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14 July 2021

Debbie Jones
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Croydon
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Dear Debbie Jones

Final report: ILACS Focused Visit Croydon

Following our recent visit, I am pleased to share with you the final report. We will usually publish this eight working days from the date of this letter on the Ofsted reports website. Please also note, that if, after receiving the draft report, you alerted us to any factual inaccuracies or had any other comments about the visit process and findings you wanted us to consider before the report was finalised, you will find our responses to these in a form attached to this letter. This form is for your information and will not be published by Ofsted.

Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with your report or the visit process, you may submit a formal complaint using the form on the [Ofsted website](#). You must submit any complaint by the end of the fifth working day from the date of this letter.

Pre-publication arrangements

We will share this pre-publication version of the report with:

- the DfE
- the Care Quality Commission
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons
- Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Services Inspectorate

If you wish, you may share this report with others under embargo until 26 July 2021 at which time it can be publicly accessed on the Ofsted website.

Feedback survey

If you have not done so already, we would like to invite you to complete our online post-inspection survey via this link:

<https://ofsted.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ilacs2021/10188956>

We value all survey responses - they help us review and improve the inspection process. We also use this feedback to help keep us informed about the quality and impact of inspections.

We would be grateful for your feedback by 14 September 2021.

If you have any queries please contact ProtectionOfChildren@ofsted.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Roxanne Smith

Inspection Support Administrator

Response to your factual accuracy comment on the draft report

Name of local authority: Croydon

Dates inspectors were onsite for inspection or visit: 15 June 2021 – 16 June 2021

Page or paragraph reference	Comments about factual accuracy	Ofsted response
Page 2 para 2	<p>No services have been disbanded. Reconfiguration has led to some services been reduced e.g. the family group conference and adolescent services. Some have been decommissioned e.g. PAUSE.</p> <p>Suggested wording: As a result some services have been reconfigured and reduced. This has led to some highly experienced social workers and managers leaving the service</p>	<p>Accepted. The letter now reads: As a result, some services have been reconfigured and reduced. This has led to some experienced social workers and managers leaving the service.</p>
Page 2 para 4	<p>No services have been disbanded. The FGC service was to be deleted, but following consultation the service has been reduced to a lead co-ordinator in each locality.</p> <p>Suggested wording: For instance the family group conference service has been reduced and there are also significant reductions in the resources available to support vulnerable adolescents.</p>	<p>Accepted. The letter now reads: For instance, the family group conference service has been reduced and there are also significant reductions in the resources available to support vulnerable adolescents.</p>

<p>Page 3 para 2</p>	<p>Inaccurate titles.</p> <p>Suggested wording: The Children’s Continuous Improvement Board Croydon’s Safeguarding Children Partnership</p>	<p>Accepted. The letter now reads: Prompt, formal action by the interim DCS and the Chair of the Children’s Continuous Improvement Board, together with Croydon’s Safeguarding Children Partnership, has been taken to address this issue.</p>
<p>Page 3 para 4</p>	<p>This is inaccurate for the CSF service response throughout the pandemic lockdown. Children were seen face to face unless families were self-isolating.</p> <p>The priority 1, 2, 3 approach to face to face visits across the service adopted in March 2020 has now ended, statutory visits are face to face by default and as stated this is increasing.</p> <p>Suggested wording: Throughout the pandemic the most vulnerable children and young people were seen face to face and social workers continued to undertake effective direct work to gain an understanding of children’s views and experiences.</p>	<p>Accepted. The final sentence in the paragraph now reads: Throughout the pandemic, the most vulnerable children were seen face to face and social workers continued to undertake effective direct work to gain an understanding of children’s views and experiences.</p>
<p>Page 3 para 5</p>	<p>Our self-assessment identified variable assessment practice as an improvement priority. Provide some scale on the evidence of multiple and ineffective assessments and interventions as</p>	<p>Accepted and amended. The final sentence in the paragraph now reads: A small number of children have been subject to multiple and ineffective assessments and</p>

	<p>this contradicts with the social work strengths also referred to in this paragraph.</p> <p>Suggested wording: A small number of children have been subject to multiple and ineffective assessment and interventions without evidence of sustained change</p>	<p>interventions without evidence of sustained change.</p>
<p>Page 3 para 6</p>	<p>Our quality assurance activities identified learning priorities related to lack of professional curiosity, over-optimism and at times adult-focused work with children, which inspectors have confirmed. The phrasing of this sentence suggests that these weaknesses are found together and are widespread and systemic.</p> <p>No cases were referred to the LA for review.</p> <p>Suggested wording: In some cases seen there was a lack of professional curiosity, over-optimism plus adult-focused work have led to some children experiencing their relationships starting again with social workers for those vulnerable children who have lived with chronic neglect, sometimes over many years.</p>	<p>Accepted and amended as follows: In some cases, a lack of professional curiosity, over-optimism plus adult-focused work have led to a 'start again' approach to vulnerable children who have lived with chronic neglect, sometimes for many years.</p>
<p>Page 4 paras 4, 6</p>	<p>A children's continuous improvement board has been in place since October 2020. Change the abbreviation to CCIB.</p>	<p>Accepted and amended</p>

Page or paragraph reference (if applicable)	Your comments about the inspection process and findings	Ofsted response
	<p>The focus of this visit and the rigour of the evaluation was extremely helpful in proving assurance on the effectiveness of the help, protection and support provided by Croydon's SPOC, Croydon Supporting Families and Early Help Services.</p> <p>Inspectors' observations and thoughtful reflections on the implications of the significant changes over the past year on practice will inform the on-going work to mitigate the impact of these changes, to keep the focus on improving outcomes for children and families.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments</p>