

**Title:** Update Report – Children’s Services  
**Wards Affected:** All Wards  
**To:** Health and Wellbeing Board **On:** 23 May 2013  
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## 1. Achievements since last meeting

- 1.1 Ofsted carried out an inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children from the 25<sup>th</sup> February to 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013. The Inspection was unannounced and considered the key aspects of a child’s journey through the child protection system, focussing on;
- The experiences of children and young people and effectiveness of the help and protection that they are offered
  - The effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements for identifying children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer harm from abuse or neglect
  - The provision of early help and the effectiveness of the Local Authority and their partners in protecting children if the risk remains or intensifies.
- 1.2 The Inspection team consisted of 6 Inspectors and they considered over 100 cases during the Inspection
- 1.3 The overall effectiveness of the arrangements to protect children was judged to be adequate and in the cases they looked at ‘no children and young people were inadequately protected or at risk of significant harm’. There are three key judgements made and the outcomes for each one indicated:

|                               |          |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Quality of Practice           | Adequate |
| Effectiveness of help/Support | Adequate |
| Governance and Leadership     | Adequate |

- 1.4 It may seem curious to celebrate an “adequate” judgement but two key factors influence this. Firstly, Ofsted have raised the bar on their inspection process whereby up to a third of authorities recently inspected have now become inadequate and only three out of over 50 have received a “good” judgement (with none going outstanding).

The second factor is a reflection on the journey that we have been on to turn the service around in a relatively short space of time.

## **2. Challenges for the next three months**

- 2.1 Children's Services has had a short celebration as a result of the inspection judgement and a slightly longer opportunity to reflect on the past journey of improvement and the essential changes that now need to be made to secure the continuous improvement process.
- 2.2 It is anticipated that the Department for Education will now withdraw the requirement for a Children's Improvement Board and will look to Torbay to put in place formal arrangements to ensure the continuation of our improvement programme. They will put in place transition arrangements for a further six months before formally moving Torbay out of intervention. These arrangements have yet to be confirmed in writing with the Department for Education.
- 2.3 The responsibility for the continued improvements in child protection services from a partnership perspective sits with the HWBB. The Board, therefore, needs to formally note the attached inspection report and act on the areas for improvement. To achieve this it should set up a small Executive sub group of senior officers who will report back to the HWBB on progress. The group should also take on responsibility for the wider improvement process as contained within the Children's Partnership Improvement Programme.
- 2.4 The HWBB will also need to formally set up a relationship with the LSCB as detailed in the subsequent report on this agenda. The LSCB will provide the partnership scrutiny to improvements and formally report on progress to the HWBB

## **3. Action required by partners**

- 3.1 That the Ofsted Inspection report be noted.
- 3.2 That a Partnership Executive be established as a sub-group of the Board:
- to ensure continued improvements in child protection services and to act on the areas for improvement identified within the Ofsted report;

and that the membership of the Executive be:

Director of Children's Services  
Executive Head - Safeguarding and Wellbeing (Torbay Council)  
Representative of Devon and Cornwall Police  
Director of Nursing and Professional Practice – Torbay and South Devon Health and Care NHS Trust  
Head of Quality Governance – Southern Devon and Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group  
Headteacher representative – nominated by Torbay Association of Secondary Heads

- 3.3 That the protocol arrangements with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, as recommended in the accompanying report, be agreed.
- 3.4 That the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board together with the Chairman of the existing Children's Improvement Board formally respond to the Department for Education detailing these arrangements.

**Background Papers:**

The following documents/files were used to compile this report:

**Ofsted Final Report**