

Audit Committee

16 March 2020



Report of: Denise Murray, Director of Finance

Title: Review of External Inspections of Council Services 2019/20

Ward: Citywide

Officer Presenting Report: Michael Pilcher, Chief Accountant

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Recommendations

Audit Committee is asked to:

- 1. Note the findings of the external inspections as set out in sections 4 to 8 of the report**
- 2. Note any improvement actions required as a consequence of the inspection findings and, where appropriate, the management response**
- 3. Note the assurance arrangements in place that oversee the Council's response to inspection findings**

Summary

This report summarises external inspection activity of Council services since April 2019. It sets out key inspection findings along with arrangements for implementing any recommendations arising from them. The report does not incorporate the outcome of any peer reviews.

The significant issues in the report are:

The outcomes of external inspections of council services are described in the report.

Following a local area inspection of services for children and young people (0-25 year olds) with special educational needs and disability (SEND), in October 2019, a Written Statement of Action was required to address five areas of significant weakness in Bristol's practice.



1. Policy

1.1 Not applicable

2. Consultation

2.1 **Internal** – not applicable

2.2 **External** – not applicable

3. Context

3.1 This report summarises external inspection activity of Council services since April 2019. It sets out key inspection findings along with arrangements for implementing any recommendations arising from them.

3.2 Inspection activity for the Council services in the financial year 2019/20 related to:

- Services for children and young people (0-25 year olds) with special educational needs and disability (SEND), undertaken by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Schools and educational settings maintained by the local authority, undertaken by Ofsted
- Children’s social care services, including council-owned children homes, undertaken by Ofsted
- Adult social care in-house provision, undertaken by CQC
- Further Education and skills (adult learning services), undertaken by Ofsted

3.3 Inspection judgements are awarded on a four-point scale - ‘Outstanding’, ‘Good’; ‘Requires Improvement to be good’, or ‘Inadequate’.

4. Local area SEND inspection

4.1 Between 30th September and 4th October 2019, Ofsted and CQC jointly inspected the effectiveness of Bristol’s approach to implementing the special educational needs and disability (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. The specific focus was on how effectively the local area (including the Council, health services, and education settings) identifies the needs of children and young people with SEND, assesses and meets those needs, and improves their education, health and care outcomes.

4.2 As a result of the inspection findings, it was determined that a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was required to address five areas of significant weakness in Bristol’s practice:

- The lack of accountability of leaders at all levels, including school leaders
- The inconsistencies in the timeliness and effectiveness of the local area’s arrangements for the identification and assessment of children and young people with SEND

- The dysfunctional Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process, and inadequate quality of EHCPs
- The underachievement and lack of inclusion of children and young people with SEND, including the high rates of persistent absenteeism and fixed-term exclusions
- The fractured relationships with parents and carers, lack of co-production and variable engagement and collaboration.

- 4.3 Inspectors recognised the quality and reliability of Bristol’s self-evaluation of SEND services, which had informed improvement work in many of the areas of weakness prior to the inspection. This has provided a strong and credible basis for the development of the WSoA, which brings all relevant improvement activity together and ensures that the Council and partners are held accountable for delivery against key outcomes and milestones.
- 4.4 The WSoA will be submitted to Ofsted by the 6th March and, subject to approval, published by the 20th March. Priority areas for improvement identified in the WSoA are being delivered through detailed action plans with operational oversight provided by the SEND Partnership Group. The local area will be re-inspected 18 months after the WSoA is published.
- 4.5 Overall progress is being overseen and assured by the SEND Improvement Board, which is chaired by an independent LGA Children’s Improvement Adviser and comprises lead members, Director for Children’s Services, key partners, and parent carer representatives. The Board is accountable for SEND improvement and for reporting to the Department of Education and NHS England of progress against delivery of actions and outcomes within the WSoA. Progress updates will be published on Bristol’s local offer website. These enhanced governance arrangements provide greater oversight to ensure pace and traction of SEND improvement work.
- 4.6 People Scrutiny Commission is also maintaining close oversight of SEND improvement work, which has already included a SEND deep dive and evidence day in February 2020.
- 4.7 Additional resources have been secured to develop and deliver the necessary changes in the SEND system and to provide increased capacity within key services. The SEN casework team responsible for delivery of the EHCP process has already significantly increased capacity to address the priority concerns around the quality and timelines of EHCPs. The Education Transformation Programme will be the vehicle for ongoing the ongoing transformation of SEND services.
- 4.8 Since the inspection, Bristol City Council has worked with and listened to parents and carers so that the content of the WSoA and associated plans for improvement reflect their wants and needs and help us to move forward more positively together. Co-production of services with parents, carers, children and young people is a key tenet to all improvement work for SEND.

5. Schools

- 5.1 Ofsted have inspected a total of fourteen schools in the city since April 2019, of which two were Bristol City Council maintained schools. The outcomes of the maintained school inspections are set out in table 5.1 below, along with a summary of improvements actions required where appropriate. One school was judged to be good, one judged to be requiring improvement.
- 5.2 Of the twelve academies inspected, one was judged to be outstanding, six were judged to be good, one judged to be requiring improvement and four inadequate.

Table 5.1 – Ofsted Maintained School Inspections April 2018 to February 2019

School	Inspection Outcome	Improvements required/ Support provided
Nova Primary School	Good	
Upper Horfield Community Primary School	Requires Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders need to ensure that their vision and plans are clearly understood and implemented by staff so that teaching becomes consistent and pupils develop the knowledge and understanding they should in all subject areas. • Senior leaders need to provide new and middle leaders with the guidance they need to support teaching staff in implementing their plans well. • Leaders should extend the strong partnership with parents in the early years to the rest of the school, particularly to improve on attendance • Leaders need to make sure that teachers have strong subject knowledge so they plan activities that build on what pupils can already understand and know in subjects across the curriculum. • Leaders need to make sure that staff subject knowledge in phonics is strong so that pupils and can apply their phonic knowledge accurately in reading and writing. • Leaders need to ensure that teachers’ expectations are equally as strong in Reception as they are in Nursery. Teachers need to provide children with more challenging activities that will allow children to achieve what they are capable of, particularly the most able. <p>The school is receiving a building capacity support package from LA</p>

- 5.3 The Council’s School Improvement Offer provides a graduated approach to school improvement, which will provide bespoke support and challenge to each school/academy depending on their current context and needs. This is informed by a robust risk assessment process which uses all available intelligence.

- 5.4 Bristol Education Partners (BEPs) are commissioned associates who support groups of schools, geographically or organisationally linked where possible. Those that are deemed to be vulnerable based on factors such as inspection grade, pupil outcomes, self-evaluation or other performance indicators, receive additional visits and support.
- 5.5 Overall accountability for ongoing monitoring of schools is held by the Excellence in Schools Group, who in turn report to the Learning City Partnership Board. The Council also meets formally with the Senior Her Majesty’s Inspector for Schools on a bi-annual basis to review school inspection activity and areas of risk.
- 5.6 Table 5.2 shows the latest school inspection outcomes for all Bristol schools. This includes academies that are not maintained by local authority. The proportion of primary schools that are judged to be good or better (75%) is significantly lower than for all England primary schools (88%), although has improved over the previous year from 73%. All Bristol special schools maintained nursery schools are judged to be good or outstanding.

Table 5.2 – All Bristol School Inspection Outcomes at 31 January 2020

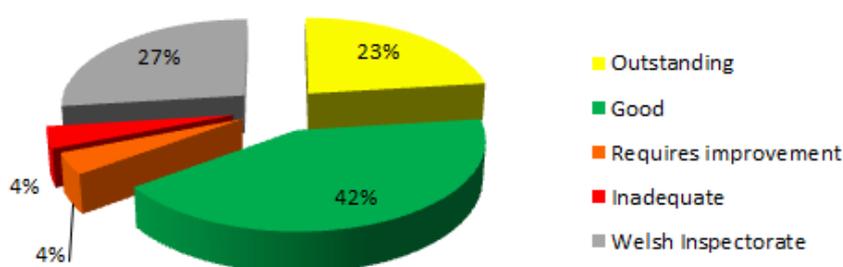
Phase / type	Total number inspected	Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate	% Good or Better	% Good or Better (England)
Nursery	12	6	6	0	0	100%	97%
Primary	104	24	54	18	8	75%	88%
Secondary	22	4	12	2	4	73%	76%
PRU	4	1	2	1	0	75%	84%
Special	10	0	10	0	0	100%	91%

6. Children’s social care services, including council-owned children homes

- 6.1 Children’s social care services are subject to Ofsted’s local authority children’s services (ILACS) inspection framework. While no formal inspection activity has taken place in the last year, the framework stipulates that a local authority annual self-evaluation of social work practice is submitted and reviewed as part of an annual conversation with inspectors. Bristol’s self-evaluation drew upon all available intelligence, which included benchmarked performance data, quality assurance and peer review findings, and feedback from social workers, children and families.
- 6.2 Bristol’s annual conversation took place in July 2019, where inspectors praised the comprehensive self-evaluation and reflected on the good progress made against key areas for development within the 2018 Standard Inspection of Children’s Services. These areas for development have also been subject to the scrutiny of the Children’s Improvement Board, chaired by LGA Children’s Improvement Adviser, which oversees Improvement Plan outcomes following inspections of children’s services.

- 6.3 The Council has five registered Children’s Homes for children in care, which are inspected under Ofsted’s Social care common inspection framework (SCCIF). Three homes are currently rated good, one home has yet to be inspected, and one is judged to be requiring improvement (following a re-inspection due to an inadequate judgement in 2019). Each Home has an improvement plan to address any recommendations made by inspectors.
- 6.4 Bristol has two Short Break Homes for disabled children, the Bush and Belbrook, both of which are rated good by Ofsted.
- 6.5 In addition to the inspection process, each home receives a monthly visit undertaken by an Independent Visitor whose role it is to assess the performance of the Home against the Children’s Home Standards. A report is received by senior managers and actions put in place to address any areas for improvement that are highlighted. This is a statutory requirement outlined in the Children’s Homes Regulations.
- 6.6 Bristol also makes use of the independent sector and has 26 children placed across 22 Independent Children’s Homes and Residential Schools. 65% of our children were being cared for in homes that were rated Outstanding or good by Ofsted, while 27% of the homes were inspected by Care Inspectorate Wales (of which, over the homes had no recommendations following inspection). One provider was rated inadequate.

Table 6.1 – Quality of children’s homes commissioned by external providers



- 6.7 Bristol’s Placements and Commissioning team monitor independent providers and work as members of Children’s Cross Regional Arrangements Group to monitor and share intelligence on independent residential providers.
- 6.8 The above is in addition to the Children Act Independent Review process which considers the suitability and quality of the care plan and placement for every child in our care.

7. Adult social care

- 7.1 So far in 2019/20 there have been three inspections by the Care Quality Commission of adult social care in-house services, all of which were judged to be good. Home First is a newly registered service and this was the first inspection. Concord Lodge and Redfield Lodge were

previously inspected in 2017. Several services have recently had pre-inspection questionnaires to complete so there may yet be further inspections this year.

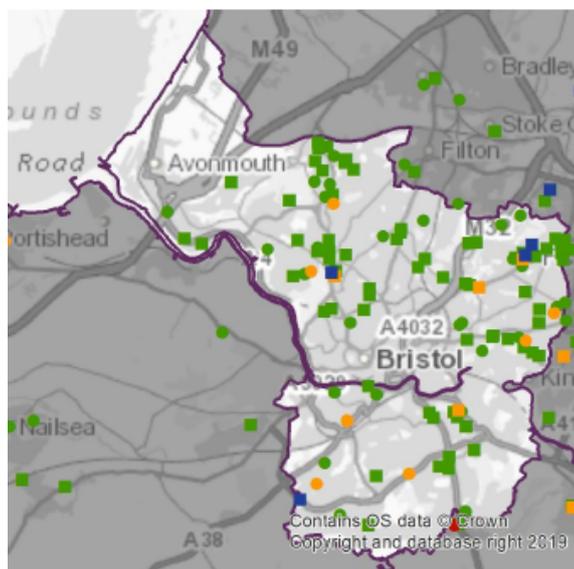
Table 7.1 – CQC inspection of in-house adult social care provision 2019/20

Service	Date	Overall Rating	Domain scores
<p>Home First (Bristol South Intermediate Care Service)</p> <p>(Multi disciplinary service providing short-term rehabilitation/reablement service to people in their own homes)</p>	23/5/19	Good	Safe - Good Effective - Good Caring - Good Responsive - Good Well Led - Good
<p>Concord Lodge</p> <p>(Residential assessment unit for people with learning difficulties and complex needs)</p>	28/8/19	Good	Safe - Good Effective - Good Caring - Good Responsive - Good Well Led - Good
<p>Redfield Lodge</p> <p>(Residential care home for people living with dementia)</p>	30/10/19	Good	Safe - Good Effective - Good Caring - Good Responsive - Good Well Led - Good

- 7.2 All seven Bristol City Council regulated in-house services that have been inspected by CQC are currently rated as good.
- 7.3 Table 7.2 (overleaf) indicates the quality of adult social care provision across Bristol and demonstrates that performance is generally better than our comparators and the national picture across all types of provision, with no inadequate ratings.
- 7.4 Bristol is currently undertaking the South West Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) Self-Assessment, the theme for which is evaluating where we are in implementing a strengths based model. Following the self-assessment, an independent analysis will be commissioned by ADASS to review the findings against 11 Key Statements to provide feedback on the impact of practice.
- 7.5 Following this a peer review will take place in April 2020, which will provide an independent evaluation of progress, performance and financial situation and will develop an action plan to address identified areas of concern.

Table 7.2 – CQC ratings for adult social care provision across Bristol

This map shows the overall ratings of active adult social care locations in Bristol, City of. There may be multiple locations in one position so not all locations may be visible



CQC data accessed on 22 October 2019

Nursing homes - see circles on map

Area	Inadequate	R.I.	Good	Outstanding	Unrated
This LA	0% (0)	22% (8)	78% (29)	0% (0)	0% (0)
England	2%	20%	69%	4%	4%
Comparators	1%	26%	66%	2%	4%

Residential homes - see squares on map

Area	Inadequate	R.I.	Good	Outstanding	Unrated
This LA	0% (0)	4% (3)	90% (66)	5% (4)	0% (0)
England	1%	13%	79%	3%	3%
Comparators	2%	14%	77%	3%	5%

Domiciliary care agencies - not shown on map

Area	Inadequate	R.I.	Good	Outstanding	Unrated
This LA	0% (0)	5% (3)	68% (39)	9% (5)	18% (10)
England	1%	11%	66%	4%	19%
Comparators	0%	13%	62%	3%	21%

Community care services - not shown on map

Area	Inadequate	R.I.	Good	Outstanding	Unrated
This LA	0% (0)	0% (0)	78% (14)	11% (2)	11% (2)
England	0%	8%	72%	4%	16%
Comparators	0%	7%	70%	5%	18%

*R.I. = requires improvement

8. Further Education and Skills

8.1 West of England adult learning provision (a consortium led by Bristol City Council) underwent an inspection on 12 and 13 February 2020. This also included Bristol's On-Site scheme that provides apprenticeships in construction and engineering.

8.2 As the provision was rated good in 2016, this was a short inspection that focusing on the quality of teaching and learning. The inspection will determine whether the provision is still good or if it requires a further standard inspection. Inspection findings are yet to be published

9. Risk Assessment

9.1 This is a report for Audit Committee to consider and note, and deals with matters that are in the public domain.

10. Public Sector Equality Duties

10.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising from the recommendations

11. Legal and Resource Implications

11.1 Legal

There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report

11.2 Financial

(a) Revenue

There are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendations

(b) Capital

There are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendations

11.3 Land

Not applicable

11.4 Human Resources

Not applicable

12. Appendices:

None

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

- [Bristol local area SEND inspection report](#)
- [State-funded school inspections and outcomes: management information](#)
- [CQC Bristol provider profile](#)