedding direct work in practice to a good standard and this is reflected in case work assessments and planning across Children's Social Care. 4.6.4 QI undertake regular training slots for social workers on planning purposeful direct work with children. 4.6.5 Frontline social workers to receive training on direct work and communicating with children to include practical direct work tools (e.g Communi Crate; Signs of Safety, three houses). 4.6.6 Front-line managers to discuss with their social work teams in team meetings and in supervision, the option to use the Children and Family Centres to undertake direct work with children in a neutral environment, where there are additional resources available, with a view to increasing this practice. 4.6.7 QI audit programme to include a regular thematic audit of direct work on case files. Links to 2.1 4.6.8 CP Chairs monitor Child friendly Child protection plans at CP reviews.	Dec 16 Mar 17	HOS QI	LBB HOS S&CP

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
4.7	<p>Contacts Arrangements (CIN & CP)</p> <p>Contact records are not sufficiently analytical and do not inform case planning well. The local authority has already identified the weaknesses in this service and is undertaking a review. Contact between children and their family members is not sufficiently risk assessed or managed. Contact records are not sufficiently analytical and do not inform case planning well. Para 62</p>	<p>4.7.1 Complete the review of the Family Contact Centre service with clear recommendations for next steps.</p> <p>4.7.2 Implement early recommendations for the review which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audit programme of contact cases - Observation of practice - Reflective supervision - Simplify the outcome-focused referral forms - Use EIFS style supervision paperwork by April 2016 - Monthly Team meetings to incorporate 'reflective practice' session by August 2016 - A policy that 100% of poor practice identified leads to active performance management action within four weeks if practice does not improve 	Oct 16	HQS EI&FS CAF Manager	

DRAFT

Priority Four - Safeguarding - better help and protection - performance measures (see appendix 1 page 46 for performance indicators)

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source	Bromley 2015/16	Target 16/17	Target 17/18
4a	% attendance of CSC staff at planned Risk Assessment training sessions	L&D	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
4b	% attendance of CSC staff at planned strategy meeting training sessions	L&D	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
4c	% attendance of partner agency staff at planned strategy meeting training sessions	L&D	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
4d	% attendance of CSC staff at planned Thresholds training sessions	L&D	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
4e	% attendance of partner agency staff at planned Thresholds training sessions	L&D	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
4f	% and number of CSC casework audits that demonstrate effective application of thresholds	Quality	Audits	New	100%	100%
4g	% and number of CSC casework audits that demonstrate effective application of SoS	Quality	Audits	New	100%	100%
4h	% and number of CSC casework audits that demonstrate child's needs have been assessed and met.	Quality	Audits	New	100%	100%
4i	% and number strategy discussions include partner agency involvement	Quality	Audits	New	100%	100%
4j	% and number of strategy discussions that lead to s47	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
4k	Minutes of initial child protection conference evidence multi agency discussion and decision making	Quality	Sample	New	TBC	TBC
4l	Number of children currently subject to a Child Protection Plan	Quality	MI Report	220	N/A	N/A
4m	% of ICPCs held within 15 days of Section 47 investigation	DfE	MI Report	67%	88.7%	88.7%
4n	% of CP Reviews held within timescale	Quality	MI Report	97.00%	100%	100%
4o	Minutes of review child protection conference evidence multi agency discussion and decision making	Quality	Sample	New	TBC	TBC
4p	Number and % of children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	Quality	MI Report	33 (13%)	17%	17%
	See Audit measures in Priority 2					

Priority Five – Supporting children looked after

High-quality assessments must be used to decide whether children and young people will become looked after. We will make sure care plans are regularly reviewed to ensure children and young people's current and developing needs continue to be met. Permanent homes and families will be found for children and young people without unnecessary delay, and adoption will be considered for all children, where appropriate. Children and young people (CYP) will be listened to by social workers who will know them well, and when support is needed, they will be able to access it for as long as it is needed, throughout their childhood and beyond, no matter where they are living.

Ofsted recommendations:

Recommendation 6 - Ensure child protection, child in need, children looked after and pathway plans are informed by assessment, focused on the needs of individual children and young people, and specific about the outcome to be achieved and the timescale for change. Contingencies should be explicit.

Recommendation 10 - Ensure priority is given to considering achieving permanency, including adoption, at the earliest possible point for children, and that there are effective systems to track and monitor the progress of this work.

Recommendation 12 - Ensure that robust assessments are undertaken when considering alternative permanency options for children with connected persons.

Recommendation 13 - Ensure that children and young people who are placed out of the borough are sufficiently supported by their social worker and have access to services to meet their needs where they are living.

Identified issues to be addressed:

- Management oversight of practice is a serious area of weakness at all levels. There is no senior manager with a single line of sight or overall responsibility for children looked after. There is little evidence of appropriate challenge by group managers and managers do not regularly scrutinise children's plan or the impact of social work.
- The processes for safely returning children home are inadequate, with senior managers not consistently authorising assessments and decisions prior to children returning home.
- Permanency arrangements are underdeveloped and there is a lack of urgency in finding permanent homes for children, and delays in long term matching.
- Placement planning and matching is poor, is not always timely and lacks clear information, actions and delegated authority. There are delays in long term matches going to panel and quality of reports is variable, lacking analysis.
- There is a lack of local placements to meet the diverse needs of our looked after children and young people, including care leavers.
- Placement plans lack important information, are sometimes late, are not updated, and lack explanation of delegated authority. They do not contain the information that carers require to understand the arrangements for children's care.
- Contact arrangements between parents and children are not sufficiently risk assessed or managed.
- The virtual school lacks the capacity to support young people aged 16+, including the cohort of young people dropping out of school in year 12.
- Where children are placed in residential homes out of borough, checks are not routinely done to ensure educational and health provision and to understand any local risks of sexual exploitation, before making the placement.

Expected impact and outcomes of this plan:

- Children will be taken into care at the right time, and when the legal grounds are met.
- Children receive swift and effective support to help them find permanent families that meet their needs well. All children who cannot return home permanently will be considered for adoption.
- CYP will be carefully matched to a placement that best meets their holistic needs with consultation with the IRO, Virtual School Head teacher, and designated CLA nurse where appropriate.
- Placement choice will be extended to ensure that, wherever possible, we are able to meet the needs of our looked after children and young people locally. Children placed outside the local authority will not be placed until the arrangements around education and health and any other risk factors in the locality have been considered.
- Children will have contact with parents and family members after carefully assessed risk, and where it is safe and suitable for them. Contact arrangements, their purpose, value and frequency will be clearly considered and recorded in the Care Plan.
- The Virtual School Head teacher will support children looked after and care leavers up to 25.
- CYP people will be listened to, practice is focused on their needs and experiences and influenced by their wishes and feelings or, where they cannot represent their view themselves, those advocated on their behalf. Good quality life story work will be completed with all children in long-term care.

Lead officer: Head of Service, Care and Resources

Page 75

22

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16–Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
	cases, carers have not received this information for a number of weeks after children are placed. Para 64, Rec 2 Managers do not have effective oversight of cases resulting in drift and delay and lack of monitoring and assessment of progress and risk to children and young people. Para 100 Rec12	<p>5.3.5 Review and revise policy and procedures for staff based on Working Together 2015 and the Care Planning Regulations 2010 for children who are returned home to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managers do NOT authorise assessments for children to return home unless there has been a thorough assessment of the risk and the IRO has scrutinised safety of plans to return children home and risks are identified when children leave care and an appropriate safety plan is in place. - Head of Service to sign off all return home plans. - All assessments and safety plans cases of children returning home are to be audited separately by QA prior to returning home and feedback used to inform learning in the teams and in management. - Risk assessments are completed on all children returning home, before they return home - IROs will scrutinise 100% of plans for children returning home to ensure risks are identified and managed <p>5.3.6 GM QI follows up through oversight of IRO team. Monitors minutes and for quality and challenge.</p>			
5.4	Private fostering Oversight of privately fostered children does not meet statutory requirements e.g. not DBS checked, not visited in timescale, the LA cannot ensure that they are safe. Para 44 Rec11	5.4.1 Undertake a review of Private Fostering arrangements and develop a SMART improvement plan to ensure systems in place meet statutory requirements.	Oct 16	HOS C&R	N/A
5.5	Assessments (CLA) Assessments for matching children to connected persons vary in their quality. There is a lack of a comprehensive exploration of the risks and vulnerabilities. Para 59 & 61 Rec 11	<p>5.5.1 Establish a connected person assessment and support team to drive improved practice.</p> <p>5.5.2 Establish a standardised connected person assessment tool.</p> <p>5.5.3 Draft a policy on connected person placements, setting out practice standards and legislative requirements.</p> <p>5.5.4 All social workers in the fostering team to undertake a training session on the new 'connected person' policy and assessment tool.</p> <p>5.5.5 Quality assurance team to undertake thematic audit on connected person placements at least annually and to be presented to DMT and the Improvement Board.</p> <p>5.5.6 Set a target for the number of connected person placements, and number of no disruptions and add this to the performance digest reporting cycle.</p> <p>5.5.7 Assessments of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people identify culture, ethnicity, religion and specific risks relating to this group of young people and reviewed through audit.</p>	<p>Sep 16 Dec 16 Dec 16 End Jan 17 Apr 17</p> <p>Sep 16</p> <p>Dec 16</p>	HOS C&R	N/A
5.6	Care plans (CLA) The majority of placement plans seen do not contain the information that carers require to understand the arrangements for children's care. In a small number of cases, carers have not received this information for a number of weeks after children are placed. Placement plans and care	<p>5.6.1 Write a set of practice standards for CLA that sets out the minimum practice standards for care planning and placement planning. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All care plans to be reviewed in accordance with practice standards - Clear outcomes to be recorded on plans - Contingency plans to be recorded and implemented in a timely way when required - supervision to focus on quality of care plans <p>5.6.2 Undertake a review of all placement plans to ensure delegated authority is agreed and recorded to those caring for the child looked after.</p> <p>5.6.3 Review and revise the placement plan template to ensure delegated authority is clearly recorded and required information is provided to carers.</p> <p>5.6.4 Review and revise the current delegated authority policy to ensure it covers all requirements and circulate to all front line staff and managers. Policy to include a requirement that IROs will check delegated authority has been appropriately agreed and applied to each</p>	<p>Jun / Sep 16</p> <p>Oct 16</p> <p>Dec 16</p>	HOS QI	Health Virtual School

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16–Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
	plans are not always updated when children move, and delegated authority was not explained or recorded in any placement plans seen by inspectors. Para 64 Rec 2	<p>5.6.5 placement and will escalate case if not. Briefing (via team meetings) to staff on the delegated authority policy and their responsibility in ensuring that it is agreed, recorded and implemented on each CLA case.</p> <p>5.6.6 Develop an information leaflet for parents of CLA and include information about delegated authority and the importance of it in the day to day care of their child.</p> <p>5.6.7 Write and implement a short protocol that ensures the child's independent reviewing officer, the virtual school and designated looked after nurse are all consulted prior to planned placement changes.</p> <p>5.6.8 Quality assurance audit as an assurance test that 100% of placement plans have delegated authority recorded, and of the quality of placement and care plans.</p> <p>5.6.9 Care plans to focus on child's long term educational needs.</p> <p>5.6.10 Undertake a review of alternative education provision available within the borough.</p>	Oct 16		
5.7	<p><u>Sufficiency of placements (CLA)</u></p> <p>The small number of children and young people who live in private residential children's homes outside the borough (21) live in homes that are judged good or better by Ofsted. However, insufficient checks are made with host authorities as to whether the local area has the appropriate health and education provision required for the child, or whether the placement location presents a child sexual exploitation risk. Para 60 Rec 11 & 13</p>	<p>5.7.1 Revise the sufficiency strategy setting out that wherever possible, there are sufficient placements for children and young people to be placed close to their home localities.</p> <p>5.7.2 Review and revise the marketing and recruitment strategy for foster carers</p> <p>5.7.3 Commission external marketing expertise for the revised marketing and recruitment strategy, to give greater focus upon recruiting carers for harder to place children and young people.</p> <p>5.7.4 Undertake a review of the structure of the fostering service to include: - separating the recruitment and support activity, from the assessment process, to ensure that foster carer assessments are given priority - Creating a dedicated GM post for the fostering service by creating a new GM post for the connected person service and GM for the adoption team.</p> <p>5.7.5 Explore with IFA providers the creation of a 'joint placement' approach to the provision of specific placement types through a commissioned service</p> <p>5.7.6 Each social worker to review all of their CLA cases to ensure they have an up to date placement plan on file. Team Managers to check this by end of August and task workers to complete by end of September 2016.</p> <p>5.7.7 Update and re-circulate the OOB placement process flowchart to social work staff so that they are aware of what needs to happen.</p> <p>5.7.8 Develop a CLA profile that can be used to inform placement choice and possible risks.</p> <p>5.7.9 Set up a system to consult host authorities prior to out of borough placements being made, to check risks in the local area and get appropriate agreement to the placement.</p> <p>5.7.10 Amend the referral form to ensure, wherever possible that the child's IRO, Virtual School and CLA nurse are fully consulted prior to placement changes.</p>	Apr 17	HOS C&R	LBB Central Placement Team
5.8	<p><u>Direct work (CLA)</u></p> <p>Life-story books seen during the inspection lacked some critical information and are not always completed in a timely way. Para 88 Rec 4 & 14</p>	<p>5.8.1 Undertake an audit of Life Story work across all CLA cases to ascertain which cases do and don't have life story work ongoing.</p> <p>5.8.2 Review the capacity of staff to complete life story work and consider a business case to recruit a consultant to do a short piece of work to get this up to date</p> <p>5.8.3 Develop a short life-story and direct work policy outlining minimum standards of practice. To include: - a requirement for direct work with all CLA, and life story for all CLA in long-term placements, - Life story work to focus on helping the child understand their journey and to be completed at the child's pace - requirements on recording direct work and life story work is happening, on the case file.</p> <p>5.8.4 Through supervision and case audit ensure social workers record direct work with children and work evidences the voice of the child</p> <p>5.8.5 Identify and deliver training to social workers in direct work techniques including recording Statutory visits and record evidence of progress against the objectives outlined in the care plan.</p>	<p>Nov 16</p> <p>Dec 16</p> <p>From Sep 16 By Jan 17</p>	HOS C&R	LBB L&D

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16–Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
5.9	<u>Contacts (CLA)</u> Contact between children and their family members is not sufficiently risk assessed or managed. Insufficient consideration is given to the potential negative impact of very frequent contact and associated travel for children and their attachment behaviour. Contact records are not sufficiently analytical and do not inform case planning well. Para 62 Rec 2	5.9.1 Write a protocol on family contact that gives guidance to front line staff. To include: - all proposed contact arrangements must be discussed with and agreed by the IRO and included in the care plan. - Contact arrangements to be assessed and discussed at CLA reviews and those that are assessed as being detrimental to the needs of the child should be robustly challenged including, if necessary, legal challenge. - Inappropriate contact arrangements to be escalated by the IRO and to be reviewed by SMT on a six monthly basis	Oct 16	HOS C&R	LBB HOS EI&FS
5.10	<u>Advocacy (CLA)</u> Although children and young people have access to an independent advocacy service and there is no waiting list, advocacy is not well promoted in children's reviews or by their social workers. Para 66 Rec 14	5.10.1 Develop a communication plan for the independent advocacy service setting out creative promotion of the service. 5.10.2 Update CLA welcome pack to include details of the advocacy service 5.10.3 Independent reviewing officers to give all children and young people a leaflet on the advocacy service at all future reviews. 5.10.4 Independent advocacy & independent visiting services to attend CLA team meetings at least annually first visit before Dec 16. 5.10.5 Setup process with Complaints Team to ensure that CLA making a complaint is provided information about independent advocacy 5.10.6 Set targets to monitor use of the service to be reported to SMT regularly.	By Dec 16	HOS QI	N/A

DRAFT

Priority Five – Supporting children looked after - performance measures (see appendix 1 page 46 for performance indicators)

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source	Bromley 2015/16	Target 16/17	Target 17/18
5a	% of CLA cases over 6 months reviewed at Early Permanency Panel (6 weeks)	Mgt OS	Minutes	New	100%	100%
5b	% of children have a permanency plan at 4 months in care	Quality	Audits	New	100%	100%
5c	% and number of safety plans for children returning home judged as good/outstanding	Quality	Audits	New	TBC	TBC
5d	% and number of plans scrutinised by IRO identify risk and how this will be managed following decision to return CYP home	Quality	Audits	New	TBC	TBC
5e	% and number of audits identifying drift and delay in placement planning/ permanency	Quality	Audits	New	TBC	TBC
5f	% and number of placement plans have delegated authority recorded	Quality	Audits	New	100%	100%
5g	% and number of care plans that are reviewed as a minimum every six months	Mgt OS	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
5h	% and number of care plans that evidence the voice of the child and their parents in care plans.	Quality	Audits	New	TBC	TBC
5i	% and number of CYP placed in residential accommodation rather than family placement	Capacity	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
5j	% and number of CYP placed more than 20 miles from home	Capacity	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
5k	% and number of children using advocacy or independent visitor	Contract Mon	Process	New	TBC	TBC

Priority Six – Supporting Care Leavers

Young people leaving care and preparing to leave care need to receive the right support to help them to make a successful transition to adulthood. We are committed to helping care leavers make effective plans to leave care that address their individual needs, so they are safe and feel safe, particularly where they live. Care leavers in Bromley will be able to successfully access education, employment, training and safe housing; and will enjoy stable and enduring relationships with staff and carers who meet their needs.

Ofsted Recommendations:

Recommendation 6 - Ensure child protection, child in need, children looked after and pathway plans are informed by assessment, focused on the needs of individual children and young people, and specific about the outcome to be achieved and the timescale for change. Contingencies should be explicit.

Recommendation 15 - Ensure that children looked after in Year 12 are effectively supported and encouraged to remain in education.

Recommendation 16 - Increase the range of suitable accommodation available for homeless 16- and 17-year-olds and care leavers, so that they are safe and feel safe where they live.

Identified issues to be addressed:

- There is an insufficient range of safe and suitable housing for care leavers. There is an over-reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation, which is not supporting positive outcomes for vulnerable care leavers,
- Not enough work is done to engage more vulnerable care leavers, particularly those aged over 18 years with more challenging behaviours.
- Pathway plans are too vague, with unclear steps for care leavers to reach their goals, and no contingency plans in place.
- Too many care leavers are not in education, employment or training, and too few in Higher Education.
- Too many young people leave care without access to their health histories.
- The setting up home allowance is provided too late meaning young people are moving into their accommodation with it not fully equipped.
- Management oversight is not effective enough and managers do not intervene quickly enough when outcomes for young people are not improving or when young people do not engage.

Expected impact and outcomes of this plan:

- Appropriate accommodation options will be available for care leavers that totally eliminate the need to use bed and breakfast accommodation, where they feel safe and supported.
- Young people are actively engaged in education, employment or training which leads to sustainable long term employment
- Young people are clear about their own health and how to access support and advice in the future.
- Social workers and personal advisers are proactive, determined and creative in their approach to engage the more vulnerable care leavers with more challenging behaviours.
- Pathway plans are SMART, individualised, with clear steps to help care leavers to reach their goals. Contingency plans are set out clearly.

Lead officer: Ian Leadbetter, Head of Service, Care and Resources

Priority Six – Supporting Care Leavers					
ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
6.1	<u>Assessments and Quality assurance (Care Leavers)</u> The provision offered to care leavers by the council is not co-ordinated and lacks a strategic vision with clarity over roles & responsibilities. The quality of pathway planning and support offered to care leavers is variable across the service. Para 92 Rec 6	6.1.1 Develop a multi-agency care leaver's strategy that clearly identifies the council's ambitions. 6.1.2 Develop a suite of performance indicators linked to the care leaver's strategy, to be agreed and monitored by the Corporate Parenting Board. 6.1.3 An annual report on progress of the Care Leavers strategy to be scheduled for the Executive Working Party for Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting within six months. 6.1.4 Write a job description and recruit an Independent Reviewing Officer for post 18 care leavers, to chair Pathway Plan reviews for care leavers where the plan is not progressing appropriately. 6.1.5 Develop practice standards for pathway planning with care leavers, to include: - a requirement that all pathway plans are reviewed within six months, and/or at point of circumstance change - have SMART actions - demonstrate 'ambition' for the young person - include clear contingency plans - demonstrate young people have input into their plans. 6.1.6 Pathway planning training to be delivered to all front-line staff (social workers/personal advisors) to cover SMART planning and the revised practice standards. - Dip samples of pathway plans to be added to the audit schedule, with monthly auditing by the GM and HoS.	End Mar 17 Oct 17 Oct 16 Dec 16 Jan 17 Mar 17	DCS HOS C&R	N/A
6.2	<u>Placements and accommodation (Care leavers)</u> The service has placed too many young people in B&B accommodation which has not been risk assessed. Para 89 Rec 16 There is an insufficient range of safe and suitable housing available for care leavers. Housing provision offered to care leavers is not appropriately risk assessed. Para 89 & 90 Rec 14 & 16	6.2.1 Review the housing pathway for care leavers The BIS team to work closely with colleagues in the Housing Teams (S&R and Allocations) to review the housing pathway for care leavers and to identify suitable accommodation options for care leavers. 6.2.2 Undertake a review of the current homelessness strategy, ensuring it sets out the policy for housing all young people. 6.2.3 Develop a policy for vulnerable homeless and care leavers as part of the homelessness strategy, outlining the housing pathways, all placement options and alternatives to bed and breakfast accommodation. 6.2.4 Develop and implement a risk assessment framework for care leavers to be used before any placement in new accommodation. 6.2.5 Amend the wider housing policy to ensure it aligns to the new care leaver placement strategy 6.2.6 The BIS Team to adopt the risk assessment tool in practice to ensure that all accommodation to be provided to care leavers is assessed for its suitability, as a safe and secure base, prior to the placement being commissioned. 6.2.7 Develop a communication plan to promote the 'staying put' policy with all foster carers and young people with a view to increasing take up on this, ensuring: - that staying put opportunities are discussed as early as possible; - clarity is given to foster carers about the level of support, including financial support they will receive through the staying put policy	Sep 16 Dec 16 Jan 17 Dec 16	DCS AD Housing HOS C&R	Housing
6.3	<u>Independent training (care leavers)</u> Not all care leavers had access to their leaving care grants when moving in. Para 94 Rec 15 Quality of support and preparation to adulthood for care leavers. Para 95 Rec 7	6.3.1 Undertake an audit of all care leavers eligible to receive their setting up home allowance/care leaver grant in the past six months, to identify young people that did not receive this. 6.3.2 Set up a system for identifying care leavers eligible for the setting up home allowance, and contact all care leavers currently eligible 6.3.3 Develop a short information leaflet for care leavers about the setting up home allowance, covering how it is to be used and accessed and disseminate to relevant care leavers. 6.3.4 Review the 'Moving on' preparation course for care leavers, improving the content and changing the timing and frequency. 6.3.5 Undertake a feasibility study to create 'training tenancies' for care leavers, the objective being to provide high levels of support to young people in preparation for their permanent independent accommodation.	Jan 17 Oct 16 Oct 16 By Dec 16 Jan 17	HOS – C&R	N/A

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
	The local authority is not proactive in engaging and staying in touch with care leavers, and do not review the outcomes and intervene quickly where young people are disengaging. Para 91 Rec 13	6.3.6 Develop a protocol setting out standards for contact between care leavers over 18 and their Young People's Adviser including action to be taken when young people disengage with the service.	Nov 16		
6.4	<u>Health (Care leavers)</u> Care leavers do not fully engage with and access health provision that is offered to them by the CLA nurse and there is a gap in what support is offered to those aged 18 years old +. Para 96 Rec 6	6.4.1 Implement care leaver health passports to ensure all care leavers have access to their health histories. 6.4.2 Progress colocation of one CLA nurses to be located in the Leaving Care Team at least once/week. 6.4.3 Update the preparation for independence course for care leavers to include input from CLA nurse input. 6.4.4 Undertake a review of what health support care leavers require post 18 and work with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) commission relevant services based on the recommendations. 6.4.5 Questions about sexual exploitation to be included within the Bromley 'Health Watch' school based survey.	Jan 17	HOS – C&R	Health
6.5	<u>Education, Training and Employment (Care Leavers)</u> For the last three years approximately a third of care leavers have not been in education, employment or training. For the last three years approximately a third of care leavers have not been in education, employment or training. Para 94 Rec 15	6.5.1 Undertake a review of the Virtual School with a view to extend its focus on care leavers. To include: - Embed post 16 PEPS in the pathway planning process - Increase capacity by creating two specific posts that support year 12/13 and post 18 care leavers - Offer a range of services to support the ongoing education and training opportunities for care leavers - Promoting higher education opportunities through taster days, information sessions etc. 6.5.2 Develop an ambitious education, employment and training strategy for care leavers 6.5.3 Set up a multi-disciplinary group, chaired by the Virtual School, to review all care leavers currently not in education, employment or training (NEET) and develop an action plan setting out the immediate support they will be given. 6.5.4 Develop a working protocol with the YES Project (Education Business Partnership) to increase opportunities and engagement of care leavers, including apprenticeship opportunities. 6.5.5 Get agreement for all care leavers to be given priority places on activities in Children and Family Centres. 6.5.6 Write a policy that sets out a requirement for all newly commissioned services to offer, where appropriate, work experience, work placements and/or apprenticeships to care leavers. 6.5.7 Set up a working protocol with Job Centre plus to agree an offer to care leavers. 6.5.8 Develop an information guide for care leavers of EET opportunities available to them, and the range of support available to them in further and higher education (accommodation, staying put, financial etc).	Apr 17	DED	N/A

Priority Six – Supporting Care Leavers - performance measures (see appendix 1 page 47 for performance indicators)

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source	Bromley 2015/16	Target 16/17	Target 17/18
6a	% of pathway plans reviewed at six months or within 10 working days of a change of circumstance	Quality	MI Report	New	100%	100%
6b	% and number of pathway plans evidence SMART objectives	Quality	Audit	New	100%	100%
6c	% and number of young people have had input into their pathway plans	Quality	Audit	New	100%	100%
6d	xx % attendance of CSC staff at pathway planning training sessions	L&D	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
6e	% and number of pathway plans have contingency plans	Quality	Audit	New	100%	100%
6f	% and number care leavers have access to their health information	Quality	MI Report	New	100%	100%
6g	% Care Leavers (16-18) Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET)	DfE	MI Report	N/A	TBC	TBC
6h	% Care Leavers (age 17-21) in suitable accommodation	DfE	MI Report	75%	85%	85%
6i	% and number young people in staying put arrangements	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
6j	% and number of care leavers post 16 that have a completed PEP to support their ETE	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
6k	% and number care leavers attend preparation for independence training course	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
6l	% Care Leavers (age 18-21) in Higher Education	DfE	MI Report	5%	8%	8%
6m	LinCC to undertake annual surveys of the council's commitment to the care leavers pledge	Satisfaction	Survey	New	TBC	TBC
6n	Young people report through consultation that they feel supported.	Satisfaction	Survey	New	TBC	TBC
6o	100% of all care leavers have access to their health information and how to access adult health services.	Quality	Audit	New	TBC	TBC
6p	% of Bromley 'Health Watch' school based surveys completed.	Satisfaction	Survey	New	TBC	TBC

Priority Seven – Adoption services

Adoption will be considered for all children who are unable to return home to their birth families and who need a permanent alternative home. We are committed to improving our adoption processes so that a sense of urgency and care is given in all our adoption work, including the appropriate use of concurrent and parallel planning, so that suitable adoptive families are identified for children without delay.

Ofsted Recommendation:

Recommendation 10 - *Ensure priority is given to considering achieving permanency, including adoption, at the earliest possible point for children, and that there are effective systems to track and monitor the progress of this work.*

Identified issues to be addressed:

- Not enough children are adopted, much lower than the national average.
- Not enough children are considered for adoption, even though they are unable to return to their birth parents, or if they are it's not considered at the earliest opportunity.
- There is too much delay in the adoption process which is caused by a range of issues including - it takes too long for children to be considered for adoption,
- a lack of urgency in pursuing permanency options for children, over optimistic assessments of parents, too many opportunities given to birth family before decisive action is taken to adopt, plans for adoption are changed resulting in some children remaining uncertain about their futures for too long. , and some being consecutive planned rather than twin tracked while assessments are on-going.
- Family finding is overly focused on finding an ethnic match at the expense of the other needs of the child, including timeliness, and this causes unnecessary delay.
- Adoption assessments take too long to start from initial contact.
- Fostering to adopt placements are under developed.
- Child permanency reports need better analysis of how the childhood trauma might affect them into adult life.
- Life story work lacks critical information, and are not always completed in a timely way.
- Processes within the adoption service lack tight management, are not focused around the child's timescales, and are too tolerant of drift and delay.

Expected impact and outcomes of this plan:

- Appropriate accommodation options will be available for care leavers that totally eliminate the need to use bed and breakfast accommodation, where they feel safe and supported.
- Children receive swift and effective support to help them find permanent families that meet their needs well. All children who cannot return to their home permanently will be considered for adoption.
- Life story work will be completed with children in long-term care
- More children will be adopted; this will take less time, and be in line with the time taken by the best performing local authorities.
- Placements for children freed for adoption will prioritise timeliness and quality of care over finding exact ethnic matches.
- Arrangements to recruit new adoptive parents will be effective and timely; children will be freed for adoption where this appropriate in a timely way and matched to good quality adoptive parents swiftly. Foster to adopt placements will be developed to reduce the number of moves children make and the time it takes to move into an adoptive placement.

Lead officer: Head of Service, Care and Resources

Priority Seven – Adoption services

[illegible]

Priority Seven – Adoption services - performance measures (see appendix 1 page 47 for performance indicators)

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source	Bromley 2015/16	Target 16/17	Target 17/18
7a	% of CLA cases over 6 months reviewed at Early Permanency Panel (6 weeks)	Mgt OS	Minutes	New	100%	100%
7b	% of children have a permanency plan at 4 months in care	Mgt OS	Audit	New	TBC	TBC
7c	Minutes of PLO and LPMs show that adoption is being considered as part of twin tracking process	Mgt OS	Audit	New	TBC	TBC
7d	Number of initial enquiries from prospective adopters	Quality	MI Report	170	TBC	TBC
7e	Number of newly approved adopters	Quality	MI Report	17	15	20
7f	Number of currently approved Adopters	Quality	MI Report	13	N/A	N/A
7g	The average time (days) between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (A1) (in year)	Adoption Scorecard	MI Report	659	426	426

Priority Eight: Tackling child sexual exploitation, children missing and gangs

The local authority and its partners do not have a strategic overview of the risks to children missing and/or at risk of CSE. The systems for scrutinising, analysing and evaluating the outcomes for children missing or at risk of sexual exploitation are under developed. Key intelligence from return home interviews is not being used to cross-reference with children at risk of CSE or gangs to form an understanding of trends and patterns and the reasons why children are going missing. Operationally, the work to safeguard children missing or at risk of CSE is poorly coordinated and inconsistent: it is marked by police delays in informing social care when a child goes missing or has returned. Return home interviews are delayed and in most cases it is unclear whether one has taken place. Procedures for children who go missing are not effectively applied and the risks to children from CSE or trafficking are not well understood by the people working with them. This reduces their capacity to manage the risks to these children.

Ofsted Recommendations:

Recommendation 7 - *Improve the arrangements to reduce the risk to children of sexual exploitation and episodes of missing from home and care, by:*

- *ensuring that risks to sexually exploited children and young people, and those who go missing, are routinely assessed and understood by strategic managers who take timely action to address concerns*
- *developing suitable arrangements to share and analyse information from child sexual exploitation risk assessments and 'return' interviews to reduce future risks for individual children and young people, and to inform partnership prevention and disruption activity.*

Identified issues to be addressed:

- The response to children missing or at risk of child sexual exploitation is underdeveloped, inconsistent and uncoordinated. Delays in police notifications meant it is not clear when children first go missing and when they return.
- Return home interviews are delayed and in most cases vague responses are being obtained from young people who have been missing.
- Performance data on children missing and child sexual exploitation is not collated or analysed sufficiently well to understand the profile of children missing and the links to sexual exploitation. There is no system in place to share and analyse information from child sexual exploitation risk assessments and return interviews, to reduce future risks for children and young people, and to inform partnership prevention and disruption activity.
- Child protection procedures for children missing from home, care or education or at risk of CSE, gangs or trafficking are inconsistently applied and there are too many delays.
- Information is not used or shared appropriately between partners and consequently the risks to these children are poorly understood nor managed.
- The partnership arrangements for identification and support of children and young people who are at risk of CSE, gang involvement or affiliation and/or missing are poorly coordinated and underdeveloped.
- Arrangements for managing CSE, missing and gangs related work needs to be centralised and coordinated to oversee, monitor and quality assure case work practice and collate and analyse trends to make intelligence links between places, children and perpetrators.
- The MASE needs to be improved so it is more intelligence led, uses data more effectively to intervene strategically and operationally to reduce and manage risks to children.
- Where children are placed out of borough in residential homes, adequate checks and risk assessments are not being done around sexual exploitation before making the placement.

Expected impact and outcomes of this plan:

- The work of CSE, missing children and gangs will be overseen by a strategic lead, and activities will be centralised, with strong oversight, collation and analysis of data and information-sharing.
- A detailed problem profile and needs analysis will help inform the work of the MASE and BSCB in addressing the issues both strategically and operationally through targeted action to prevent and reduce risks for children and young people,
- Return home interviews will be done on time and information gathered will be used on both an individual case basis, and collated to help inform the wider partnership response.
- Senior managers will have strong oversight of the issues and prevalence of CSE, gangs and missing episodes in their area, the extent of risks to children and will use this to inform local commissioning decisions.
- The support needs of children who are at risk of CSE or victims of CSE, trafficking, gangs or who go missing will be reviewed and appropriate services will be commissioned to meet these needs. The service will monitor and review the support arrangements that have been put in place for children and young people and measure outcomes of those who have been offered support.

Lead officer: Director Children's Services

Page 91

Page 91

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
8.4	Plans to disband the monthly multi-agency case-focused planning meeting were withdrawn when inspectors raised concerns about the need to have a holistic response that links children across agencies. Para 105 Rec 7	<p>8.4.1 MASE 'problem profile' to be developed based on a detailed analysis of trends and data on missing children, trafficking, gangs and CSE. Analysis to include: geographical patterns of sexual offending, mapping of offenders and children, hotspots, trends and profiles of CSE and missing, trafficking and gang related activity within Bromley and in proximity to CLA placed out of borough.</p> <p>8.4.2 Problem profile to be shared with Director of Children's Services, Chief Constable, Children's Service Senior Management Team, BSCB and Council members and updated as a live document at least every quarter.</p> <p>8.4.3 The MASE to develop a plan for using intelligence from partners to intervene in a targeted way to disrupt CSE, gang activity, and reduce missing episodes, and trafficking incidents.</p> <p>8.4.4 The MASE to develop a dataset to evidence of disruption activity, prosecutions, and use of SOPOs, RHOSOs, Abduction Notices, and ancillary orders, to monitor its own effectiveness as a panel and report back to BSCB and Improvement Board.</p> <p>8.4.5 Children's commissioning service to undertake an exercise to map the identified in the MASE Problem profile and feedback from consultation with children, with the existing therapeutic resources available for children at risk from missing, CSE, trafficking or gangs in Bromley; and make recommendations based on any gaps or duplication of service.</p> <p>8.4.6 BSCB contributes to a multi-agency CSE day for front line staff which publicises CSE/Missing functions and protocol.</p>	April 17	DCS Police	LBB Health Police Probation Schools
8.5	Return home interviews for children and young people are not routinely completed. Para 32, 73, 106 Rec 7	<p>8.5.1 The local authority to ensure that all returning CLA and children missing from home are referred to commissioned service for an independent return home interview, and that they hold a strategy meeting and have appropriate risk management plans on file.</p> <p>8.5.2 Develop a return from home interview protocol to be included in the revised missing procedures as per 8.4 of this plan. The protocol to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The children services strategic lead to hold a meeting with the superintendent of Public Protection Desk to understand why police notifications are not being made in a timely way and problem solve, including setting up a system to monitor this going forward. - The strategic lead to reissue clear guidance to all staff on missing procedures, the statutory timescale, the criteria for a strategy meeting, and the purpose of arranging a return home interview. - The strategic lead will monitor poor performance and performance manage those social workers who do not comply. - The strategic lead will arrange reflective workshops or team meetings to explore how social workers can use the RHI interviews more effectively, and strategy and MAP meetings for children missing/at risk of CSE to inform better care planning. - Team Managers to follow up improvements in practice within supervision, and minute discussions providing clear actions for staff who have not complied with procedure or who have not addressed risks well in their plans. <p>8.5.3 The strategic lead for children's services and team managers to continuously monitor case work and follow up concerns with management action.</p>	Sep 16	DCS	N/A
8.6	The local authority is more effective in tracking and identifying children and young people missing education. Para 34	<p>8.6.1 Develop a missing from education working protocol (to be included in the missing from home, care and education policy as per 8.3 of this plan).</p> <p>8.6.2 Set up a 'missing from education' database, tracking sheet and action plan, to track children and ensure robust action is in place to ensure that they are returned to education with the minimum of delay.</p> <p>8.6.3 Designate a lead on 'missing from education'</p> <p>8.6.4 Set up regular 'missing from education' meetings to go through the tracking sheet and agree actions.</p> <p>8.6.5 Contact all schools attended by Bromley children to request information on any children who regularly miss part of the school day, or are missing education.</p> <p>8.6.6 Set up a protocol to screen and follow up on these children to reduce incidents</p> <p>8.6.7 Set up a requirement for all children who are educated at home to be visited twice a year to check on their welfare and educational progress. Any safeguarding concerns must be reported to children's social care.</p> <p>8.6.8 Set up reporting mechanisms for all children who are missing education or electively home educated, and these arrangements are to be reported to the BSCB for oversight and scrutiny.</p>	Jul 16	DCS	N/A
8.7	Insufficient checks are made with host authorities as to	8.7.1 Update the IT recording system for authorising out of borough placements, to require verification that checks been made with the area around educational and health provision and/or risks around sexual exploitation have been checked first.	Aug 16	HOS C&R	Police Education

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
	<p>whether the local area has the appropriate health and education provision required for the child, or whether the placement location presents a child sexual exploitation risk. Para 60 Rec 13</p> <p>Ensure that children and young people who are placed out of the borough are sufficiently supported by their social worker and have access to services to meet their needs where they are living. Rec 13</p>	<p>8.7.2 Implement requirement that Head of Service for CLA checks that risks around sexual exploitation have been considered before agreeing to out of borough placements.</p> <p>8.7.3 Review all out of borough placements and check for any risks (intelligence re: CSE)</p> <p>8.7.4 Set up requirement that multi-agency strategy meetings are to be held and safety plans to be put in place in any CLA cases where there are concerns about risk. To be included in revised multi-agency policies and protocols as per 8.3 of this plan.</p> <p>8.7.5 Head of Service Care and Resources to provide regular reassurance reports to the Improvement Board, Corporate Parenting Board and BSCB. This to be reported as a standing item as part of all future annual Corporate Parenting Board Reports.</p>			<p>Schools Health</p> <p>BSCB Partners</p>

DRAFT

Priority Eight: Tackling child sexual exploitation, children missing and gangs – a full data set will be developed as part of the BSCB task and finish group CSE, Missing, Gangs.

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source	Bromley 2015/16	Target 16/17	Target 17/18
8a	Number of children known to the LA that are at risk of CSE, missing, trafficking or gangs	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
8b	Number of referrals sent to MAP Panel (and % of all CIN, CP and CLA)	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
8c	Outcome of MAP Panel referrals	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
8d	Minutes of MASE evidence challenge by management of all partners, and that actions are routinely reviewed and completed.	Quality	Audit	New	TBC	TBC
8e	% and number of CYP who have received a return home interview within 72 hours of return home	Quality	MI Report	New	80%	80%
8f	Number (and %) of CIN/CP with missing episodes	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
8g	Number of children known to be at risk of/or affiliated to gang activity	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
8h	Number of children known to be at risk from CSE (and as % of all CIN including CP and LAC)	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
8i	100% of the children identified have a multi-agency risk assessment and safety plan in place, a named key worker and are reviewed monthly at MASE or a MAP meeting.	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC

DRAFT

Priority Nine – Strategic Commissioning

Commissioning activity is fragmented and not evidence driven. Commissioned services to support early intervention and statutory services are fragmented and the lack of a children's commissioning strategy does not lead to effective joined up services with partner agencies. The availability of local foster placements and suitable placements for care leavers were not sufficient to ensure that there is sufficient choice to meet need. At the time of the inspection 14 care leavers over the age of 18 were living in bed and breakfast accommodation. Some commissioned services are not robustly reviewed and monitored for their effectiveness.

Ofsted Recommendation:

Ofsted Report Recommendations 11, 16 -18:

Recommendation 11 - Improve the sufficiency and choice of placements within the borough to meet current needs, to strengthen placement planning arrangements and to ensure increased support to foster carers.

Recommendation 16 - Increase the range of suitable accommodation available for homeless 16 and 17-year-olds and care leavers, so that they are safe and feel safe where they live.

Recommendation 17 - Integrate children's commissioning arrangements corporately, to ensure that safeguarding children and young people is understood and prioritised.

Recommendation 18 - Evaluate services that support children and families living with domestic violence, drug and alcohol misuse and parental mental ill health to ensure that these are making a difference and improving circumstances for children and young people.

Identified issues to be addressed:

- A carefully planned, dedicated and child-centred commissioning strategy is required so that children and their families in Bromley are to benefit from it.
- Commissioning activity is fragmented, not evidence driven. Commissioned services to support early intervention and statutory services are fragmented and the lack of a children's commissioning strategy does not lead to effective joined up services with partner agencies.
- Some commissioned services are not robustly reviewed and monitored for their effectiveness.
- The availability of local foster placements and suitable placements for care leavers were not sufficient to ensure that there is sufficient choice to meet need. Although training and supervision was generally well received by foster carers, many felt that they were not considered as an important part of the professional team around the child.
- Too many care leavers are living in unsuitable accommodation including bed and breakfast accommodation.
- The JSNA is not used effectively to help evaluate what resources could be commissioned to ameliorate certain issues such as parental domestic abuse, mental health and those missing from home and care.

Expected impact and outcomes of this plan:

- A comprehensive integrated commissioning strategy is in place to drive and deliver coordinated commissioning arrangements corporately.
- The commissioning strategy makes best use of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and other performance data.
- Services are evaluated and reviewed regularly to ensure they are making a difference and improving circumstances for children, young people and families.
- Commissioned services are based on actual need and take into account the views of young people and thorough risk assessments, ensuring safeguarding children and young people is understood and prioritised.
- The number of local foster carers is increased
- A range of suitable accommodation is commissioned for homeless 16 and 17 year olds and care leavers, so they are safe and feel safe where they live.

Lead officer: Director of Children's Services

Priority Nine – Strategic Commissioning					
ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
9.1	Work is required if children and their families in Bromley are to benefit from a carefully planned, dedicated and child-centred commissioning strategy. Para 109 Rec 17	9.1.1 Appoint Children's Commissioner to lead of all commissioning arrangements. (completed) 9.1.2 Develop an integrated commissioning strategy for children's services. 9.1.3 Implement the commissioning strategy for children.	Sep 16 Dec 16	DCS	Health
9.2	Too often, plans recommend parents' engagement or re-engagement with services without considering how effective these services are. Para 28 Rec 18	9.2.1 Undertake a full review of children's commissioning contracts to assess the effectiveness of the help and support provided, and that they are delivering against the key objectives. Review to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocacy service - Independent visiting service - Return home visits agency and tracking - Missing & CSE support services - Parental mental ill health services - Substance misuse services - Violence against women and girls/ Domestic Violence services - The range of services providing therapeutic help and support, with an overview of the extent to which these existing programmes are tailored towards the specific needs of CLA, children with learning difficulties, children outside of mainstream education (COOME) and trafficked children - A proposed framework for monitoring the effectiveness of commissioned services going forward - A proposed set of performance indicators to evaluation commissioned services going forward - An overview of any gaps in services (based on the needs of children as per the updated JSNA). - A plan around how poor performing contracts will be reviewed, with timescales - An overview of any programmes with consistently poor feedback or low take up. 9.2.2 The final written review report to be presented to the Improvement Board with recommendations and an action plan.	April 17	DCS	LBB Procurement
9.3	The local authority recognises that it does not have sufficient foster placements for older children and for children from ethnic minority backgrounds. Para 57 Rec 11	9.3.1 Complete review of the sufficiency strategy to increase placement options, including placements for care leavers. 9.3.2 Revise recruitment strategy for foster carers and adopters to include commissioned arrangements where appropriate, with a target for 20 new foster carers recruited annually.	Dec 16	HOS C&R	N/A
9.4	There are significant gaps in the JSNA for some groups of vulnerable children, for example the high number of children known to early help services and children's social care as a result of parental domestic abuse, mental health and substance misuse. There is no reference to child sexual exploitation or those missing from home or care. Paras 107 108	9.4.1 Review and update the JSNA to include : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children in need - children known to early help services and children's social care as a result of parental domestic abuse, mental health and substance misuse - CSE and missing CLA - VAWG - Young people's homelessness - health needs of children, including specifically children at risk from missing, CSE, trafficking and gangs. 9.4.2 Review and revise the Health and Wellbeing strategy to reflect the updated JSNA, setting out priorities based on the updated needs assessment. 9.4.3 Health and Wellbeing Board receives regular reports of identified issues. 9.4.4 Review membership of the JSNA officer working group, to ensure appropriate representation from agencies.	April 17	DPH	JSNA strategy group

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between Jun 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
9.5	Foster carers report feeling undervalued by the local authority and do not feel that they are considered as part of a professional team supporting children and young people. Para 56 Rec 11	9.5.1 Develop a foster carer academy to deliver, in partnership with learning providers, a range of courses, including professionally credited learning opportunities. 9.5.2 Set a target for all foster carers to be trained in 12 months, and ensure that there is a rolling count of new carers being trained. - Foster carers to have a personal development plan that is reviewed annually 9.5.3 Evaluate feedback and use to improve training 9.5.4 Provide an enhanced out of hours telephone support service using social work staff/ existing foster carers. 9.5.5 Develop a fostering support service for carers to access additional support particularly in the evenings and weekends	End Dec16	HOS C&R	Task and finish group
9.6	A new violence against women and girls Strategy is required.	9.6.1 Update and launch the multi-agency violence against women and girls Strategy 2016 - 2019. - The revised strategy will have clear outcomes and measures - Strategy to be monitored and report to Improvement Board.	Oct 16	AD SBSS	PP&S Partnership
9.7	Lack of planning and monitoring for the placement journey for children with complex and challenging behaviour. Children are placed in a variety of provisions without a clear focus on the outcomes to be achieved in the placement and/or the best provision to deliver outcomes	9.7.1 Develop a Placement Policy to ensure that children are placed in the right provision at the right time in order that their needs are addressed enabling them to move to family based care that will succeed. 9.7.2 Setup Placement Planning meetings with the Central Placements team and CSC; to set and then monitor targets/ outcomes with providers. 9.7.3 Develop a Business Development role with the central placements team to: - develop specialist resource and provider knowledge - facilitate the commissioning and negotiation of value for money services and high cost residential placements - guide and advice Placement Officers - work with providers - monitor outcomes with social workers and providers, ensuring placement plans stay on target.	Apr 17 Dec 16	DCom HOS Placements and Brokerage	HOS C&R
9.8	Caseloads for Placement Officers and Brokers are too high. The LA is criticised by the courts for failing to provide appropriate and timely expert witnesses and commissioning information to enable cases to proceed within timescales.	9.8.1 Undertake a review to increase caseload capacity of Placement Officers and present a business case that: - reflects growth in cases in care proceedings and connected person's placements, and capacity for court timescales to be adhered to; - improves the commissioning of expert witnesses; - reduce delays in placement reviews and payment of allowances to connected persons; - provides capacity for identifying child focussed provision; - ensures carers receive support in a timely way. 9.8.2 Recruit additional posts, monitor activity and report outcomes.	Oct 16 Dec 16	DCom HOS Placements and Brokerage	HOS S&CP

Priority Nine – Strategic Commissioning

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source	Bromley 2015/16	Target 16/17	Target 17/18
9a	Number of initial enquiries from prospective foster carers	Ofsted	MI Report	251	TBC	TBC
9b	Number of newly approved foster carer households	Ofsted	MI Report	4	22	22
9c	Number of current LBB Foster Carer Households	Quality	MI Report	123	TBC	TBC
9d	% and number of foster carers with a personal development plan	Quality	Sample	New	TBC	TBC

DRAFT

Priority Ten - Legal services

There has been drift in legal planning meetings and public law outline meetings being held in a timely way. The quality and timeliness of the legal advice and support to social workers is not consistent. Cases are not always presented in a competent manner or by lawyers with sufficient experience of advocating in particularly complex cases.

Ofsted Recommendations:

Recommendation 8 – Review the cases under the public law outline and in care proceedings to ensure that robust plans are in place and that cases are progressing at a pace that matches children's needs.

Recommendation 9 - Improve the quality of legal advice to social workers and their managers to enable confident and effective presentation of care plans in court, to achieve the right outcomes for children and young people.

Identified issues to be addressed:

- Comprehensive weaknesses in the quality of legal advice mean that local authority lawyers are not sufficiently experienced to advocate for children in complex care proceedings. Cases are not prepared thoroughly enough for court, and social work evidence is too often not strong enough to support the local authority's plan.
- Improve the quality of legal advice to social workers and their managers to enable confident and effective presentation of care plans in court, to achieve the right outcomes for children and young people.
- Managers in Bromley do not get good enough legal support in court. Because of this, childcare cases are not well prepared and do not always support plans for children's and young people's futures.
- There are significant weaknesses in the quality of the legal advice available to social workers and their managers. The public law outline (PLO) process is not used effectively, leading to too many children experiencing significant drift and delay in achieving permanence.
- The PLO process is not being used effectively to consider what evidence or assessments are needed to make early decisions about care plans.
- There are significant weaknesses in the quality of legal advice available to social workers and their managers, and this sets a threshold for intervention that is too high. This results in a lack of confidence in their analysis of risk and professional judgment. Consequently, there are delays in convening and reviewing legal planning meetings, and issuing proceedings.
- The judiciary expressed significant concern about the quality of the children's services' legal representation in court. The local authority does not instruct sufficiently experienced lawyers in complex cases. Representations have been made by the judge to the local authority on a number of occasions, with little impact or improvement. Evidence is not prepared well. There is a lack of understanding about what constitutes good evidence. Consequently, the PLO is implemented neither effectively nor quickly enough.
- There has been drift in legal planning meetings and public law outline meetings being held in a timely way.
- The quality of legal support and advice has not been consistent and has contributed to the delay in ensuring that children are protected from harm.

Expected impact and outcomes of this plan:

- A suitably experienced and qualified legal team, with increased capacity, will provide good quality, timely support to the local authority.
- All legal action is taken in a timely way to ensure that children are not left in neglectful homes for too long and that permanency planning is undertaken in a timely way.
- Good legal advice will ensure there is good analysis of thresholds
- Confident and competent representation at court by experienced barristers to ensure the presentation of care plans is done in a way that achieves the right outcomes for children. Evidence will be well prepared.
- The PLO process is used effectively to make early decisions about care plans
- Legal planning meetings and public law outline meetings are tracked to ensure that timescales are met.

Lead officer: Director of Corporate Services

Priority Ten - Legal services

ID	Issue (Ofsted Para & Rec)	Key Actions	Timescale between June 16 – Oct 17	Lead	Agency Involvement
10.1	Failure to convene or review timely legal planning meetings and to consider public law outline procedures soon enough. Para 19 Rec 8	<p>10.1.1 Review and update the PLO policy and process to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all legal planning meetings and public law outline meetings are tracked by the court manager and head of service. - Legal manager and head of service to agree any cases stepping down from PLO. - Monthly meetings to monitor progress, chaired by the Interim Director CSC, and for any escalations not resolved at a lower level to be discussed at this meeting. - Where the decision is made that threshold is met at a legal planning meeting, the PLO to be written by legal and sent to the parents and the PLO meeting to be held within 10 days. - The PLO to be reviewed within no longer than 6 weeks to ensure that progress is being made. <p>10.1.2 PLO data to be reported in the performance digest.</p> <p>10.1.3 Monthly meetings have been agreed to monitor progress chaired by the Interim Director CSC and for any escalations not resolved at a lower level to be discussed at this meeting. To improve communication and resolution of any systemic problems between CSC and Legal Services</p>	<p>Aug 16</p> <p>Implemented</p> <p>May 16</p>	<p>HOS S&CP</p> <p>DCS</p>	<p>LBB Court Manager HO LS</p>
10.2	Significant weaknesses in the quality of legal advice available to social workers and their managers Para 50 Rec 9	<p>10.2.1 Review current capacity in the legal team and outline plan to increase capacity to address the shortfalls in practice</p> <p>10.2.2 Explore viability of offering a secondment to the Head of Legal Team to Court Team on temporary basis.</p> <p>10.2.3 Undertake recruitment of a Group Manager, Deputy Manager and 6 Advanced Practitioners within the court team.</p> <p>10.2.4 Court Team to introduce service user feedback forms for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Work colleagues to measure satisfaction levels with Legal colleagues. - Legal colleagues to measure satisfaction levels with Social Work practice. <p>10.2.5 Summary of feedback to be provided to DCS.</p>	<p>Sep 16</p> <p>End Aug 16</p> <p>End Oct 16</p> <p>Oct 16</p> <p>Dec 16</p>	<p>HO LS</p> <p>HOS S&CP</p> <p>Court Manager</p>	<p>N/A</p>
10.3	The judiciary expressed significant concern about the quality of the children's services' legal representation in court. Para 113 Rec 9	<p>10.3.1 Barristers to be used in future care proceedings where appropriate to ensure that robust legal representation is provided</p> <p>10.3.2 Seek regular feedback from judiciary including meetings with Judge Redgrave about the local authority performance and any remedial action to be taken to ensure excellent court outcomes.</p>	<p>From Jun 16</p> <p>By Oct 16</p>	<p>HO LS</p>	<p>N/A</p>
10.4	Lawyers are not sufficiently experienced to advocate for children in complex care proceedings. Para 51 Rec 9	<p>10.4.1 Arrange a mandatory training and development programme for all lawyers within the Legal Team to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law Society Children Panel - Higher rights of Audience - Advocacy <p>10.4.2 Identify shadowing opportunities for all members of the legal team to undertake a minimum of twice/year.</p> <p>10.4.3 Identify mentoring opportunities for legal team members to develop their experience and confidence.</p> <p>10.4.4 Each legal team member to be given an individual personal development plan setting out clear steps needed to address the concerns raised by Ofsted.</p>	<p>April 17</p>	<p>HO LS</p>	<p>N/A</p>
10.5	Evidence is not prepared well. There is a lack of understanding about what constitutes good evidence. Para 50 Rec 9	<p>10.5.1 Undertake a legal audit of cases to identify those that have experienced drift or delay in proceeding to court.</p> <p>10.5.2 Undertake peer review to audit the sample of cases inspected by Ofsted and a final report to provide recommendations. Case audit to be completed by Camden.</p> <p>10.5.3 Review and update the case management system used by Legal Department to ensure it is fit for purpose.</p> <p>10.5.4 Provide quality assurance activity on court evidence and offer guidance and advice to social work teams on quality of work from within the legal.</p>	<p>Jul 16</p> <p>Jul – Sep 16</p> <p>Jul – Dec 16</p> <p>From Aug 16</p>	<p>DCOs</p> <p>HO LS</p>	<p>N/A</p>
10.6	Para 50 Rec 9	<p>10.6.1 Review and update the case management system used by Legal Department to ensure it is fit for purpose.</p>	<p>Nov 16</p>	<p>HO LS</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Priority Ten - Legal services (see appendix 1 page 47 for performance indicators)

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source	Bromley 2015/16	Target 16/17	Target 17/18
10a	Number of children currently in care proceedings	CafCass	MI Report	87	TBC	TBC
10b	Average number of weeks in care proceedings (per family)	CafCass	MI Report	36	26	26
10c	Number (and %) of Legal Planning Meetings not held within 5 working days	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
10d	Number (and %) where Legal Planning meeting is held and PLO has taken place within 15 days.	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
10e	Number (and %) of Public Law Outline meetings that have not taken place within 10 working days	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
10f	Number (and %) of Public Law Outline Cases that have lasted longer than 6 weeks without a decision to go to Care Proceedings	Quality	MI Report	New	TBC	TBC
10g	% and Number of legal cases audited as good/ outstanding	Quality	Audit	New	TBC	TBC
10h	CSC satisfaction level with Legal Department	Quality	Sample	New	TBC	TBC
10i	Legal department satisfaction level with CSC	Quality	Sample	New	TBC	TBC

Bromley Children's Social Care - Service Improvement Performance Measures (DRAFT)

General profile for children and young people in Bromley - numbers and volumes

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source of data	Accumulation of data	Bromley 2015/16	Bromley 2014/15	National Average 2014/15	Statistical Neighbours 2014/15
1	Number of Children in Need	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	prov 2,390	2,258	total: 391,000	2,699
2	Children in Need per 10,000 population	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	334.3	315.9	337.3	316.2
3	Number of children currently subject to a Child Protection Plan	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	224	220	total: 49,700	398
4	Children subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 population	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	31.3	30.8	42.9	41.7
5	Number of children currently Looked After	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	283	264	69,540	4,800
6	Children Looked After per 10,000 population	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	39.6	37.0	60	50

Priority Two Management Oversight and Quality Assurance

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source of data	Accumulation of data	Bromley 2015/16	Bromley 2014/15	Target 16/17	Target 17/18	National Average 2014/15	Statistical Neighbours 2014/15
7	Average FTE days lost to sickness (all social care staff)	Local	HR System	Snapshot			6		-	-
8	Average FTE days lost to sickness (qualified social workers)	Local	HR System	Snapshot			6		-	-
9	Current turnover rate of qualified social care staff	DfE	HR System	Snapshot	17.3%				16%	25.1%
10	Current vacancy rate (qualified social workers)	DfE	HR System	Snapshot	18.2%				17%	19.5%
11	Number (and%) of vacant posts covered by agency staff									

Prioity Four Safeguarding - Better Help and Protection

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source of data	Accumulation of data	Bromley 2015/16	Bromley 2014/15	Target 16/17	Target 17/18	National Average 2014/15	Statistical Neighbours 2014/15
12	Number and rate of Section 47 investigations commenced	DfE	CareFirst	In month	668 93.4	613 85.8			138.2	117.6
13	% of children with an up to date CIN plan	Local	TBC	TBC			100%	100%	-	-
14	% of Social Work assessments reviewed within 10 days	Local	CareFirst	In Month	85%	62%	85%	85%	-	-
15	% of Social Work assessments completed within 45 days	DfE	Carefirst	In month	81%	84%	81%	91%	81.5%	77.1%
16	% Referrals received within 12 months of a previous referral	DfE	CareFirst	Year to date	17.0%	18.4%	17%	17.0%	24%	22%
17	CIN Cases open for 2+years	DfE	CareFirst			35.4%	30%	27.3%	31.3%	34.8%
19	Number and rate of children who have had an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC)	DfE	CareFirst	In month	285 39.3	326 41.6			61.6	55.9
20	% of ICPCs held within 15 days of Section 47 investigation	DfE	CareFirst	In month	83%	67%	88.7%	88.7%	74.8%	75.3%
21	% ICPC not progressing to CP	Local	CareFirst	Year to date					-	-
22	% of CP Reviews held within timescale	DfE	CareFirst	Year to date	96%	97%	100%	100%	94%	92%
23	Number of children currently subject to a Child Protection Plan	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	224	220			total: 49,700	398
24	Number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for 2 years+	DfE	CareFirst	Snapshot	12 (5.4%)		2%		2.3%	4.9%
25	Number and % of children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	DfE	CareFirst	In month	50 (21%)	33 (13%)	17%	13%	16.6%	18.8%
26	Number of children ceasing to be subject to a Child Protection Plan	DfE	CareFirst	In month	291	218	Not applicable	Not applicable	-	-
27	Number and % of children ceasing to be subject to a Child Protection Plan who had been on a Plan continuously for 2 years+	DfE	CareFirst	In month	15 (6%)	3 (1%)	4%	3%	3.7%	5.3%

Prioirty Five Supporting Children Looked After

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source of data	Accumulation of data	Bromley 2015/16	Bromley 2014/15	Target 16/17	Target 17/18	National Average 2014/15	Statistical Neighbours 2014/15
28	% Children Looked After currently under Section 20	DfE	CareFirst	Snapshot	39%	37%	30%	20%	29%	35%
29	% of children looked after placed in:								-	-
	Foster Care	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	69%	73%	75%	75%	75%	75%
	Residential Settings	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	13%	12%	10%	10%	12%	11%
	Independent living	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	11%	8%	15%	15%	-	-
30	Number of initial enquiries from prospective foster carers	Ofsted	Team	In month	216	251	Not applicable	Not applicable	-	-
31	Number of newly approved foster carer households	Ofsted	Team	In month	4	13	22	22	-	-
32	Number of current LBB Foster Carer Households	Local	Team	Snapshot	123	134	Not applicable	Not applicable	-	-
33	% of Children Looked After who have been in 3 or more placements during the year	DfE	Carefirst	Year to Date	10%	11%	8.5%	8.5%	10%	11%

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source of data	Accumulation of data	Bromley 2015/16	Bromley 2014/15	Target 16/17	Target 17/18	National Average 2014/15	Statistical Neighbours 2014/15
34	% of Children Looked After under the age of 16 who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years and who have been in the same placement for at least 2 years	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	69%	68%	71%	71%	68%	66%
35	% Children Looked After visits held within timescales	Local	Carefirst	Year to date	91%	n/a	100%	100%	-	-
37	% Children Looked After and Care Leavers with an up to date Pathway Plan	Local	TBC	Year to date	78%	n/a	100%	100%	-	-
38	% of new Children Looked After with an Initial Care Plan completed within 20 working days becoming Looked After	Local	TBC	Year to date	45%	n/a	100%	100%	-	-
39	% Children Looked After Reviews held within timescale	Local	CareFirst	Year to date	88%	93%	100%	100%	-	-

Theme 6 - Care Leavers and Young People

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source of data	Accumulation of data	Bromley 2015/16	Bromley 2014/15	Target 16/17	Target 17/18	National Average 2014/15	Statistical Neighbours 2014/15
40	% Care Leavers (age 17-21) who are in touch	Local	Carefirst	Year to date on Birthday*	83.4%	n/a	85%	90%	-	-
41	% All Young People (16-17) in Education Employment or Training (EET)	DFE	CCIS	In month	92.4%	91.2%	TBC		-	-
42	% All Young People (16-18) Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET)	DFE	CCIS	In month	3.8%	4.4%	5%	5%	5.3%	-
43	% All Young People (16-18) whose education, training and employment status is Not Known.	DFE	CCIS	In month	6.4%	5.7%	8%	8%	7.1%	-
45	% Care Leavers (age 17-21) in Education Employment or Training (EET)	DfE	Carefirst	Year to date on Birthday*	44%	48%	50%	55%	48%	50%
46	% Care Leavers (age 18-21) in Higher Education	DfE	Carefirst	Year to date on Birthday*	n/a	5%	8%	8%	6%	7%
47	% Care Leavers (age 17-21) in suitable accommodation	DfE	Carefirst	Year to date on Birthday*	73%	75%	85%	95%	81%	83%
48	% of Children Looked After placed outside of Bromley and more than 20 miles from where they used to live (excluding UASC and placed for adoption)	DfE	Carefirst	Snapshot	20%	21%	15%	10%	13%	14%
49	% of Care Leavers that have been in B&B beyond the statutory time period of 2 working days	DfE	Team	Snapshot	N/A	N/A	0	0	-	-
50	% Children Looked After and Care Leavers with an up to date Pathway Plan	Local	Carefirst	Year to date	78%	n/a	100%	100%	-	-

Priorty Seven Adoption Services

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source of data	Accumulation of data	Bromley 2015/16	Bromley 2014/15	Target 16/17	Target 17/18	National Average 2014/15	Statistical Neighbours 2014/15
51	Number and % of children ceasing to be Looked After who were adopted	DfE	CareFirst	Snapshot	15 10.9%	20 13%			16%	15%
52	Number of initial enquiries from prospective adopters	Local	Team	In month	222	170	Not applicable	Not applicable	-	-
53	Number of newly approved adopters	ALB	Team	In month	11	17	15	20	2780	-
54	Number of currently approved Adopters	ALB	Team	Snapshot	13	13	Not applicable	Not applicable	-	-
55	The average time (days) between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (A1) (in year)	Local	CareFirst	Year to date	849	623			-	-
56	The average time (days) between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (A1) (3 year average)	Adoption Scorecard	CareFirst	Year to date	686	659	426	426	593	583
57	The average time (days) between a Local Authority receiving court authority to place a child and the Local Authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (in year)	Local	CareFirst	Year to date	212	290			-	-
58	The average time (days) between a Local Authority receiving court authority to place a child and the Local Authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (3 year average)	Adoption Scorecard	CareFirst	Year to date	260	252	121	121	223	212
59	Percentage of children who wait less than 15 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (3 year average)	Adoption Scorecard	CareFirst	Year to date	35.4% (15 months)	42% (16 months)	50%	50%	47%	50%

Priorty Ten Legal Services

No.	Indicator	Type of Indicator	Source of data	Accumulation of data	Bromley 2015/16	Bromley 2014/15	Target 16/17	Target 17/18	National Average 2014/15	Statistical Neighbours 2014/15
60	Number of children currently in care proceedings	Cafcass	Team	Snapshot	87	N/A	Not applicable	Not applicable		
61	Average number of weeks in care proceedings (per family)	Cafcass	Team	Year to Date	36	33	26	26	30	-

Appendix 2 - What this means for a Bromley Child

As part of the Children's Social Care Engagement Framework we will look at how the following methods could assist us in demonstrating that the actions within the improvement plan are making a difference. These include:

- General satisfaction feedback forms for both children and young people;
- Child Protection Conference evaluation forms for both children and young people;
- Children Looked After Review evaluation forms for both children and young people;
- Learning from complaints;

In addition to these we will also work with the Living in Care Council (LinCC) to find the best ways of measuring that the improvement actions are making things better. We will ask the members of the LinCC whether the following statements work

Children who need help and protection

The child's wellbeing will be improved by the early intervention of appropriate services and support and alternative arrangements put in place where the identified change has not been made in the time identified. Welfare is promoted and immediate or planned action is taken to safeguard the child and make alternative arrangements where it is not possible for them to remain in the family.

e.g. "I know that if someone tells children's social care they think I am at risk of being hurt, they will listen to that person and if they need more information, they will ask for it, and if there is a risk, they will give my case to a social worker to find out what is going on and to make sure I am safe. My social worker will make sure that they check regularly to see if things are improving and I can tell them how I feel and if I think things are worse or better".

"My social worker speaks to all of the family, and listens to what they say. Together we work out a plan to support my family to look after me and keep me safe".

"I know why I am in care and understand my family background."

Children looked after and achieving permanence

Children and young people live in a placement that is appropriate to their needs and promotes a sense of belonging enabling them to be exposed to a range of experiences that contribute to a positive childhood and where these experiences match those of their peers as much as is possible.

e.g. "When it is not safe for me to be with my family my social worker listens to my views, and finds a safe place for me to stay as close as possible to Bromley so that I am not isolated from my friends, family and school. I know that when I see my family at Contact I will be safe because the staff will know about me and my family and be prepared for and supportive in the session".

Adoption performance

Children will be placed in stable homes with loving carers and have their needs met in a timely way and have good outcomes.

e.g. "If I cannot live at home I know I will be looked after by someone else as a permanent part of the family where I will be loved and cared for."

Experiences and progress of care leavers

Young people making the transition to adulthood are able to do so in a safe and supported way and have access to a range of services that encourage and facilitate a route to sustainable employment and equips them to function successfully as adults.

e.g. "As a young person leaving care I am prepared for adulthood, I can look after myself physically and practically and have been supported to find a good place to live. I have been encouraged and supported to achieve my potential in terms of education and have found employment. I feel ready for the rest of my life".