



RESPONSE BY THE PCC TO HMICFRS INSPECTIONS OF CLEVELAND POLICE

INSPECTION DETAILS

Title of Inspection

PEEL: PCC HMICFRS Response - Child Protection Post Inspection Review - Cleveland

Date Inspection Published

November 2018

Type of Inspection:

- Cleveland Specific National
 Follow Up Thematic
 Partner Inspection

Is Cleveland Police quoted in the Report? Yes No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

In May 2017, HMICFRS conducted a child protection inspection of Cleveland Police. In September 2017, the findings of that report concluded that

'The Chief Officer team had a clear and unequivocal commitment to protecting vulnerable children. This was widely recognised by the staff, officers and other agencies with whom HMICFRS spoke as part of the inspection. Whilst some improvements had been made, the force need to take further action in strengthening its safeguarding practice, some of which needed to be done as a matter of urgency, in order to protect adequately those children most at risk'.

Since the May 2017 inspection, the post inspection review findings, published in November 2017, highlighted that the Force had taken steps to improve safeguarding practices and outcomes for vulnerable children. It had reviewed some of its structures, systems and processes and had put in place some good initiatives to help improve awareness of child protection issues.

Some areas of practices were still found to be weak, particularly how the force responded to those who go missing from care or from home. Even when significant vulnerabilities were known, activity to locate and safeguard those children was often absent.

The new processes to record information in cases where there were concerns about the welfare of children were not being used consistently and were not easily accessible to staff.

The Force recognised the need to improve in certain areas, and understood what was required to ensure that it provided a consistently good child protecting practice. The Force had taken some important and positive initial steps to address the recommendations from the 2017 inspection, but accepted there was still more to do to improve its protective practices and outcomes for children.

FORCE RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

We have dealt with over 6500 cases of children and young people who have been reported missing since early 2017 with each case having individual complexities and needing varying degrees of specialist resource.

Our staff and officers are committed to safeguarding our children; however they can only go so far due to the limited resources that we have available to us. There are increasing demands upon the Force around child protection and safeguarding matters, however we do not work in isolation and it is a partner agency responsibility.

Going forward, we are going through substantial change to better manage our demands; the Chief Constable has announced the removal of two ranks within the structure and is streamlining processes quickly and effectively. We also launched a Missing from Home Improvement Team to audit cases and share learning. The Inspectorate identified that we are going in the right direction and this is reflected in the report.

PCC RESPONSE TO INSPECTION

Comment by the PCC:

Protecting the most vulnerable in our communities will always be a priority for me and figures show that Cleveland has particularly high volumes of calls regarding vulnerable and missing children.

As demand increases and resources dwindle, it is more important than ever that the police and partner agencies work together on these complex issues to keep our children and young people safe.

I am confident that the Chief Constable's restructure will allow the Force to make the best use of the resources they have and I will seek to ensure that momentum is continued through my scrutiny programme.

Through the scrutiny programme, in April 2018 and prior to the re-inspection, I asked the Force to provide information on the progress with the actions contained within the Force's action plan.

In doing so, the Force explained that they had undertaken an exercise to review and consider other force's action plans and had taken areas of best practice in other areas. Concentrated training had been given which had included initiatives such as 'adopt a shift' and videos which provided details on the links between missing from home and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). A 'missing' task group had been set up to ensure that the Force had the right data to be able to map out that demand including details on what harm people were coming to and where the hotspots were.

It was noted that in order to ensure a consistency of oversight, the problem solving team undertook a lot of work around the high demand cases but more preventative work was needed. Especially with children's homes and undertaking better assessments, the Force were working with the Children's Society in order to ensure that this happened and significant progress was being made.

The Force were working on Public Protection Notices and Occurrence Enquiry Log (OEL)s. A training plan for staff would be in place by the time of the inspection with a timetable and programme for completion will be established by July.

The Chief Constable was also the national lead for children missing from home and consideration

would be taken of best practice from forces around the country to ensure that the Force was up to date with national best practice.

A further update following the post inspection report would be required from the Force on 20 February.

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