	Corporate Parenting Committee 24 April 2023
	Report from the Corporate Director of Children and Young People
Outcome of Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS)	
Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Inspection Report
Background Papers:	N/A
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1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report informs Members of the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) that was published on 11 April 2023. The full report is attached.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 Note the findings of the inspection and the 'Good' judgement across all categories.
- 2.2 Agree to receive a further report on the plan to address the recommendations and areas for development in respect of looked after children and care leavers.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 ILACS focuses on the effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements:
- to help and protect children
 - the experiences and progress of children in care wherever they live, including those children who return home

- the arrangements for permanence for children who are looked after, including adoption
- the experiences and progress of care leavers.

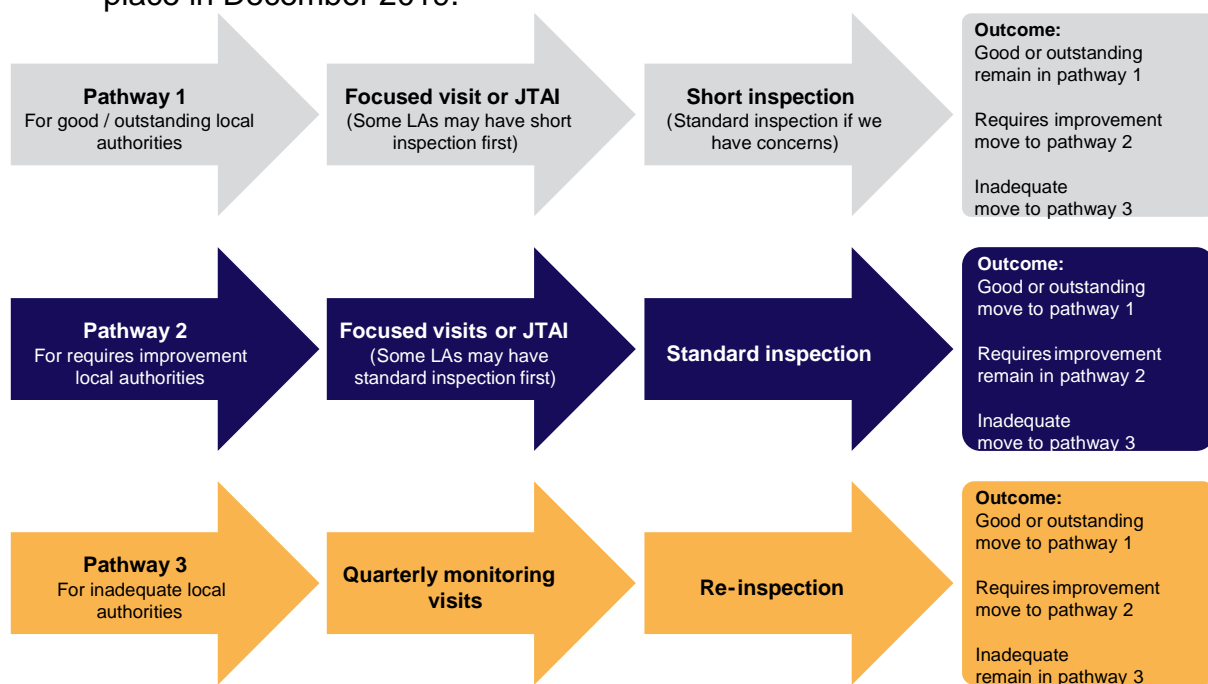
While the framework is primarily focused on social work and the quality of professional practice, the effectiveness of leaders and managers and the impact they have on the lives of children and young people are also evaluated.

3.2 ILACS is an inspection 'system', introduced in January 2018 aimed at making inspection risk-based and proportionate through more frequent contact tailored to each local authority. It comprises:

- an annual engagement meeting (Brent's most recent was July 2022) between the local authority and an Ofsted regional representative to reflect on what is happening in the local authority and to inform future engagement
- standard inspections (usually for local authorities judged requires improvement to be good)
- short inspections (for local authorities judged good or outstanding)
- focused visits that look at a specific area of service or cohort of children, taking place over 2 days, usually in between standard / short inspections
- monitoring visits for authorities rated 'inadequate'
- Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI).

Local authorities are also encouraged to participate in activity outside inspection, such as sharing a self-evaluation for discussion at the annual engagement meeting.

3.3 The following diagram summarises the three inspection pathways in the ILACS framework. Brent is on Pathway 1, having been previously graded as 'Good' at the last ILACS inspection in May 2018. A focused visit into Care Leavers took place in December 2019.



- 3.4 Brent was informed on Monday 13 February 2023 that a short inspection would be undertaken, commencing with immediate effect, with inspectors on site at the Civic Centre from 20 to 24 February. There were 6 inspectors in total. In December 2022 Ofsted introduced a new judgement into the ILACS framework on 'the experiences and progress of care leavers' and this was the first time this was considered in Brent. Ofsted spent time engaging with the local authority in the week preceding the on-site visit, gathering information and intelligence to inform their key lines of enquiry.
- 3.5 Ofsted considered evidence across all ILACS judgements and sought to answer 3 key questions:
- Has the quality and impact of practice been maintained?
 - Are there any areas where the quality and impact of practice have improved?
 - Are there any areas where the quality and impact of practice have deteriorated?
- 3.6 The inspection team tested the validity of Brent's most recent self-evaluation (June 2022) with the main focus on social workers' direct practice with families and the impact on outcomes for children. The inspection involved reading case files and supporting documentation, including evaluating individual children's records that have already been audited by the local authority.
- 3.7 The inspection identified many strengths within the local authority and how it delivers services for children in care and care leavers, particularly services to prevent children entering care, support for disabled children and the education and training opportunities available for children in care and care leavers. In relation to the leadership judgement inspectors found that Members of the council and senior leaders are listening, committed and caring corporate parents, highlighting the impact of Care in Action and Care Leavers in Action to improve and strengthen services.
- 3.8 The overall effectiveness of the local authority was judged to have remained 'good' overall.
- 3.9 An action plan is currently being prepared to address the recommendations arising from the inspection as well as other areas of practice improvement that were identified. An overview of plans to improve and strengthen services will be provided at the next committee meeting.
- 3.10 The full report can be found on this link:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80489>

Report sign-off:

Nigel Chapman

Corporate Director Children and Young People