Lessons from the inspected
Welcome

Steve Crocker,
Chair, Standards, Performance & Inspection Policy Committee and Director of Children’s Services, Hampshire County Council and Isle of Wight Council
Lucy Butler

Director of Children, Education and Families, Oxfordshire County Council
January 2018 and Lisa Pascoe is addressing a conference about the new Ofsted Inspection framework

Preparation is everything – Ofsted preparation process and team in place for several months

Because we are a ‘Good’ Authority, we were told we would get a short one week inspection – in reality, it’s two weeks

‘No room for showcasing, just an honest appraisal of what is working well’
From Barcelona to Oxford…

You get the phone call Monday morning – be prepared, this is one part of the inspection that is not short…..

If you’re away from the office (Barcelona, for example) – work out how to get back quick!

The inspection starts immediately – Week 1 has a big impact on the outcome and is very intense for senior managers.
Week One (1)

Intense - taking phone calls from the Lead Inspector on Key Lines Of Enquiry (KLOE)

Senior Leadership Team heavily involved – lengthy phone calls on specific & detailed areas

Additional information was requested on a daily basis

Adoption being a particular focus
Ofsted used the first week to interview us to test out KLOE

Ofsted quoted data back at us - they obviously had this in front of them – including details of case holders

They did allow us time and they were willing to accept further clarification

The off-site week felt very different compared to the last inspection. It also felt different in intensity & in the sophistication of the data analysis Ofsted provided
**Week Two (1)**

Once the team arrived on-site, the intensity increased significantly

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Day 1 – Lunchtime set-up meeting with Leadership Team</th>
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Then Ofsted decided on the following timetable:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Day 2 – Visit to Looked After Children and Leaving Care Teams</th>
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<td>Day 3 – Visit to Child Protection Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day 4 – Visit to ‘Front Door’, MASH &amp; Assessment Teams</td>
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| Day 5 – Ofsted Team prepares its feedback and presents at lunchtime |
Week Two (2)

Day 1 - we talked through the presentation we used for the Annual Conversation - accurate Self-Evaluation essential

Able to highlight areas of improvement and actions being taken

We had a huge surge in activity since the last inspection – we needed to tell the story of why and our response to this - big part of context setting on Day 1

Responding to their KLOE (17 by this stage)
Week Two (3)

Days 2 – 4 - typical day would go like this:

• After the KIT meeting, Ofsted would spend a short amount of time with the Team Manager who gave context and strengths/weaknesses of the team
• Team of 4 inspectors spent time talking to every single social worker in the team
• Ofsted spent a long time (8.45am - 7.30pm) with front line staff, either talking directly with them or looking at their case files
• They also looked at case files from similar teams across the Authority
Week Two (4)

End of the day, Lead Inspector would call me.

Go through KLOE and headline feedback.

At first, the inspection felt very much focused on queries about what was wrong with the service rather than a balance of concerns.

The KIT meetings were robust and challenging but did give us a chance, as a Senior Management Team, to engage and to challenge back.

Social workers reported that they enjoyed spending time with the Inspectors and talking about their cases.

They found the inspection intense and working with the Inspectors, for such long hours, felt gruelling.
Felt a sea change on Day 3 where the inspection became much more collaborative

Reasons for getting all the negatives out on the table early so that they could be explored & tested and, where necessary, put to bed

Overall, it was a helpful approach but, at times, it felt bruising and anxiety-provoking

This is where you need to be prepared - demonstrate your understanding of the service (good Self-Evaluation, Performance Management Framework, Quality Assurance Framework)
In Summary…

- No less intensive than the previous inspections that we have grown to know and love
- More sophisticated and had a real focus on front line practice
- Authenticity of the approach is not in question and there really is nowhere to hide
- Personally, I felt it lost something by not focusing on partners, the LSCB or the wider environment we work in
- The inspectors met our CEO and Lead Member, more out of courtesy than enquiry
- Inspection team was well-informed and had the tools to get to know us and the journey that we’re on
- To get you through the intensity, I would recommend cake and wine, though not in front of Ofsted!
How well do we know our service?

March 2018 - **Our Self-Evaluation**
‘Good’ service with some areas for improvement…

April 2018 - **Ofsted ILACS**
‘Good’ service with some areas for improvement…
## ILACS April 2018
### Judgement Grades

**Overall effectiveness – Good**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families</th>
<th>The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection</th>
<th>The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Good</strong></td>
<td><strong>Requires Improvement to be Good</strong></td>
<td><strong>Good</strong></td>
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DELIVERING ILACS

What are your Quick Wins and Banana Skins?! 

Bernie Brown 
Assistant Director, Bolton Council
Are you ready?

- Fail to prepare …prepare to fail
- Check your CHAT data with your local performance reports-Any gaps?
- Inspection group?
- Clear TOR and actions
- Run annexe A weekly …culture of readiness
- Baseline review across three areas
Judgement areas

• Impact of Leaders on social work practice
• Experience and progress of children who need help and protection
• Experience and progress of children in care and care leavers
• Overall effectiveness
How well do you know yourself?

- Performance data – do you truly scrutinise?
- Is your narrative clear?
- Management oversight?
- Decision making?
- Caseloads
- Capacity and staffs view of this and impact
- Morale?
Practice

- Do you know your children?
- Missing
- CSE
- CME
- Virtual School
- CICC
- VOC.
Permanence

• Plan, plan, review plan
• Quality of Pre-proceedings and PLO
• Quality of matching decisions
• Obsession with transition to SGO – challenge
• Narrative on your approach to the array of permanence options
• SGO /Adoption – post order support.
Audit for Outcomes

• Are your audits outcome focused not compliance laden? So what?
• Do audits and performance reports go through leadership to CEX and politicians? So what?
• Do they know the accurate picture? So what?
• Do you have a clear and comprehensive narrative on what works well and an action plan for what doesn’t impact!?
Visible leadership

• Management briefings on vision for organisation and aspiration for children and families
• Shadowing of practice
• Performance challenge sessions – value of data
• Good practice examples- all staff
• Action plan with focused timescales – short medium and long term.
Consider and identify

- Single point of contact and support team
- Administration /Rooms – Your Timpson moment!
- Dry run
- Minute taker
- Pace /Impact on staff
- Calm measured reassuring and fun!
- Get everyone over the line!
Ofsted Focused Visit – Solihull

Sally Hodges
Director of Children’s Services and Skills
Lessons Learnt

• Know what your strengths are and articulate them in discussions with Ofsted about possible focused inspection themes.

• Produce a table, as we did, setting out progress on the focus area since the last inspection and any other key themes. (What do you know, how do you know it, what improvement/sustainability actions are you taking.) Keep it sensible length – ours was about six pages. Share it at the initial meeting on day 1 or before. Use it as we did re HMO to set the record straight if this applies.
Lessons Learnt

• **Be confident and proud** of your work and reflect on any previous comments made by inspectors (and other previous external reviewers) about the social work staff knowing their children, their commitment and obvious enthusiasm to demonstrate working towards the best outcomes.

• Don’t try to hide the problems – they’ll be found and then you can be seen as not knowing your services.

• Get the logistics right – offices, car parking, maps etc – critical given the short time frame. Unlikely to want log-ins but be prepared.
Lessons Learnt

• Have cover available at TM level to respond to emergencies so those directly involved can focus on the inspection.

• Set up a nerve centre for senior leaders, data people etc for rapid response – ideally at a nearby site.

• Keep on top of the staff’s experience and share apparent lines of enquiry and interest: senior leaders will be unable to control or even influence much once it starts so this communication line is essential.
Lessons Learnt

• Good that it’s quick – but means you have to be able to brigade evidence to challenge very quickly.

• As always, prepare staff through audits that replicate the Ofsted approach; and teach them how to manage their time with an inspector (“I’d like to show you a case I’m really proud of…””)
Outcomes

“Continued improvement in services for young people leaving care and unaccompanied asylum seeking children since the last inspection”

Care Leavers

• SWs and PAs help care leavers prepare for independence.
• Detailed pathway plans and PEPs.
• A ‘strong focus’ on helping find work, training and education
• Almost all in suitable accommodation
• Increasing use of staying put arrangements
Outcomes

UASC
• SWs demonstrate cultural sensitivity – including when doing age assessments
• Demonstrate ‘expertise with legislation’

Management Oversight
• Councillors and senior managers know the service well – helping them monitor performance and improve quality
• Robust performance management processes with appropriate use of data
• Management footprint evident in all cases
• Reflective discussion helped SWs and PAs consider complex issues and how to achieve better outcomes
Outcomes

Our Voice, Our Service (Ovos)

• A revitalised CiCC, a more co-ordinated and involved approach
• Young people shaping support through this process
• Achievements of young people are celebrated
Outcomes

Areas for consideration

- Ensure earlier leaving-care planning for ALL looked after children (as soon as reach 16 years)
- Record of reflective discussion to be incorporated into all supervision notes
- Make the approach to young people understanding their personal histories ‘more routine’ and at the young person’s pace
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Overall

- Positive experience
- Staff and managers felt good about it – listened to, respected and understood.
Florence Kroll

Director of Children’s Services,
Royal Borough of Greenwich
Learning Lessons from the Inspected

JTAI Royal Borough of Greenwich – Florence Kroll DCS
Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) February 2018
Child Sexual Exploitation, Children associated with gangs and at risk of exploitation and Children missing from home, care or education.
• Multi agency response and coordination
• Annex A – off site work – Week 1 and 2
• Field work - Week 3
• Focus groups
• Deep dive focus - 8 cases
• Tracking - 2 cases
The response to all forms of child abuse, neglect and exploitation at the point of identification.

The quality and impact of assessment, planning and decision-making in response to notifications and referrals.

Protecting children and young people at risk of a specific type (or types) of harm, or the support and care of children looked after and/or care leavers.

The leadership and management of this work.

The effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding partner arrangements in relation to this work.

A place for children to learn, belong, grow and achieve.
JTAI Themes about the children

- All children in the deep dive review had, additionally to the risk factors, an EHCP or mental health concern
- A high proportion had not lived in the borough throughout their childhood and had moved relatively recently into the borough
- Changes in circumstances happen rapidly and are not always predictable
- School exclusions both permanent and FTE were a theme in all cases
- Consistently providing alternative education quickly enough for children on EHCP when they have been excluded from school.
• Acknowledgement that it is difficult to impact on outcomes with so many complex and competing needs, however impact of work could improve

• Traditional methods of assessment planning and interventions may not always effectively reach or have an impact on this group of children and young people

• Not enough evidence of use of strategy meetings or legal planning meetings for this group

• Does there need to be one Front Door for social care and Early Help?
JTAI Themes about the partnership

• Need to evidence the impact of partnership work
• Strong strategic partnership but not always consistent in practice in terms of referrals, joined up plans and delivery
• A hierarchy of professions can exist which does not promote challenge across partners
• Limited partnership mapping and analytical capacity to understand picture of Gangs, CSE and missing - County lines is a significant problem
• How do we collectively capture meaningful information about where the child is when missing
Key messages

• It’s tough
• Be Prepared
• Coordination across the partnership is essential
• Staff felt bruised – the nature of the cohort
• Focus on lessons learned and action planning is critical
• There is lots we are still reflecting on
Questions?

Have you considered joining the Standards, Performance and Inspection Policy Committee?

Visit [www.adcs.org.uk/committees/spipc](http://www.adcs.org.uk/committees/spipc) for further information