



Making a Difference; Driving Improvement

An Inspection of The Government of
Jersey Children's Social Work Service

A follow-up report

December 2019

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Foreword from the Chair of the Jersey Care Commission

The first Ofsted led inspection in Jersey took place in June 2018. The outcome, 'Making a Difference; Driving Improvement', identified 20 recommendations for improving children's social work services. In this follow-up inspection, Ofsted found that social work services for children and families had improved but some aspects still fall short of recognised best practice.

Changes are needed in legislation and support infrastructure, further investment is needed to improve support for care leavers, to develop early help and to drive forward the necessary improvements in education and support for children in the care system.

Creating stability across the workforce in terms of leadership, recruitment and retention of social workers is the fundamental challenge emerging from this inspection. This report describes the actions required to shift the whole child care system onto a better and stronger footing.

Children and young people expect and deserve high quality services. Those who are responsible for the delivery of social work services must apply the necessary skills, talents and resources to address the remaining gaps and to eliminate poor practice.

Jersey has the potential to become one of the best performing child care systems in the British Isles. It is up to those who are responsible for planning and delivering these services to make it happen.

Glenn Houston

Chair Jersey Care Commission

SECTION 1

Executive Summary

Summary of the inspection's findings

1. An inspection of the Jersey children's social work service by inspectors from Ofsted took place between the 23rd September and 27th September 2019. Inspectors used Ofsted's framework for inspecting local authority services for children in need of help and protection, children in care and care leavers in England¹. The detailed findings of the inspection are at Section 2 of this report.
2. In summary, Ofsted found that:
 - *“Since the previous inspection in 2018, there has been a significant shift in corporate and political support for children's services, as well as greater recognition of the need to strengthen the support provided for children. However, there is still a long way to go to ensure that children, and particularly care leavers, are consistently and effectively supported, protected and cared for.*
 - *Leaders have put important building blocks in place. The appointment of a children's minister, and the creation of a children's plan and of the corporate parenting board all indicate a changing culture, where children's welfare is beginning to take a more central position in corporate and political thinking. A children's pledge now sets out how the Government will support children in its care. However, not all members of the Assembly have signed up to give this their support. These changes have led to some improvements in services for children, where their safety and welfare are better addressed. Nevertheless, not all children get the help they need at the right time.*
 - *Progress has been made from a very low base. Improvements include a strengthened multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH), improved adoption and fostering services, and a better response to children at risk of*

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services-from-2018>

exploitation. Nevertheless, some areas for development are taking too long to progress. Not all departments across the Government work effectively together to ensure a joined-up response to vulnerable children's needs. The work to improve the early help offer and the response to children in care's educational needs is neither effective nor sufficient. Social work practice has improved, but there remains much more to do to ensure that children are consistently helped and supported. The service for care leavers remains insufficient to meet their needs. There is limited suitable accommodation, a disjointed response to their transition to independence and shortfalls in help with their emotional well-being needs.

- Some social workers demonstrate tenacity and commitment to children, and there is evidence of child-centred work to help improve children's outcomes. Dedicated support from HR now helps social workers to navigate the complex social and population policies, so that they can live in Jersey. This is not always sufficient, and there is more to do to ensure that support continues as social workers settle into life in Jersey. This is equally important for agency social workers, who are a vital resource, and need to be well supported to live and work on the island as well.*
- A more proactive, coherent response to recruitment and workforce development is beginning to reap rewards, but the service remains fragile. The greatest threat to the improvement of services for children remains the continuing instability of the workforce. The continued instability in leadership arrangements is a real concern. At all levels, other than team managers, the level of turnover is much too high. The previous interim leadership team recently left the service at a critical point in the improvement journey. This created further instability and inconsistency in practice.*
- Although supervision and management oversight are now more evident on children's case files, instability in frontline management positions means that this is patchy. As a result, social workers do not have enough support or guidance, and the oversight of children's plans is not consistently*

effective. The impact of this is that social workers and managers have to start again each time a new worker is allocated.

- *Shortfalls in supervision and management oversight and a lack of coherent procedures make it difficult for social workers to do their jobs. This results in a high turnover of staff and leads to a lack of stability for children. Children and families continue to express concern about changes in social workers. Inspectors heard powerful and compelling feedback from young people, who talked about the impact that this has had on their welfare. Changes in social workers make it difficult for them to form relationships or to accept the help and support offered because they have a deep-seated mistrust that their social workers will remain with them. This anxiety is difficult to overcome.*
- *Improvements have been made to ensure greater oversight of practice through audit and more reliable performance information. There has rightly been a focus on ensuring that basic standards are met. However, this has not been sufficiently supported with work to strengthen practice or to increase the confidence of the workforce.”*

What needs to improve

3. Ofsted identified the need for improvement in the following areas:
 - *“Stabilise the workforce at all levels, including the senior leadership team, so that children experience less turnover and change.*
 - *Implement and embed the wider system changes, such as new legislation and improved corporate infrastructure, with comprehensive political commitment.*
 - *Improve the quality of services and support provided to care leavers and to children in private fostering arrangements.*
 - *Rapidly develop and implement an early help offer so that children’s needs are responded to effectively at the earliest opportunity.*

- *Improve the education of children in care and the support for their emotional well-being.*
- *Ensure that staff are clear regarding expectations of their role and standards of practice, so that more consistent social work practice is evident.”*

Conclusions and recommendations

4. The inspection findings remain consistent with the conclusions reached by Frances Oldham QC in the report of the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry ² that children in the care system in Jersey are not always receiving the kind or quality of support they need.
5. The Care Commission agrees with Ofsted that whole system change is required. All those with corporate responsibility for meeting the needs of children and young people in Jersey must now address the key challenges summarised above; ‘What needs to improve’.
6. It remains the case that unless or until these core issues are satisfactorily resolved, the service will continue to struggle to deliver safe and effective interventions and support for children and their families.
7. The Care Commission’s recommendations in Section 3 of this report have been quality assured and confirmed with Ofsted.
8. The recommendations are grouped under ten themes as follows:
 - Develop an effective social work service to children and their families.
 - Consolidate and improve the Jersey Government’s corporate parenting responsibilities.
 - Improve the quality of services and support provided to care leavers.
 - Improve the response to children living in private fostering arrangements.
 - Improve the early help offer and deliver a coordinated service for families.
 - Ensure the response to the educational needs of children in care is effective.

² <http://www.jerseycareinquiry.org/final-report>

- Strengthen the social work and social care practice and increase the confidence of the workforce.
 - Monitor the well-being of children who are home educated.
 - Ensure that attention to children's mental health and emotional well-being is developed.
 - Improve children's permanence planning.
9. These themes enable the grouping of the actions required by those with responsibility in these respective areas.
10. These recommendations identify the actions necessary to bring children's services in Jersey up to the required standard. Success in this regard will continue to depend upon the commitment of a range of stakeholders including the Government, senior management and front-line professionals in the children's social work department.
11. There needs to be continued and effective collaboration with a range of organisations and departments. These include the courts, the police, the health and education departments and others. There is a need for strategic and political support and intervention to ensure that this remains effective.
12. The Care Commission will seek assurances from the Chief Minister and from those in charge of delivering care and support to children and young people that all of the recommendations will be accepted and taken forward with the necessary pace and commitment.
13. The Care Commission will seek regular reports in respect of progress made in meeting each of the identified requirements.

Acknowledgements

14. The Care Commission would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Ofsted team in making this inspection possible, in particular the assistance of Lisa Pascoe, Deputy Director of Social Care Policy, and the skill and expertise of the Ofsted inspectors, Donna Marriott, John Roughton and Nick Stacey.
15. The Care Commission appreciates and acknowledges the support and co-operation provided to the inspectors by all those who engaged directly with them during the fieldwork stage. This willingness to support the inspection process has proven invaluable in facilitating a detailed assessment of the service, identifying areas where improvement is needed.

SECTION 2

The Ofsted inspection report

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection

16. Children in need of help and protection are now better supported than they were at the time of the last inspection. However, there is still more to do to ensure a fully joined up response to children's needs.
17. Work to improve the early help offer has not been successful in delivering a sufficiently coordinated service for families. This means that children and families are not always provided with the support and help that they need at the earliest opportunity. The lack of a joint strategic needs assessment means that the service does not have an accurate understanding of the needs of children and families to drive planning and development.
18. The introduction of the 'right help, right time' panel is a positive step forward, but the early help offer remains significantly underdeveloped. Early help assessments are carried out at the appropriate threshold for early intervention. There has been some progress in collecting and analysing performance data on early help activity. Nevertheless, the lack of a shared electronic recording system or a coordinated approach to quality assurance hampers this. Until this system is progressed, too many children will continue to be referred to the MASH and their needs assessed, rather than them being able to access support when they need it. This work needs to be prioritised and rapidly improved across the partnership.
19. The MASH provides an effective response to ensuring timely decisions about how best to respond to referrals that identify risk and need for children. Threshold decisions are mostly appropriate. Partners are strongly engaged and provide high-quality information and analysis that help managers to decide on next steps. The MASH has been subject to intense scrutiny for a considerable period. It would now benefit from a period of stability, with a focus on building confidence within and outside the service.

This needs to include work to strengthen the interface between the MASH and the children in need teams.

20. Central to building confidence is the need for greater clarity about how consent is sought from and explained to families by referring agencies. The MASH referral form does not set out the exact detail of the consent that is provided by parents and carers. Further work is needed to ensure that parents and carers are clear about why they are being referred, what consenting to agency enquiries means and whether they wish to participate in an assessment.
21. Strategy meetings have improved. They are held promptly, are informed by comprehensive, high-quality agency enquiries and provide rich information to inform decisions. There is not always a clear rationale given regarding next steps, the actions to be taken and contingency arrangements.
22. Practice is mostly child-centred, with some examples of direct work evident. It has taken some time for leaders to implement their new restorative, strengths- based model of practice. Consequently, this is not yet embedded or evident in children's casework.
23. Children are visited regularly and seen alone. Visits are mostly well recorded, although they would benefit from a clearer rationale about their purpose. Leaders created a post-referral visit process, which required the receiving team to visit children within five days of the referral. This has led to some examples of poor practice, where social workers visit before the assessment, seek further consent and sometimes divert families out of the assessment process. This is not good practice. It has the potential to create additional changes of social workers and undermines decision-making by MASH managers. It would be more appropriate to ensure that children are allocated for assessment, with a focus on ensuring that children are seen according to their needs and individual circumstances.
24. Assessments are in place for most children, but there is further work needed to improve their quality, and to ensure that they are updated in response to children's changing needs.

Most are comprehensive, supported by high-quality agency information and capture children's voices and experiences. They document parental history but do not always consider absent fathers. Most assessments are informed by a chronology, but these are of variable quality. They often lack important information and are often not updated. There has been a focus on ensuring that chronologies are in place. However, the service now needs to build a culture where the workforce recognises the importance that these critical documents play in helping to understand children's daily lived experiences.

25. Children's plans are focused on key issues, but do not include timescales for actions. This makes it difficult to ensure that plans are progressed in the child's timescales. Most plans are child-focused, but they lack contingency plans, making it difficult for families to be clear about what will happen if change is not achieved. Highly complex child protection work with very vulnerable disabled children is well managed through competent supervision, regular core groups and child protection conferences. A wide spectrum of involved agencies is engaged in child protection planning.
26. Social workers and partners are proactive in trying to progress children's plans. There are examples of good decisions being made to respond to risk when concerns increase or to step plans down when concerns reduce. However, sometimes plans are stepped up or down too often. Closer scrutiny is needed in reviewing plans, to ensure that improved parenting is sustained before changes are made.
27. The response to child exploitation has been strengthened since the last inspection. There is a growing awareness of the associated risks for children. Social workers use exploitation screening tools to consider levels of risk, although these are not always updated in accordance with practice requirements. Risks are identified, and strategy meetings are held when concerns increase. Children assessed as being at high risk of exploitation benefit from well-coordinated partnership activity. This focuses on reducing risk and disrupting potential perpetrators.

There is further work to do to build social workers' understanding and confidence in identifying risk to ensure consistently strong risk assessments.

28. When children go missing from home or care, social workers, youth workers and other professionals act to ensure that they are safe. Children are visited and there are examples of tenacious, child-centred work to divert them from harm. Return interviews are attempted, but weaknesses in recording mean that there are gaps in information. This can lead to gaps in important intelligence, which adversely impacts on the assessment of risk.
29. Leaders were unable to provide information to the inspection team about the arrangements in place to monitor the welfare of children who are home educated. It is not clear, therefore, whether the arrangements in place are effective in ensuring that children are safe and suitably supported.
30. There has been limited action to respond to the recommendation from the last inspection to improve the response to children living in private fostering arrangements. The service is aware of very few children who are living in these arrangements. These children's needs have been assessed, but there has been no assessment of the carers. No work has taken place across the partnership to raise awareness of children who may be privately fostered.
31. An increasing number of allegations about professionals working with children are referred to the designated officer. This indicates a growing awareness in responding to these risks. Concerns are comprehensively explored in initial meetings chaired by the designated officer. Most are well recorded and action planning is largely effective. Outcomes are tracked through to closure. This could be improved by specifying the length of the investigation and outlining the reasons for any delays.

The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers

32. When children come into care, planning and oversight are generally rigorous. Many children and families receive careful and skilled support from the 'edge of care' service, which enables some children to safely stay at home. The team works tenaciously to support children to return to their families when it is suitable. Detailed planning underpins their transitions back home.
33. Most care plans would benefit from tighter objectives to ensure that critical actions are completed in specified timescales to address children's needs. Careful consideration is given to children having time with their birth families, including those who live a long distance from home. Some recent work is of better standard. Stronger child-centred practice features in up-to-date care plans, which accurately reflect children's needs.
34. Too many children in care receive fractured social work support caused by frequent changes of social workers. This prevents trusting professional relationships from forming and can also lead to delays and interruption in important elements of children's care planning. Some of these practice shortcomings are mitigated because of the quality and consistency of support provided by carers, which helps to provide much-needed stability.
35. Children live with carers who support them well and work hard to provide a secure base and improve their outcomes. Many children who live 'off island' live in specialist residential homes. They benefit from specialist intervention, which helps to redress earlier adversities.
36. Work with children and their foster carers intensifies when placements become fragile. The 'edge of care' team and other services support children and their carers through difficult periods. Experienced and stable managers and supervising social workers in the fostering team skilfully support carers. Foster carers are extremely complimentary about the quality of this support.

Carers have good access to training and development programmes tailored to the needs of the children they look after. Assessments of prospective foster carers are of a good standard but take too long to complete.

37. Placement sufficiency is now much better understood. There is a focus on keeping children in their families where possible, but there are not enough placements to meet children's needs. Work to strengthen care planning and embed edge-of-care support is beginning to deliver results. There has been a decline in the number of children placed at a distance from home since the last inspection, with none placed off island in the last nine months. Further work is planned to increase provision through the intensive fostering initiative and an increase in supported housing options. These need to be progressed with pace if they are to provide more options for the most vulnerable children to help them to remain close to home and their families.
38. Concerted work has taken place to strengthen the residential estate. This has created smaller family units, with fewer children and more homely environments, rather than institutional settings. Work is underway to improve the experience and expertise of the residential workforce. There is more to do to ensure that they are well equipped to respond sensitively to children's adverse experiences and trauma.
39. Children's health needs are initially assessed within agreed timescales and are reviewed annually. Attention to children's emotional well-being and mental health is fragmented. Fast-track access to dedicated child and adolescent health service resources is not provided. The support that is provided is too inconsistent. This leaves a significant number of children and young people in care with unmet emotional needs.
40. Educational outcomes for children in care are poor. Results at key stage 4 are particularly poor. Destinations for children in care post-16 are not fully understood. Too many children are excluded and have limited school attendance. These very poor outcomes show a lack of care or aspiration from their corporate parents.

A representative from the virtual school does not attend all personal education planning meetings and is neither a consistent nor effective advocate for helping to tackle the woeful educational outcomes for children in care at all key stages.

41. Permanence planning is well considered at the earliest stage, with the adoption team engaged quickly and potential matches explored where appropriate. Fostering for adoption is beginning to be considered in order to reduce the potential for delay in achieving permanence for children. Potential family members are carefully explored and, where appropriate, comprehensive connected persons assessments inform decisions in order to help children live safely in these arrangements.
42. The lack of legal options for permanence, other than residence orders, creates concerns for carers about how they will be supported if they take on the permanent care of children. This has led to many children living with carers or family members for many years while they remain subject to legal orders.

Children generally understand that they are living in their 'forever family' but are often not advised that the decision has been formalised. This means that they continue to be subjected to bureaucratic processes that impact on their experience of normal family life. Social workers are not clear about the process for formalising children's permanence arrangements in these circumstances.

43. An effective adoption service has provided permanent homes for 11 children over the past year. Older children and those with additional needs are adopted. Adopter assessments are thorough and careful. Matching is of a high standard, providing the panel with authoritative information to make decisions. Social workers and foster carers go to great lengths to carefully prepare children to move into their adoptive families. Recruitment of adopters is effective. This results in a sufficient pool of adopters for matching to children.
44. Children's participation and influence in the children's service have increased from a very low base.

An outstanding children's rights officer is central to this development. Her energetic and skilled work with children in care and young care leavers is producing rich and critical feedback on their often very poor experiences of children's services. The Jersey Care Forum has been recently constituted and needs to be actively supported to help improve the corporate parenting.

45. Preparing children aged 16 to 18 for their transition to independence is erratic. Pathway planning often starts too late, and some young people are wholly unprepared and ill equipped to manage their lives when they turn 18. A powerful example of the impact of this is seen in the feedback from one care leaver, who had to leave residential care just before her eighteenth birthday. The support to prepare her for independence and the adult world was disjointed and insufficient. She spoke eloquently about how her first day as an adult was shadowed by confusion and fear, having to visit the social security, fill in complicated forms and sort out her bills and shopping, rather than being able to celebrate becoming an adult. Listening to her account of how devalued and unsupported she felt was a stark reminder of the need for leaders to improve services for care leavers.
46. Most care leavers have a pathway plan at 18, which is reviewed as their needs and circumstances change. Some, but not all, benefit from the commitment and persistence of their personal adviser or family support worker. These staff build strong and supportive relationships and tenaciously and creatively ensure that care leavers' needs are well understood and appropriately met. They support care leavers to engage in education, training and employment opportunities.
47. Work has begun to improve the support to young people and the range of accommodation but there is not enough accommodation to meet need. Family support workers and personal advisers are knowledgeable about how to navigate the complex procedural and legislative requirements to get the best support for care leavers. However, there are not enough of them to support all care leavers.

The impact of this is that young people are supported by social workers who have competing demands and are juggling a wide range of children's needs. Some young people spoke powerfully about the lack of consistent support they receive from their allocated social workers. This leaves them feeling undervalued and magnifies their experience of loss, when social workers frequently change.

48. The need to strengthen the support and help provided to young people leaving care remains a top priority and needs to improve with pace. The extent of the cultural and legislative change needed will take time to sort. Nevertheless, there are operational changes that can be delivered more quickly, if leaders provide the momentum. These young people deserve a greater commitment, to ensure that they receive the support and care that they rightly deserve from their corporate parents. The insufficient investment to date means that young people do not receive the dedicated care and support they need. Consequently, some are left floundering and extremely vulnerable.

The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families

49. Since the last inspection in 2018, leaders have acted to tackle the significant weaknesses in services for children in Jersey. Concerted work has taken place to better prioritise children's needs, but there is still much more to do to ensure that children are consistently well supported and cared for.
50. Leaders in Jersey better recognise that meeting the needs of vulnerable children should be a priority for the Government, with children's welfare more central to corporate and political thinking. The appointment of a children's minister and the development of the children's plan are indicators of a move in the right direction. The creation of the children's pledge indicates a change in culture. However, this is not reflected by every political leader, and a small number are yet to sign up and pledge their commitment. The development of a children's legislative transformation programme is a further indicator of a shift in culture and commitment.

51. Government-wide corporate parenting is in its infancy. Basic governance structures have been recently implemented, but commitment, urgency and energy are necessary to ensure that the experiences and outcomes of children in care and young people who have left care are fully understood and improved. A corporate parenting board has been established, but it is too early to demonstrate impact. Membership of the board needs to be widened so that it includes children, carers and representative from children's services if it is going to be effective in driving service improvements.
52. Significant work has taken place to improve corporate support for children's services, with better infrastructure. Importantly, the focus on improving services for vulnerable children now appears to be more of a system-wide endeavour, rather than a drive by determined individuals working in isolation. Although this progress is welcome, there is still a long way to go to ensure that all departments work together to strengthen services for children. This is particularly evident in respect of the need to join up the strategic response to developing the early help offer, as well as in ensuring improved educational support for children in care and care leavers.
53. There is now a much more joined up approach to recruitment and workforce development. The hard-hitting 'Let's be honest' recruitment campaign has led to successful recruitment of 17 social workers, who are currently in the process of joining the department. Work has taken place to ensure an improved island-wide offer for social workers moving to Jersey, including a more suitable accommodation offer and relocation support. This is clearly a significant step forward in terms of creating a more stable workforce. However, there is much more to do to ensure that social workers have the support they need to help them remain living and working in Jersey.
54. Some social workers report that they have not been well supported to work in Jersey and this is reflected in some exit interviews. Although induction packs have been developed, practice standards and expectations are not as clear as they need to be.

Despite this being an area to develop at the last inspection, social workers are still not sufficiently informed about the procedures to be followed and there is a widespread lack of understanding by frontline staff about how to access them. Procedures had been reviewed but had not been issued to staff until very recently.

55. Equally significant is the impact of the instability of management and leadership positions. The instability of the senior leadership team is a real concern. The previous interim director left at short notice and has been replaced by another interim director. A new permanent director was appointed during the inspection period, but this is the fourth director in the last two years. These constant changes in leadership hamper progress and lead to a lack of confidence for frontline staff.
56. Instability in management positions is a factor that hampers practice improvement. Social workers report that most managers make themselves available, but they express concern about the constant changes. Supervision is now more regularly taking place and is beginning to ensure better oversight of children's plans. However, it is not consistent and does not yet provide a framework for analysis and challenge. Managers need to be more robust in setting clear actions and timescales and in ensuring that they are progressed.
57. Creating stability across the children's services workforce is the greatest challenge. Staff turnover in some teams remains much too high and leads to a lack of stability for children. Throughout the inspection, young people provided powerful and compelling feedback on the impact this has on their welfare. It makes it difficult for them to form relationships or to accept the help and support offered, because they have a deep-seated mistrust of social workers, which is difficult to overcome.
58. The strategic improvement board, introduced in 2018, has maintained oversight of the improvement plan. The operational improvement board, chaired by an independent consultant, has not kept close enough oversight of the improvement work. Actions are not consistently followed through and activity is not always sufficiently focused.

There has been an emphasis on compliance. Membership has not been set at the right level and operational heads of service were omitted. This has not helped to embed improvements in the quality of practice across the service. The new interim director has recently acted to address this.

59. Audits have been taking place. This is a significant improvement, in contrast to the last inspection. Audit work has relied heavily on dip sampling to make sure that children are safe and that actions are in place. Some auditing has taken place with staff, but the focus has been on compliance rather than embedding learning or ensuring that practice improvements are sustained. Audit activity has not been sufficiently structured and has not always been carried out in accordance with the quality assurance plan. The quality assurance framework is limited in its reach and approach. Like the last inspection, the safeguarding partnership board (children) has not been sufficiently active in providing the oversight and challenge needed in its audit and scrutiny role.
60. The quality of performance management information has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection. Leaders are now more able to understand the effectiveness of the service because the quality of data is now much more accurate and reliable. Further development work is planned to ensure that performance information is improved across all areas of practice.

SECTION 3

The Jersey Care Commission's recommendations

R1 Deliver an effective social work service to children, young people and their families by:

- Investing in and valuing all staff through effective systems for recruitment, induction and retention;
- Ensuring the Operational Improvement Board has a clear focus on how best to improve children's social work services;
- Ensuring that all staff delivering services provide consistent high quality social work practice, including placing the rights of the child at the centre of their planning and interventions.

(paragraphs 8, 9, 51, 52)

R2 Consolidate and Improve the Jersey Government's corporate parenting responsibilities by:

- Ensuring that all children and young people in care receive the necessary support to identify and work towards achieving their personal goals and aspirations;
- Widening the membership of the Corporate Parenting Board to include experts by experience e.g. children, family carers and representation from children's services;
- Supporting the Corporate Parenting Board to improve educational support for children in care and provide better support for care leavers.

(paragraphs 48, 49)

R3 Improve the quality of services and support provided to care leavers by:

- Implementing with some urgency a Jersey Care Leavers Offer and delivering the three key priorities:
 - Clarifying the support offered to young people for whom the

Government of Jersey has been their Corporate Parent.

- Proactively supporting young people who are care experienced to increase their educational aspirations and achievements so that outcome gaps are reduced.
- Ensuring that young people who have been in care have a robust foundation from which to move successfully towards independence.
- Establish and maintain sufficient family support and personal adviser capacity within the service to meet the needs of all young people leaving care.
- Developing a range of high-quality accommodation to meet the individual needs of young people leaving care;
- Supporting skills for life and employment opportunities, enabling young people to have a better start and more positive experiences when moving out of the care system and living independently.

(paragraphs 44 and 45)

R4 Improve the response to children living in private fostering arrangements by:

- Establishing the extent of private fostering arrangements and maintaining appropriate contact with individuals and families who privately foster children
- Providing assessments of the carers, and assessments and care plans for children living in private fostering arrangements;

(paragraph 27)

R5 Improve the early help offer and deliver a coordinated service for families by:

- Establishing a joint strategic needs assessment, making best use of corporate information to provide an accurate understanding of the needs of children and their families;

- Providing an effective service for children who need early help, which ensures that appropriate and proportionate assessment and support is available – the ‘right help at the right time’;
- Ensuring that the Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH) responds appropriately to referrals in respect of safeguarding concerns only.
- Ensuring that all requests for early help and intervention are processed effectively and separately from the MASH.
- Ensuring the MASH takes appropriate action to strengthen the interface with the ‘Children in Need’ teams;
- Establishing an effective electronic recording system which supports leaders to oversee and manage the service.

(paragraphs 14, 15, 16)

R6 Ensure the response to the educational needs of children in care is effective by:

- Increasing the aspirations of corporate parents for children in their care;
- Providing a framework for social work and social care staff which enables them to support better educational outcomes for children in care;
- Reducing the number of children in care who are excluded and have limited school attendance;
- Making sure a representative from the 'virtual' school attends all personal education planning meetings and an effective advocate for children in care at all key stages³.

(paragraph 37)

³ The Education of Looked After Children Policy says that Virtual School Head (VSH) should ensure the educational attainment and progress of children looked after by the Government of Jersey are monitored and evaluated as if those children attended a single school.

R7 Strengthen social work and social care practice and increase the confidence of the workforce by:

- Describing the roles of social workers and support workers clearly in terms of what is expected of them and what they can expect from their managers in terms of supervision, support and professional development;
- Setting out the expected standards of social work practice⁴;
- Accelerating implementation of a restorative, strengths-based model of social work practice, to embed and evidence this in children's casework;
- Making sure that all policies, procedures and protocols are up to date, available and easily accessible to staff and people that use services;

(paragraphs 11, 12, 19, 51, 56)

R8 Monitoring the well-being of children who are home educated by:

- Evidencing and reporting on the necessary arrangements to ensure that children who are home educated are safe and suitably supported.

(paragraph 26)

R9 Ensure that attention to children's mental health and emotional well-being is developed by:

- Putting in place consistent, fast-track access to a dedicated child and adolescent mental health service for children who require this level of support and intervention.

(paragraph 36)

⁴ Ofsted Evaluation Criteria and the Skills for Care Professional Capabilities Framework are helpful examples to be considered when reviewing delivery of expected standards.

R10 Improving children's permanence planning by:

- Developing a permanence policy and procedures to advise long term foster carers how they will be supported if they take on the permanent care of children, and ensures social workers are clear about the process for formalising children's permanence arrangements in these circumstances.

(paragraph 39)

SECTION 4

Looking ahead

61. The Jersey Care Commission will take the following action to monitor progress against these recommendations:

- The Care Commission will receive regular reports from Children's Services outlining progress towards implementing these recommendations.
- Once reports from Children's Services have been received and have been considered by the Care Commission they will be placed on the Care Commission's website.
- The Care Commission will determine what further measures may be required to provide the public with the necessary assurance that the children's social work service is striving to achieve the specific recommendations and is maintaining a focus on quality improvement.
- The Care Commission will also determine what further steps will be necessary to ensure independent oversight of social work services for children, young people and their families.
- The Care Commission will work alongside Government of Jersey policy leads and other key stakeholders to ensure that the statutory regulatory framework for the independent inspection of children's services is implemented.
- The Care Commission will continue to seek the cooperation of the Government of Jersey children's services to undertake monitoring and other activity relating to following up on the recommendations within this report.

APPENDIX 1

Ministerial Decision: Chief Minister

Chief Minister's Office
Ministerial Decision
Decision Summary



Ministerial decision reference : MD-C-2019-0108			
DECISION SUMMARY TITLE: Independent Inspection of Children's Services – Article 38 Regulation of Care (Jersey) Law 2014			
Decision summary author	Assistant Director- Policy and Ministerial Support – Health and Social Services	Is the decision summary public or exempt?	Public
REPORT TITLE: Independent Inspection of Children's Services – Article 38 Regulation of Care (Jersey) Law 2014			
Report author or name of person giving report	Assistant Director- Policy and Ministerial Support – Health and Social Services	Is the report public or exempt?	Public
Decision and reason for the decision			
<p>In 2018, the Care Commission, at the request of the Chief Minister, prepared a Report in respect of Children's Services. The Chief Minister requested, in accordance with Article 38 of the Regulation of Care (Jersey) Law 2014, a further report from the Care Commission on Children's Services that offers an updated assessment by an external independent agency. This further report should address the concerns expressed in the report entitled 'Making a Difference Driving Improvement' (September 2018), which set out the findings and recommendations of the first Ofsted-led inspection of social work services for children and young people in Jersey.</p> <p>The Independent Jersey Care Inquiry recommended independent inspection arrangements of children's services that will have the confidence of children, staff and the wider public. In order to provide independent oversight, the Chief Minister has once again requested the Jersey Care Commission, which is itself an arms-length body, to lead on commissioning independent inspectors to undertake the necessary work. This will include the Care Commission determining relevant matters, including scope, timeframe and schedule for inspections, as well as the external inspection agency to be used.</p>			
Resource implications: There will be additional resources required during 2019 to enable the Care Commission to contract independent external inspectors to complete the required inspections, which will be requested once the scope has been determined by the Commission.			
Action required			
Chief Minister to write to the Care Commission to request the required report.			
Signature			
	Position Senator John Le Fondre Chief Minister		
Date signed	5 / 9 / 2019		
	Effective date of the decision		

APPENDIX 2

Ministerial Decision: Health and Community Services Department

Decision Summary
Health and Social Services Department
Ministerial Decision



Ministerial decision reference : MD-HSS-2019-0039			
DECISION SUMMARY TITLE: Independent Inspection of Children's Services – permissions for Ofsted inspectors			
Decision summary author	Private Secretary for the Minister for Children and Housing	Is the decision summary public or exempt?	Public
REPORT TITLE: Independent Inspection of Children's Services – permissions for Ofsted Inspectors			
Report author or name of person giving report	Private Secretary for the Minister for Children and Housing	Is the report public or exempt?	Public
Decision and reason for the decision			
<p>For the purpose of enabling Ofsted Inspectors to undertake an assessment of the Children's Social Work Service on behalf of the Care Commission and in accordance with the request from the Chief Minister made in MD-C-2019-0108 (the "Ministerial Decision"), The Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services granted permission to Ofsted inspectors to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enter any premises (other than a private dwelling house) used for or in connection with the delivery of Children's Social Work Services. engage with social work practitioners and other members of staff employed in the Health and Social Services Department engage or examine any other aspect of the delivery of the Children's Social Work Service as is necessary to produce the report referred to in the Ministerial Decision. have access to relevant records held by the Health and Social Services Department for the purpose of the inspection subject to appropriate confidentiality requirements. <p>Interpretation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the term "staff" includes those employed, contracted to provide services or acting in a volunteer capacity the term "engage" includes interview observe, interview (formally or informally) and discuss any aspect of the delivery of Children's Services. "stakeholders" includes (but is not limited to) those in receipt of, or engaged with, Children's Services, their families and organisations with an interest in the delivery or impact of Children's Services. 			

To ensure that the inspectors from Ofsted are working within the requirements of the Data Protection (Jersey) Law 2005. The Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services authorises Ofsted officers engaged to undertake an inspection of the Children's Social Work service, access to relevant records held by the Health and Community Services and the Children, Young People, Education and Skills Departments subject to a requirement to maintain the confidentiality of those documents.

REASON FOR THE DECISION:

The Health and Social Care Commission inspection powers under the Regulation of Care (Jersey) Law 2014 are in place to inspect regulated services. However, the Children's Service is not a regulated activity under the 2014 Law at present. Therefore, to ensure Ofsted, acting as an agent of the Health and Social Care Commission, has the necessary legal authority to undertake an inspection of the Children's Social Work Service, the Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services gives permission to Ofsted officers to undertake such activity as is necessary to complete an inspection and produce a report.

Resource implications: The Inspection will have resource implications for the Children's Social Work Service in terms of staff time required to prepare for the inspection and service improvements that may be required following the outcome of the inspection.

Action required: The Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services grants Ofsted permission to access such premises, staff and documents as are required in order to complete an inspection and produce a report on the Children's Social Work Service.

Signature



Position

Senator Sam Mézec
Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services.

Date signed

4/9/2019

Effective date of the decision

APPENDIX 3

Terms of Reference

The Jersey Care Commission has appointed OFSTED to undertake a follow up inspection, to provide an assessment of progress in respect of findings and recommendations of the September 2018 inspection report 'Making a Difference; Driving Improvement'.

The terms of reference are as follows:

Review and assess –

- 1.1. the extent to which the Government of Jersey has made progress towards fulfilling its statutory responsibilities to the children in its care, ensuring their rights and entitlements are realised
- 1.2. the extent to which the Government of Jersey is able to demonstrate its commitment to investing in infrastructure and corporate support to enable the children's social work service to engage effectively with vulnerable children and their families
- 1.3. the capacity and capability at both strategic leadership level and at social work team level to provide the necessary assurances that children in need, and children at risk, are receiving timely interventions
- 1.4. progress with recruitment and retention of social work staff to be able to respond effectively to the needs of children and young people in Jersey, including those at risk of sexual exploitation and neglect
- 1.5. the quality and timeliness of social work interventions, to ensure that any risk of harm to children and young people who are looked after, and those on the child protection register, is minimised
- 1.6. the extent to which the leaving and after care service engages with young people in providing support for longer term health and relationships, accommodation, further and higher education, employment opportunities and readiness for adult life

- 1.7. the extent to which children and young people are engaged directly in taking important decisions impacting on their future health and well-being
- 1.8. improvements in performance management, quality assurance, audit and supervision of front-line social work practice the impact of leaders on front-line practice.

APPENDIX 4



The Jersey Care Commission is established under Part 7 of the Regulation of Care (Jersey) Law 2014.

It is a statutory body, independent of the Minister for Health and Social Services, the Chief Minister and the States of Jersey. The Care Commission is established to regulate and inspect health and social care services in Jersey by providing independent assurance, promoting best practice and improving health and social care outcomes for the people of Jersey.

The Care Commission was established in shadow form in early 2017, with the appointment of a Chair and four other Commissioners to prepare for the implementation the 2014 Law and became fully operational on 1 January 2019.



The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.