

INTERNAL AUDIT FINAL REPORT

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW OF THE TROUBLED FAMILIES CLAIM FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2020 TO 31 MARCH 2021

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Prepared by: Trainee Auditor

Reviewed by: Principal Auditor

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INTRODUCTION

1. This report sets out the results of our audit testing of a sample of individual claims for the claim period between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021.
2. We have agreed with the Early Intervention Team that checks on a sample of individual claims will be carried out every six months, in September and March of each financial year. These compliance checks seek to confirm that the sample of individual claims to be submitted at the end of those periods meet the employment or significant and sustained progress criteria, enabling a claim to be made.
3. The Financial Framework for the Troubled Families Programme issued in January 2018 by the Department for Communities and Local Government (now the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) sets out the 'Principles for Internal Audit'. Following these principles, we selected a sample of 10% of claims submitted for the six-month period ended 31 March 2021. This was to ensure continuity of testing from the previous claim period.

METHODOLOGY

4. There were 215 individual claims closed between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021 and our sample for checking consisted of 22 claims. The claims in our sample were where the Early Intervention Team considered that the national and/or local criteria as set out in the London Borough of Bromley's Outcome Plan had been met and significant and sustained progress had been made, resulting in the family no longer being attached to the programme.

AUDIT OPINION
The evidence seen by Internal Audit demonstrates that the grant claim conditions have been met

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

5. Our review of these claims found that each one in our sample for testing met the relevant criteria for a claim to be made.
6. We also checked to confirm that the families in our sample had not been claimed for previously and we identified a claim which had been submitted before, in September 2019. This was notified to the Intelligence & Operations Lead, who removed the claim from the list and added another claim which had been closed and set aside to be claimed for in the next reporting

period. Therefore, the total number of individual claims submitted to MHCLG between the period 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021 remained at 215.

7. Our previous audit work has confirmed that the Early Intervention Team have arrangements in place to identify any claims which have been made previously, prior to submission. On this occasion however, the incorrect submission resulted from a human error. At our request, they have completed further checks on the batch of claims submitted. They found no evidence of any further duplicate claims, are confident that they have robust systems in place and will continue to be vigilant going forward.
8. With effect from 1 April 2021, the Troubled Families Programme (now renamed as the Supporting Families Programme) allows for 're-claiming' if certain requirements are met. Families must not have been claimed for within the last two years and must have been in active receipt of services since April 2020.
9. We verified that the total amount claimed for payment by results for the 215 individual claims submitted between the period 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021 was £172,000. As a result of our testing there are no recommendations arising from this review.
10. Finally, we would like to thank everyone contacted during this review for their help and co-operation.