



Department
for Education

Department for Education
St Paul's Place

Sheffield

Tel: 01142742411

www.gov.uk/df

Date: 22 September 2017

Dear Suzanne

I wanted to offer you some written feedback from the last DfE review in June in addition to the feedback from the focus groups sent a little while ago. I apologise for the delay with this letter and recognise that there have been further improvements in a number of areas over the past couple of months.

The information presented and discussion at the review (and the earlier focus groups) on 28 June suggests that the council is continuing to prioritise the improvement of children's services and that it is committed to "Knowing Ourselves, Knowing Our children" and improving outcomes for vulnerable children and their families.

It was clear that there had been good progress in a number of areas since the previous review in December 2017; including ongoing visibility of senior management; effective engagement and challenge from members; enhanced performance management and reporting following the launch of Liquid Logic; a fresh audit programme; increased workforce stability and reduced agency staff; ongoing completion of improvement plan actions and the rapid development of the LSCB under new leadership.

We agreed there are a number of areas to focus on and I know from our regular conversations that these are being actioned. In particular, a new strategy for placement stability for looked after children and continued embedding of quality of practice to achieve consistently good social work practice across the service.

I look forward to seeing further progress at the next review towards the end of this year.

Yours sincerely

Angela

Angela Windle

ps I'm really pleased to hear that workforce stability continues to improve - agency rate reduced from 37% in April to 13% in September.

cc Councillor Cyndi Hughes (Children and Young People Portfolio); Ada Burns (Chief Executive); Kochanowski (Assistant Director of Children's Services) and Clive Harrison RedQuadrant