



Children's Social Care - National Implementation Board

Minutes of meeting held on 16 November 2022, 09:00-10:30

Minister's Boardroom, and virtually via MS Teams.

Attendees

- Amanda Spielman - Her Majesty's Chief Inspector at Ofsted
- Angela Frazer-Wicks - birth parent/parent, Chair of Trustees of Family Rights Group
- Anne-Marie Connelly – care leaver, working within participation at Action for Children
- Sir Anthony Finkelstein CBE, FREng - President of City, University of London.
Computer Scientist
- Claire Coutinho MP - Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing. **Chair.**
- Isabelle Trowler - Chief Social Worker for Children and Families for England
- Janet Kay - adopter and kinship carer
- Jill Colbert OBE - Chief Executive of Together for Children and Director for Children's Services in Sunderland
- Dame Rachel De Souza DBE - England's Children's Commissioner
- Steve Crocker OBE - President of the Association for Directors of Children's Services
- Tom Riordan CBE - Chief Executive of Leeds City Council

Officials in Attendance

- Josh MacAlister - Chair of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care
- Indra Morris - Director-General of Families Group and Senior Responsible Officer of Children's Social Care Reform Programme
- Fran Oram - Director, Children's Social Care – Strategy and Care System, DfE
- Hannah Smith - Head of Government Response Team, DfE
- Madeleine Percival - Children's Social Care Reform Programme Director, DfE

Item 1: Introductions

1. Minister Coutinho, chairing this Board for the first time, introduced herself to members. She set out her ambition for large scale improvement of Children's Social Care. The Minister emphasised the importance of having honest, open conversations in the Board.

Item 2: The Case for Change

2. Members set out the need for reform from their perspective, drawing on their professional expertise and personal experiences.
3. The Board heard personal stories from the members with personal experience of the social care system (experts by experience members), setting out the context and some of the problems with the current system from the point of view of a birth parent, kinship carer and adopter, and a person with care experience.
4. The Minister thanked members for their assessment of the current landscape, extending particular thanks to the experts by experience for sharing their personal stories, which provide a strong grounding for the importance of delivering an ambitious reform agenda.

Item 3: Theory of Change

5. Officials presented the Board with an opportunity to shape the Theory of Change. This is a product that aims to describe the outcomes and outputs we want to achieve across the reform programme, and the activities that will get us there. Overall, members were broadly positive about the document.
6. Members noted that a successful programme will require DfE to control the programmes' complexity. It was highlighted that systems thinking, logistics, data, and processes should be a strong focus to ensure a good understanding of how reforms will impact the system.
7. The Board challenged the Department around being clearer about our goals. In particular, the need to articulate what a high performing system looks like from a data perspective.
8. The Board recognised the importance of clear communication, noting some people will not know what a Theory of Change is. DfE should think how we present the new system to families as well as practitioners.
9. Members emphasised the need to ensure people with personal experience of the care system, including children and young people, remain at the heart of our work and need opportunities to engage as we move to deliver reform.

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