



Keeping your head.....

Cllr Sarah Russell - Deputy City Mayor – Social Care

Linda Clegg – LGA Children’s Advisor -North West

Andrew Bunyan – LGA Advisor

The Leicester Journey...

2015 – Inadequate inspection – Lead member and Director sacked

2015 – 2017 Monitoring visits, DFE involvement, Improvement board, huge changes and challenges.

2017 – Requires Improvement judgement by Ofsted

2017 – 2021 – Poor SEND review, continual challenge, DCS changes, our own improvement board (independently chaired), COVID.

2021 – GOOD inspection outcome

2021-2022 – Striving for Excellence – but constantly worrying about staying good!

At the beginning..

CHILDREN ARE SERIOUSLY INADEQUATELY MASSIVELY OVEREQUIPPED

What did Ofsted say?

Inspection date: 14 January – 4 February 2015

Report published: 20 March 2015

The overall judgement is that children’s services are inadequate

There are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. Leaders and managers have not been able to demonstrate sufficient understanding of failures and have been ineffective in prioritising, challenging and making improvements.

It is Ofsted’s expectation that, as a minimum, all children and young people receive good help, care and protection.²

The judgements on areas of the service that contribute to overall effectiveness are:

1. Children who need help and protection	Inadequate
2. Children looked after and achieving permanence	Requires improvement
2.1 Adoption performance	Good
2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Requires improvement
3. Leadership, management and governance	Inadequate

“There has been a corporate failure of leadership to a point where children are no longer adequately protected.”

The only way is up?

- Morale
- Exhaustion
- Digging
- Staff churn
- Partners referrals
- Poor early work leads to higher numbers

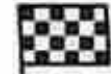
Early decisions

- Budget
 - Permanent Uplift vs One off Injection
 - Short term fixes vs Capacity building
- Governance
- Honest allies

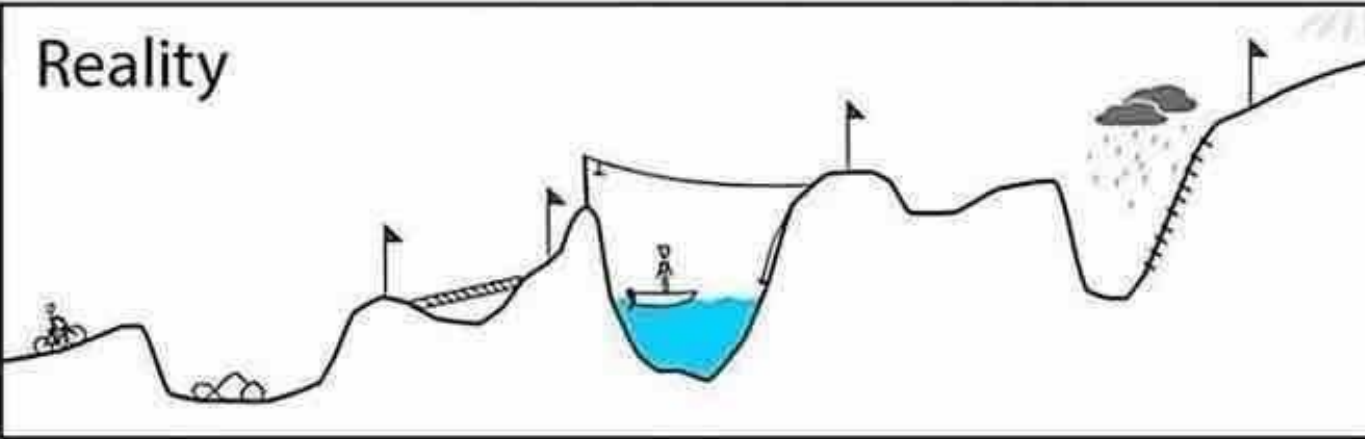
Managing Expectations

- Staff
- Members
 - Leader/Executive
 - Own group
 - Opposition
- Media
- Wider political party
- Public
- Your own

Your plan



Reality



Focus

- Who decides?
- LM/Director
- Short vs medium vs long



Relationships

- Director
- Senior team
- Leader
- Scrutiny lead
- Other Cabinet/Exec leads
 - Adults – transitions
 - Health
 - Housing
 - Education (if separate)
- Partners

“Triangulation”



Follow the money

- Investment £2.4m to support improvement
 - £1.2m each year
 - Tracked monthly
 - All new commitments had to demonstrate what they would add long term
 - Included external auditors, performance specialists, senior capacity
- Development of the cross-service Multi-agency CSE Missing Trafficked Hub
- Halford House Accommodation - Children's social care fieldwork
- Permanent funding into placement budget and staffing structures to safeguard children/young people
- Grow our own
- Temporary funding to recruit level 2/3 social workers to support newly qualified social workers (over establishment)
- £500k investment in Signs of Safety practice framework
- Deployed resources from across support services to work with children's services

The softer side....

- Laughter
- Despair
- Resilience
- Cake

Preparing for Ofsted visits

- Honesty
- Support
- Challenge
- Planning
- Creating an industry
- Agree feedback process

When Ofsted are in.....

- CHOCOLATE
- Lonely
- Keep busy
- Try not to interfere
- Keep the Leader in the loop

What next?

- Exhaustion
- Staff changes
- Re-setting
- Partnerships
- Expectations
- Consolidation

Not yet good (or Outstanding)

- Staying on track
- Losing interest?
- Budgets and support
- Meetings and structures
- Data – who needs it – and in what ways!
- Easier to fall back than move forward.

What no one tells you

- Left side
- Holidays
- Can be lonely
- Lack of control
- Budget pressures

Essentials

- Honest Allies
- Triangulation
- Follow the money
- Hold your nerve
- There is no end line!