

Inspection dates for the Single Inspection Framework (SIF)

The spring term 2015 SIF dates are:

- 24 February
- 03 March

The dates that the local authority SIF inspections will commence in the summer 2015 programme are below.

Changes

Notification to the LA will change to Monday morning, with inspectors arriving on site on the Tuesday morning. Where a Bank Holiday Monday falls in week one, notification to the LA will be on the Friday of the preceding week. Where a Bank Holiday falls within inspection weeks three and four, on-site inspection activity will take place from Tuesday 1 pm until Friday 1pm.

- 13 April
- 11 May
- 22 May (notification on the Friday due to the Monday Bank Holiday)
- 1 June
- 22 June
- 6 July
- 20 July
- 27 July
- 3 August

A revised handbook will be published before the Easter break in relation to revised deployment arrangements.

Bath and North East Somerset OFSTED Preparation Web page:

There will shortly be a B&NES OFSTED preparation web page which will contain all of the important documents and policies we are collating for the OFSTED Inspection in one place.

When this is in place I will send a link for everyone to be able to access this.

Watch this space.

What Good looks like: Characteristics of the Strongest Local Authorities:

Following 44 Single Inspection Framework Inspection reports to date here are some key characteristics of those strongest Local Authorities:

- **Early Help** – goes beyond the integrated professional “offer” – this is known and understood locally and makes a difference.
- **Domestic Abuse** – is taken seriously and effective help is provided
- **Assessments** – address the needs of and risks to children. They **inform clear decisions and plans supported by chronologies.**
- **Social Workers** – have trusting **relationships** with families and children and work directly with them. There is usually a **theoretical base** to the work.
- **Capacity of parents** – is well considered and they are **given help** to parent and protect their children
- **Protection** – when it is needed. **Best interests** of children in view.
- **Being ‘Looked After’** – **legal** decisions are good and supported in Court. Children do well in **school**, good **mental health support** and risks from **sexual exploitation** minimised.
- **Permanent Homes** – are found quickly. There are enough families and children can live with brothers and sisters.
- **Adoption** – experienced staff, few delays – 3 months approval to matching in one place.
- **Leaving Care** - is well planned, accommodation is good.
- **Leaders** (politicians too) – understand the strengths and weaknesses and have a plan. **They learn** from practice.
- **Management Oversight of Practice** – **a priority.** Managers know the cases well. **Principle Social Workers** influence effectively.
- **Performance** – understood – **numbers and practice.**
- **Resources** – **prioritised**, shared and **targeted.**
- **Children** – their **voice is important.** There is evidence of their engagement.
- **Working Environment** – is **prioritised**, **vacancies** managed, **workload** monitored, the **quality of training and supervision** is very important.

This information is taken from a presentation “The Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services” by Jeremy Gleadon, Senior OFSTED HMI on 04/02/2015.

Narrowing the Gap – In Life Chances and Education:

- A group of children that we need to focus on are those children in the category of FSM (children receiving free school meals).
- Statistically Bath and North East Somerset is performing in the top 25% nationally for some education indicators BUT for others, is in the bottom 25%. For example in 2014 the gap between FSM pupils and non-FSM achieving 5 A* - C including maths and English was 34.6%.
- Although improvements were seen in 2014 the gap is not closing as the non-FSM children have further improved.
- We know there are gaps for LAC, some BME and SEN children but children in receipt of FSM are the highest profile issue for us in B&NES.
- We need to be concerned for that group of children who are not achieving as well as they might because the gap widens with age and becomes inter-generational and because it results in inequality of outcomes and life chances.
- This is an issue not just for educational professionals but for all of us – multiple factors affect children's ability to learn, not just what happens in school – we can all contribute in our different roles across the services by **working together** with children and families and each other to support children to attain their potential.
- For example, children on FSM may be less likely to get a good breakfast, have less support at home, have lower self-esteem, feel excluded from trips on financial grounds, have a challenge with affordability of uniform (and even more so with non-uniform events) and as a result enjoy school less, have poorer attendance and are less ready to learn at when they are at school.

This website includes good information for all services who work with children and families to aim to narrow the gap: www.C4EO.org.uk . A useful power point presentation can be found on [The Michael Sieff Foundation](#)

Don't forget; this is your opportunity to shine and show what a good job you do for children and young people in Bath and North East Somerset.

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