

Report for Kersey PC from County Councillor Robert Lindsay 2.9.24

Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care

In August the inspection report for Suffolk County Council's social care services for children was published, following a visit from Ofsted at the end of May. The report found that social care services for children, which include fostering and adoption, safeguarding, child protection, youth justice and corporate parenting (children in care), 'require improvement to be good.' My opposition group are concerned by this as children's services were rated as 'Outstanding' the last time they were inspected in 2019, and the remarks on leadership – that leaders do not have 'sufficient grip' on all the services provided – are especially worrying.

A new director for children's services started in July 2024, and more information will be available on the plans for improvement in September when the inspection report is tabled at Cabinet. Here is a summary of the findings of the report:

- The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families – Requires improvement to be good
- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection – Requires improvement to be good
- The experiences and progress of children in care – Good
- The experiences and progress of care leavers – Requires improvement to be good
- **Overall effectiveness – Requires improvement to be good**

This inspection is separate from the recent inspection into services for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

You can read the full Ofsted inspection report here:

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80565>

Free online courses for school transitions

The county is providing free online courses for children starting primary or secondary school and for their parents. You can access these using the link www.inourplace.co.uk/moving-up and register for an account using the access code WOLSEY.

Electric Car Hire

The county has won a bid for £7.3m Government funding for electric car infrastructure. £1.4m will go towards chargers in 63 community sites such as village halls, scout huts, while £5.9m will be spent on on-street charging. Also the county will be tendering for a company to provide an electric car rental service across eight locations in Suffolk including Sudbury, Needham and Stowmarket. Residents can book them by the minute, hour or day.

Launch of Solar Together Suffolk

The county is launching a group buying scheme for people wanting to install solar panels or battery storage. If you sign up to the scheme, an independent company will organise bids from installers to collectively install several schemes in your area. The winner is the cheapest bidder.

It is free to register at www.solartogether.co.uk/suffolk, and there is no obligation to go ahead with an installation.