

2 April 2014

MEETING

**EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES
SCRUTINY PANEL**

(Councillors Sohal (Chair), Abe, Brooker, Carter, Davis,
O'Connor, Hussain, Malik and Matlob)

Education Voting Co-opted Members

Oxford Diocese Representative (Vacant)
Northampton Diocese Representative (Vacant)
Parent Governor Representative (Vacant)

Education Non-Voting Co-opted Members

Lynda Bussley (Primary School Teacher
Representative)
Head Teacher Representative (Vacant)
Secondary School Representative (Vacant)

DATE AND TIME:

THURSDAY, 10TH APRIL, 2014 AT 6.30 PM

VENUE:

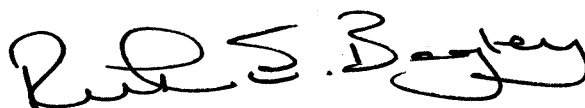
MEETING ROOM 3, CHALVEY COMMUNITY CENTRE,
THE GREEN, CHALVEY, SLOUGH, SL1 2SP

**SCRUTINY OFFICER:
(for all enquiries)**

SARAH FORSYTH
01753 875657

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



RUTH BAGLEY
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART 1

Apologies for absence

CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

1. **Declaration of Interest**

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary or other Pecuniary or non pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Section 3 paragraphs 3.25 – 3.27 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 3.28 of the Code.

The Chair will ask Members to confirm that they do not have a declarable interest.

All Members making a declaration will be required to complete a Declaration of Interests at Meetings form detailing the nature of their interest.

2. **Minutes of the meetings held on 19 February and 10 April 2014** 1 - 10

SCRUTINY ISSUES

3. **Member Questions**

(An opportunity for Panel Members to ask questions of the relevant Director/ Assistant Director, relating to pertinent, topical issues affecting their Directorate – maximum of 10 minutes allocated).

4. Slough Local Safeguarding Children Board - Ofsted Report 11 - 20

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

5. **Attendance Record** 21 - 22
6. **Date of Next Meeting - 15 July 2014**

Press and Public

You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before the Committee considers any items in the Part II agenda. Special facilities may be made available for disabled or non-English speaking persons. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer shown above for further details.

Minicom Number for the hard of hearing – (01753) 875030

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Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Wednesday, 19th February, 2014.

Present:- Councillors Sohal (Chair), Abe (Vice-Chair), Brooker, Carter, Davis, Malik and Matloob

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors P K Mann, Plimmer, Smith and Strutton

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors O'Connor and Hussain and O'Connor. Lynda Bussley

PART 1

43. Declarations of Interest

None.

44. Ofsted Inspection Findings

The Panel considered the report of Ofsted on its Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers, which was carried out from 19th November to 11th December 2013. The overall judgement was inadequate, with the findings for individual services as follows:

Children who need help and protection	Inadequate
Children looked after and achieving permanence	Inadequate
• Adoption performance	Requires improvement
• Experiences and progress of care leavers	Inadequate
Leadership, management and governance	Inadequate

In attendance were Councillor P K Mann, Commissioner for Education and Children, the Chief Executive, the Strategic Director of Wellbeing and the Assistant Director – Children Young People and Families, to answer questions from members. The Chief Executive began by expressing regret that the Council should find itself in this position and disappointment that the report was more harsh in tone than officers had been led to believe from face to face feedback from the Ofsted inspectors, albeit that the overall judgement was not a great surprise. Whilst it was recognised that it remained a big challenge for Slough to achieve services for children and young people that could be judged good, it was disappointing that the report had not taken account of a number of improvements that were in the process of implementation at the time of the inspection, and that the section on adoption and looked after children was not as positive as suggested by the evidence available. All efforts would be made to focus on the priority and immediate action and other areas for improvement as set out in the inspection report.

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 19.02.14

Members received answers to questions and clarification of points of detail in the report as follows.

Children who need help and protection

The Council had established good working relationships with its partner agencies, for instance, effective liaison with the Safeguarding Board around early help and protection issues and a very worthwhile collaborative approach between the Council and the Bucks Healthcare Trust. The key findings of the Ofsted report had been shared with partners as it affected them and it was recognised that further work with partners was still required, for example, in relation to referrals from the police involving domestic violence, the quality of information passed on about the type, nature and seriousness of the case could be improved. The Panel noted that the criteria in place during the last inspection were different and more exacting than those applied during the 2011 inspection. As a result of previous work to implement improvements, the number of children assessed as being formally in need of a specialist children's service had increased substantially (to a level more in line with what would be expected in a Borough such as Slough) and the resources required to deal with this had increased.

Looked after children

The Panel noted that the vast majority of looked after children were placed in foster care. Some were in residential children's homes and while others were with parents in their own homes where special regular monitoring arrangements were in place. It was noted that the Council was looking to increase the base of foster parents in Slough and within a radius of 20 miles, but given the small size of Borough it was inevitable that not all children could be placed in the town. Attendance at school by looked after children was generally in line with the national average but it was accepted that this needed to be improved and work with schools about this was ongoing. Discussions were taking place with Cambridge Education about how schools distant from Slough managed the Council's looked after children. The Council had applied an additional £800k to the looked after children budget in the last financial year and additional sums had been applied throughout the current year to ensure all placements were funded. An increased base budget had been approved for 2014/15.

Adoption performance

The report had recognised a number of strengths in the Council's record on adoption. It was noted that of 99 children found permanent homes over the last two years, 54 had been adopted with the remainder placed in long term fostering care. Steps had now been taken to reduce the time lag on the approval process for adoptions.

Care Leavers

It was recognised that more work was needed on the support of care leavers – arrangements were in hand to design a "pledge" to make to care leavers in relation to key issues about their housing, support and education/employment. Along with the other authorities in Berkshire, the Council was a participant in 'city deal', a scheme with Aspire which increased the opportunities for

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 19.02.14

assisting vulnerable young people into skills training or work, and there was scope to target better results on this. The Council had been criticised for failure to look at things from the child's perspective and part of the answer to this lay in further development of the Council's corporate parenting role.

Leadership , management and governance

In relation to a workforce strategy, a whole range of improvements had been taking place over the last year which were beginning to show results as the inspection was taking place. A lot of work had been done around increasing the numbers of permanently employed, qualified and experienced social work staff, as well as creating more longer term temps, which had great benefits for continuity of care and support provided. An open (and ongoing) recruitment drive had been mounted against a background of a national shortage of social workers and strong competition from other authorities to attract staff. Recruitment and retention measures had been improved, and a three year development programme for newly qualified social workers had been introduced. Increased funding had enabled a 37% increase in staff numbers, with a protected caseload for newly qualified staff (average now down to 18 cases). It was considered the right management structure was in position to deliver a sustainable improvement in performance. The accommodation works being carried out at St Martin's Place would provide more areas suitable for confidential discussions between managers, staff, clients as well as a new reception area for children and families. However, from the 7th February an immediate improvement had been implemented through grouping social work staff together on one floor (compared to two previously) with adequate space for the increased workforce.

The Panel noted the improvements in hand would assist in addressing many of the issues raised in the Ofsted report, but renewed attention would be given the priority and immediate actions identified. The Chair thanked the officers for attending the meeting and answering questions from the Panel.

Resolved -

- 1) that the report and additional action proposed be noted;
- 2) to receive regular reports of progress, with an updated action plan showing a timeframe for actions to be implemented and outcomes achieved; and
- 3) that a workshop/seminar for the Panel on what 'good' would look like will be held in the new municipal year.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 9.00 pm)

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Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Wednesday, 12th March, 2014.

Present: Councillors Sohal (Chair), Abe (Vice-Chair), Brooker, Carter, Davis, O'Connor, Hussain, Malik and Matloob

Education Non-Voting Co-opted Members: Lynda Bussley (Primary School Teacher Co-optee) – from 6.45 p.m.

PART 1

45. Declaration of Interest

Councillor Brooker declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 3 (Members Questions) as the question submitted concerned Burnham Park Academy which his daughter attended.

46. Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 January 2014

The minutes of the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel meeting on the 30 January 2014 were approved as a correct record.

47. Member Questions

Councillor Brooker submitted the following question:

“Given that in 2012 373 Slough children attended Burnham Upper in 2012, it is of great concern that in 2013 no one low achieving pupil in Burnham Park Academy got 5 GCSEs. In the latest OFSTED report the school was judged to be in need of improvement in nearly all aspects. It is of great concern that this report states that pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium are not making as much progress as they should. Is it possible to find out what is being done to improve this sorry state of affairs?”

Julian King-Harris, Head of School Improvement at Cambridge Education, responded to the submitted question, with the Panel considering the following points:

- Burnham Park Academy had 15 children in the low achieving category, a small number compared with other schools such as Beechwood with 28 or Wexham with 48. In comparing the achievement rates across this cohort with other schools, Burnham Park Academy, in percentage terms, is in proportion with the general levels of achievement.
- Schools are required to publish how much they receive in Pupil Premiums and what this funding is used for and the impact it has had. OFSTED had been focusing on this aspect of school spending, which gave the council an opportunity to encourage greater targeting of this resource where the impact would be more focused on the students in question.

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 12.03.14

- Pupil Premium students were not the same as low achievement students, although some may fall into both categories. The Pupil Premium related to children eligible for Free School Meals. Across Slough 25% of Pupil Premium students achieved five GCSEs A*-C.
- Whilst Slough Borough Council did not have jurisdiction, it was able to approach the Academy about its use of the Pupil Premium and the work being done to improve attainment amongst its low achievement cohort, but cannot compel the school to respond.

Resolved – to note the response.

48. Churchmead School - Update on Improvement

Chris Tomes (Headteacher, Churchmead School) and Simon Evry (Royal Borough Windsor and Maidenhead) summarised the key elements of the improvements made at Churchmead School since OFSTED found it to be inadequate in November 2012.

The Panel noted the following comments:

- That rapid and sustained progress had been made, and recognised by OFSTED who moved the school out of special measures, with a rating of 'requires improvement', in December 2013.
- That the GCSE results in the summer 2013 had shown improvement on previous years.
- That the school aspired to be outstanding.

The Panel discussed the following points:

- that there had not been a large turnover of staff at the school, and that therefore the improvements in the quality of teaching had been done with existing staff through a change in culture;
- that the new Headteacher had had a profound impact demonstrated by the rapid improvement at the school, bringing a strategic focus to improvement, teaching and learning; creating a calm, focused and dynamic environment;
- that the school had opened new science labs in the summer 2013, and had just received confirmation of a grant to further improve facilities at the site;
- that consideration of moving to academy status, which had been on hold, would now be explored as part of the ambitious plans for the school going forward. Such a move would provide an opportunity to draw a line under the historical reputation of the school, rebranding it for the future. The Panel particularly discussed the impact of such a move on admissions policies and the importance of Churchmead to Slough's ability to provide sufficient numbers of school places;
- that the school had set a target of 50% A*-C for this year's GCSE cohort, and a range of interventions were in place to support achievement of this. In particular, the recent disruption at the school due to the flooding, had been minimised by working with East Berkshire College, who had provided facilities for Year 11. In addition

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 12.03.14

to this, the schools had looked to identify students at risk of under-achieving, putting in place strategies to improve their standards through specialised, focused revision;

- that the school was working to mobilise parents, and the Parent Forum had been successful in engaging them in the vision for the school with the aim of regaining the confidence of the local community;
- that the school recognised the historical problems with achievement in science, but that results were improving. Science, along with maths and engineering, were a key focus; and the school would be interested in developing a stronger relationship with local businesses, such as those based on the Trading Estate;
- that the school would also be focusing on improving reading age issues, with a particular emphasis on students engaging in active reading;
- that the attendance record at the school had just tipped up over the threshold that OFSTED would consider to be a 'good' rating; and
- that consideration was being given to establishing a shadow Board of Governors, but that the Interim Executive Board had been doing a very good job, with a small focused, dynamic group driving the improvement agenda.

The Panel congratulated Chris Tomes and Simon Evry on the improvements made at Churchmead and thanked them for their time.

Resolved – to continue to monitor progress at Churchmead School, and bring the discussion back to the Panel should the next OFSTED inspection raises any further issues.

49. **Assessment and Examination Results for 2012-13**

Robin Crofts (Lead for Education, Cambridge Education) and Julian King-Harris (Head of School Improvement) introduced the report and stressed the focus of the borough's schools on improvement, particularly in relation to raising the aspirations and achievements of vulnerable groups.

The Panel discussed:

- the need to celebrate the success of Slough's students in 2013, with a rise of 5.3% in attainment at Key Stage 4, bring Slough up to 7th in the country out of 152 local authorities for results;
- that at Key Stage 2, Free School Meal (FSM) students were achieving around the national average, and significantly higher than the national average at Key Stage 4. However, there was still a distance to go in terms of closing the gap when compared with non-FSM students;
- the need to ensure that the Pupil Premium funding was spent in a focused way to benefit effectively the individual it is attached to, and discourage schools spending it on more broad provision. It was felt this would then drive closing the gap;
- that the council closely monitors the areas of scrutiny from OFSTED, and that looking at the quality of teaching included close review of the accuracy of assessments of need;

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 12.03.14

- that individual schools assess what curriculum they enter their students for, which can distort the entry figures for such subjects as GCSE science;
- the need to improve the offer to teachers, and encourage them to come to, and stay in, Slough. The Panel received additional information from Lynda Bussley providing a summary of the key findings from the Department for Education Workload Survey 2013, with working conditions and pay being a serious barrier to staff recruitment and retention nationally. The Panel suggested that there might be cross-service learning from the work stream in Children's Services looking at the recruitment and retention of social workers; as well as work to bring the schools together in a collective recruitment programme to market Slough on a bigger scale; the council should also consider the effectiveness of key worker housing at retaining staff.

Resolved – to congratulate the borough's schools' and students' excellent results in 2013.

50. Community Learning and Skills - Review of 2012/13 Performance and Development

Philip Wright (Head of Community Learning and Skills) introduced the report setting out the progress made in the development of a shared community learning and skills service with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

The Panel discussed:

- the importance of partner engagement, and the excellent relationships that had been developed across the two boroughs with providers of this service;
- the need to increase the number of apprentices employed by Slough Borough Council or through its sub-contractors to set the right example to other employers in the borough. The apprenticeships should not just be in business administration but provide broader opportunities for trade skills and other key growing sectors; and
- that the City Deal would provide additional impetus to the ASPIRE programme, with a focus on apprenticeships for NEETs.

RECOMMENDED – that the Cabinet commission a piece of work to investigate the options for increasing the number of apprentices employed by the council and/or its sub-contractors and report back to the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel on proposals in six months.

51. Forward Work Programme

Resolved – to note the current work programme.

52. Attendance Record

Resolved – to note the attendance record for the current municipal year.

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - 12.03.14

53. Date of Next Meeting - 10 April 2014

Resolved – that the Panel's final meeting of the municipal year would be held on the 10 April 2014.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.33 pm and closed at 9.00 pm)

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SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 10 April 2014

CONTACT: Sarah Forsyth (Scrutiny Officer)
For all enquiries: (01753) 875657

WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Councillor P Mann (Commissioner for Education and Children)

PART I
FOR SCRUTINY

OFSTED INSPECTION – REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

1. **Purpose of Report**

To provide the Panel with information relating to the recent Ofsted inspection into the effectiveness of the Slough Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB).

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

That the Panel:

- a) review the findings of the Ofsted inspection in relation to the Slough Local Safeguarding Children Board; and
- b) scrutinise the plans being developed to put in place the required improvements.

3. **Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Health and Well-Being

- By identifying and prioritising services for vulnerable groups in the Slough population and by targeting support to meet the needs of children and young people.
- Through focussing on the needs of the most vulnerable children and young people and their parents and carers in Slough, and providing targeted services through partnership working primarily with the NHS to secure measurable health improvements

Safer Communities

- By offering effective support to families to help them do their best for their children so that children and young people are safe in their families and communities.
- By recognising that parents are the main carers for their children, and by offering services that enable them to continue to care for their children successfully so that children can grow up within their own families and communities wherever possible.
- By carrying out respective roles across the local authority and partner agencies to ensure that the most vulnerable children in our community are protected from harm and they are enabled to live with their families.
- By carrying out our statutory role as a local authority to provide services for children in need, to safeguard them and look after children whose parents are unable to do so.
- By working effectively with partner agencies so that they also contribute to safeguarding children and young people and demonstrate improved outcomes for those children and young people and their families.
- By ensuring that children and young people who are looked after have the standards of care and life opportunities that we would want for our own children with contributions from all partner agencies.

Economy and Skills

- By offering early education and family support to parents of young children so that they can focus on meeting their children's needs and overcoming personal and family difficulties that affect their ability to care for their children.
- By promoting educational achievement which gives children and young people in care and leaving care enjoyment in learning and increased opportunities for success in adult life.
- By maintaining high levels of Education, Employment and Training (EET) for young people who are looked after beyond 16 years of age.
- By promoting vulnerable young people's social and emotional development alongside advances in educational achievement.

4. Other Implications

a) Financial

The SLSCB pooled budget comprises contributions from partner agencies, and is used to carry out the SLSCB Business Plan and associated work.

Slough Borough Council's budgets for Early Intervention, Safeguarding and Children Looked After also include the provision of services for children and young people who have been trafficked and exploited.

b) Risk Management

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Risk/Threat/Opportunity</u>	<u>Mitigation</u>
Further multi-agency work needs to be carried out through the SLSCB to ensure all partners in Slough are aware of the risk to children who might be trafficked and/or exploited; are able to identify signs of that, and report it appropriately.	Children and young people who are not recognised as trafficked or exploited continue to be at risk of serious significant harm.	All partners working to SLSCB Business Plan requirements to recognise children and young people in this group; draw up and implement the Action Plan on Child Sexual Exploitation required by DfE.
Ensure that the SLSCB Business Plan and the operational work of partners fulfil Ofsted grade criteria for 'good'/'outstanding'.	Ofsted will be including child trafficking and exploitation in future unannounced inspections of safeguarding and looked after children and assessing the impact of multi-agency services in prevention and protection.	Use the clear, written multi-agency approach in the Berkshire Child Protection Procedures to ensure consistency of practice.

c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no human rights or legal implications arising from this report.

d) Equalities Impact Assessment

An equalities impact assessment is not required in relation to this report.

5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 Ofsted undertook an inspection of the SLSCB from the 19 November to the 11 December 2013, alongside its inspection of Slough Borough Council's services for children in need of help and protection, children look after and Care Leavers. The latter inspection was the subject of scrutiny at the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel on the 19 February 2014.
- 5.2 The portion of the final Ofsted report relating to the inspection of the SLSCB is attached as Appendix A.
- 5.3 The Independent Chair of the SLSCB will provide a response to the findings by Ofsted at the meeting, along with outlining the SLSCB's proposed plan of action for putting in place the required improvements.

6 **Conclusion**

The Ofsted inspection found that the SLSCB was unable to demonstrate that it had effective arrangements in place, and the required skills, to discharge its statutory duties.

7 **Background Papers**

- 1 - Ofsted report on the announced inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services June 2011
- 2 - Ofsted report on the inspection of Adoption Services April 2012
- 3 - Ofsted report on the inspection of Fostering Services June 2012

Section 2: The effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board

The effectiveness of the LSCB is inadequate

Priority and immediate action

- Ensure all partner agencies are engaged in the delivery of the early help strategy that children and families have equal access to the services they need as early as possible.
- Ensure that agencies take full responsibility for their roles as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department for Education 2013) and that they commit to multi-agency strategies and working groups, including sharing responsibility and resources where necessary.

Areas for improvement

- Include an evaluation of the effectiveness of arrangements for children who are missing from home and education in the LSCB annual report. This information should be accompanied by an overview of private fostering in order to help make decisions and plan service improvements.
- Complete and implement a pathway for young people at risk of sexual exploitation, which clearly outlines multi-agency responses and interventions, setting out how risk will be continually reviewed on individual cases.
- Improve auditing activity and focus on evaluating the quality of interventions in order to draw the key lessons for improving management decision-making and oversight on cases.
- Ensure operational staff are included in multi-agency audits to provide the required expertise to ensure rigorous scrutiny. Individual agencies must own the findings of audits and use this information effectively to promote improvement.

Key strengths and weaknesses of the LSCB

- The LSCB has made clear improvements in the last year from a low starting point. This is particularly the case in the scope of its scrutiny and analysis activities. It is well placed to drive improvements, but as yet there is too little evidence of significant impact in key areas of child protection and early help.
- Accountabilities between the Independent Chair of the LSCB, the DCS and the Council's Chief Executive are clearly defined. There are formal and informal arrangements in place to ensure dialogue and challenge.
- Not all key partners are making a full and active contribution to improving the delivery of early help services for children and young people. This inconsistent performance is causing needs to go unmet. Children and families living in the diverse communities of Slough do not have equality of access to support services; their needs are not comprehensively met as early as they should be in order to prevent children's situations deteriorating and avoid children's social care

involvement. Whilst partnership work is becoming more effective in some areas, increasing the impact of its challenge to partner agencies, so that they cooperate fully in the improvement of early help, is the single most important area for the board to develop.

- Although the LSCB has appropriately challenged poor attendance and variation in different agencies' contributions, this has not been effective in securing improvement in important areas of work. For example, there remains a need to secure the routine involvement of the police at critical stages of the child protection process in order to complete risk assessments at initial child protection conferences.
- The LSCB has conducted audits of agencies' compliance with requirements in statutory guidance. However, not all partner agencies have complied fully with the audit process. The panel coordinating audits has been poorly attended and has only recently produced an action plan drive improvement.
- While the LSCB now considers and evaluates a good range of performance information from the partner agencies, its use in quality assurance remains under-developed. It has only recently commenced multi-agency case audits and this is not yet leading to consistent discernible improvements.
- The LSCB has clearly identified priorities which have been informed by local needs and the performance data provided by both the partner agencies and the Local Authority. However, although the data for missing children is detailed, there has not been sufficient oversight and reporting by the LSCB to determine the effectiveness of arrangements for missing children.
- The LSCB has taken effective action to address some of the shortfalls and weaknesses in the Board's operation which were identified at the last inspection. For example, it has identified key priorities with all strategic partnership boards across the area and taken decisive action to bring about improvements. However, progress in the key areas of children's services remains in the early stages.
- The LSCB has clearly identified priorities in the current business plan and regularly reviews its progress. The Executive Board scrutinises these decisions and actions. The LSCB has brought a clear focus to shaping strategy, policy and practice across the partnership; it has revised thresholds and engaged with children and families to improve their involvement and participation across services in regards to domestic violence, child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child trafficking. However, progress on priorities in the LSCB business plan is variable. For example, while the LSCB has been effective in raising awareness of CSE, with a corresponding increase in referrals, it has yet to complete work on a pathway to ensure a safe and consistent response to it. Support for male victims of CSE is not clearly defined and initiatives to tackle and understand the level of need to support victims of female genital mutilation are at a very early stage.
- The LSCB has been instrumental in ensuring the appointment of a strategic lead for domestic violence. This post is now operational and leads on coordinating both the strategy and delivery of services.

- Learning from serious case reviews is well established and suitably incorporates lessons from both local and national issues and relevant research. The learning and impact on practice is evaluated through audit activity and, where this is a local serious case review, the board effectively monitors progress. For example, it has tracked and audited progress by health agencies in implementing the recommendations of a 2011 serious case review.
- Slough LSCB is led by an Independent Chair, appointed in March 2012, who has ensured that the work of the LSCB meets statutory requirements as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department for Education 2013). The membership of the board now meets requirements following the appointment of two lay members. Although the LSCB has received an annual report on private fostering and subsequently identified actions, this has not been reported on in the LSCB annual report.
- Partners make appropriate financial contributions to support the business of the LSCB and the members of the board are at a sufficiently senior level to influence change in partner agencies. However, in practice there are shortfalls in sharing responsibilities, with some partners not attending meetings or reluctant to take responsibility for appropriate areas of work which increases the responsibility on the Local Authority.
- The LSCB ensures policies, procedures and the threshold for access to services are fit for purpose, kept under review and regularly updated to reflect statutory responsibilities and changes. However, although arrangements are in place to disseminate key points of information across the partnership, the threshold for access to service is not yet embedded.
- The workforce across the partnership is receiving appropriate safeguarding training. A well-defined learning and development strategy supports agencies to identify and address the safeguarding training needs of their workforce on a single and inter-agency basis. The LSCB has funded multi-agency early help training in the last two years. There are good quality assurance arrangements for the delivery of multi-agency training. However, arrangements to evaluate its impact on practice are less developed.
- Although in the early stages, good progress has been made to establish reflective forums for the multi-agency audit of cases. However, operational staff are not yet fully involved in learning from this experience. Some good examples of audits have identified multi-agency learning points, which have led to improved communication. However, in general, audits remain under-developed and overly focused on process; they do not evaluate sufficiently the quality of interventions. Opportunities to identify learning at key points, particularly in cases relevant to the role of line managers, are not included in audit outcomes.

What the inspection judgments mean: the LSCB

An **outstanding** LSCB is highly influential in improving the care and protection of children. Their evaluation of performance is exceptional and helps the local authority and its partners to understand the difference that services make and where they need to improve. The LSCB creates and fosters an effective learning culture.

An LSCB that is **good** coordinates the activity of statutory partners and monitors the effectiveness of local arrangements. Multi-agency training in the protection and care of children is effective and evaluated regularly for impact. The LSCB provides robust and rigorous evaluation and analysis of local performance that identifies areas for improvement and influences the planning and delivery of high-quality services.

An LSCB **requires improvement** if it does not yet demonstrate the characteristics of good.

An LSCB that is **inadequate** does not demonstrate that it has effective arrangements in place and the required skills to discharge its statutory functions. It does not understand the experiences of children and young people locally and fails to identify where improvements can be made.

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MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE RECORD
EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL 2013-14

COUNCILLOR	MEETING DATES							
	01/07/2013	10/10/2013	05/12/2013	30/01/2014	19/02/2014	12/03/2014	16/04/2014	
Abe	P	Ap	P	Ab	P*	P		
Brooker	P	P	P	P	P*	P		
Carter	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Davis	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Hussain	Ap	Ap	P*	P*	Ap	P		
Malik	P	P	P	P	P*	P		
Matloob	P	P*	P*	P*	P	P		
O'Connor	P	P	P	Ap	Ap	P		
Sohal	P	P	Ap	P	P	P		

P = Present for whole meeting P* = Present for part of meeting
 Ap = Apologies given Ab = Absent; no apologies given

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