

Ofsted Assurance Visit October 2020

Frances Craven – Chief Executive

Steven Gauntley – Director of Quality and Performance

Pauline Turner – Director of Operations

Tara Malik – Director of Resources

Purpose of this engagement session



- To explain OFSTED's assurance visit programme
- To outline some of the history and context of children's services and inspections in Sandwell
- Remind staff of our progress, and how we have overcome challenges during the pandemic
- Remind staff of our continuous improvements
- Questions – please use the chat bar and we will try our best to answer straight away (or respond as soon as possible)

Ofsted Inspections

- We were inspected in November 2017 and judged to be inadequate
- 12 visits / inspections from our regulators
- We have shown Ofsted and others our trajectory of improvement
- Inspectors will be undertaking an assurance visit in Sep / Oct 2020
- The full inspection is expected in Easter 2021
- Suspension of inspection during the pandemic, and legal framework to do so
- From 15th September 2020 Ofsted have been visiting children's services departments to assure themselves that children are safeguarded during the pandemic
- Full inspections are expected to resume in April 2021

Scope of the Assurance Visit

1. Help & Protection

effectiveness of front door, with reference to any rise in & response to referrals, S47 enquiries & strategy discussions
progress of children subject to CP & CIN plans
progress of those recently stepped up or stepped down to early help & the exercise of thresholds

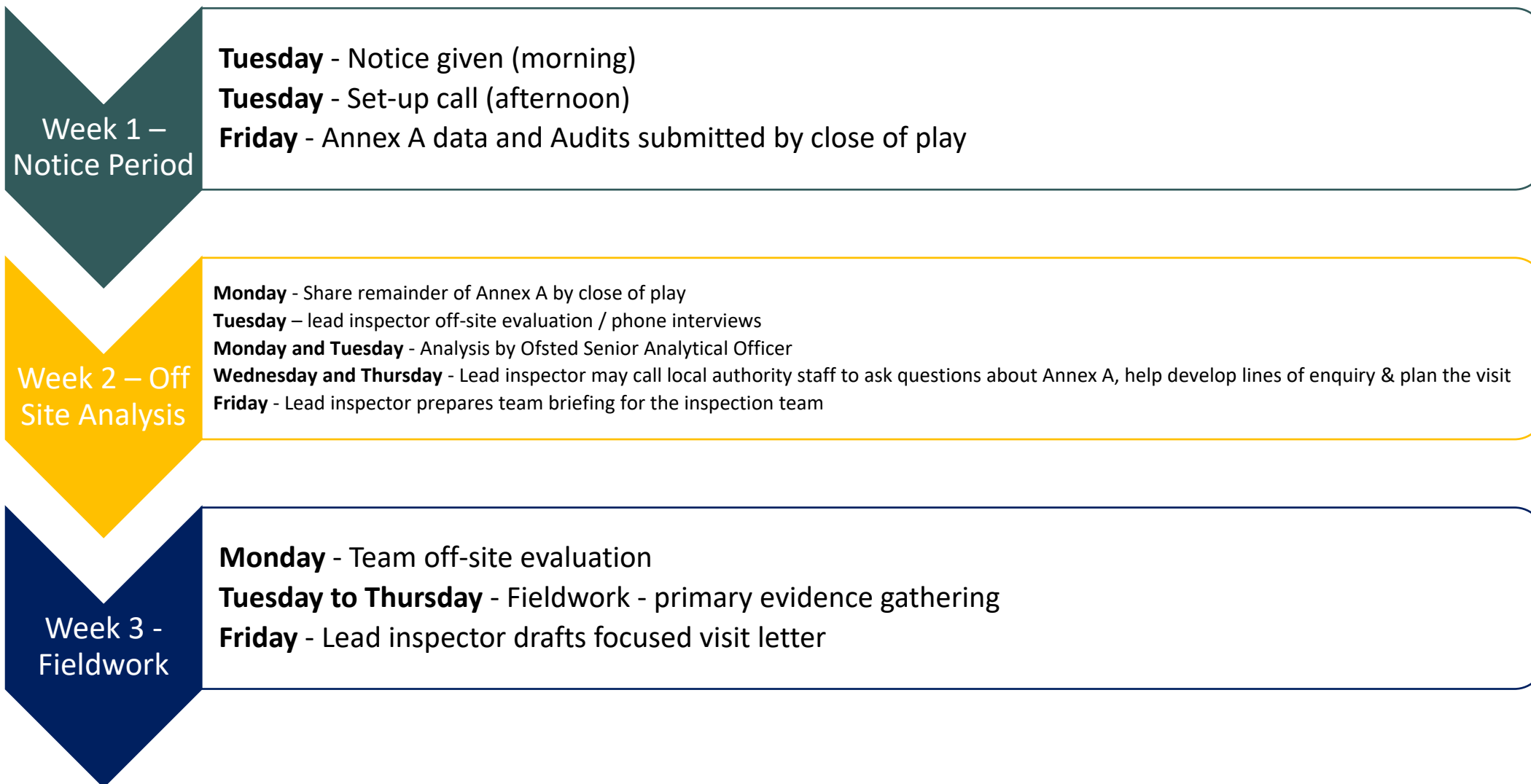
2. Children in Care & Care Leavers

edge of care/pre-proceedings, particularly those subject to a letter before proceedings
focus on physical & mental health of children in care & care leavers, including how LA has maintained contact with them & facilitated contact with families
placement decisions, including quality of matching, particularly where sufficiency is a challenge

3. Impact of Leaders

the quality assurance of practice & 'line of sight' to the quality & impact of practice with children & families
management & workforce capacity, including responses to staff wellbeing
effectiveness of leaders in leading & contributing to multi-agency working that leads to effective social work practice

Timeline of the Assurance Visit



What the inspectors are looking for

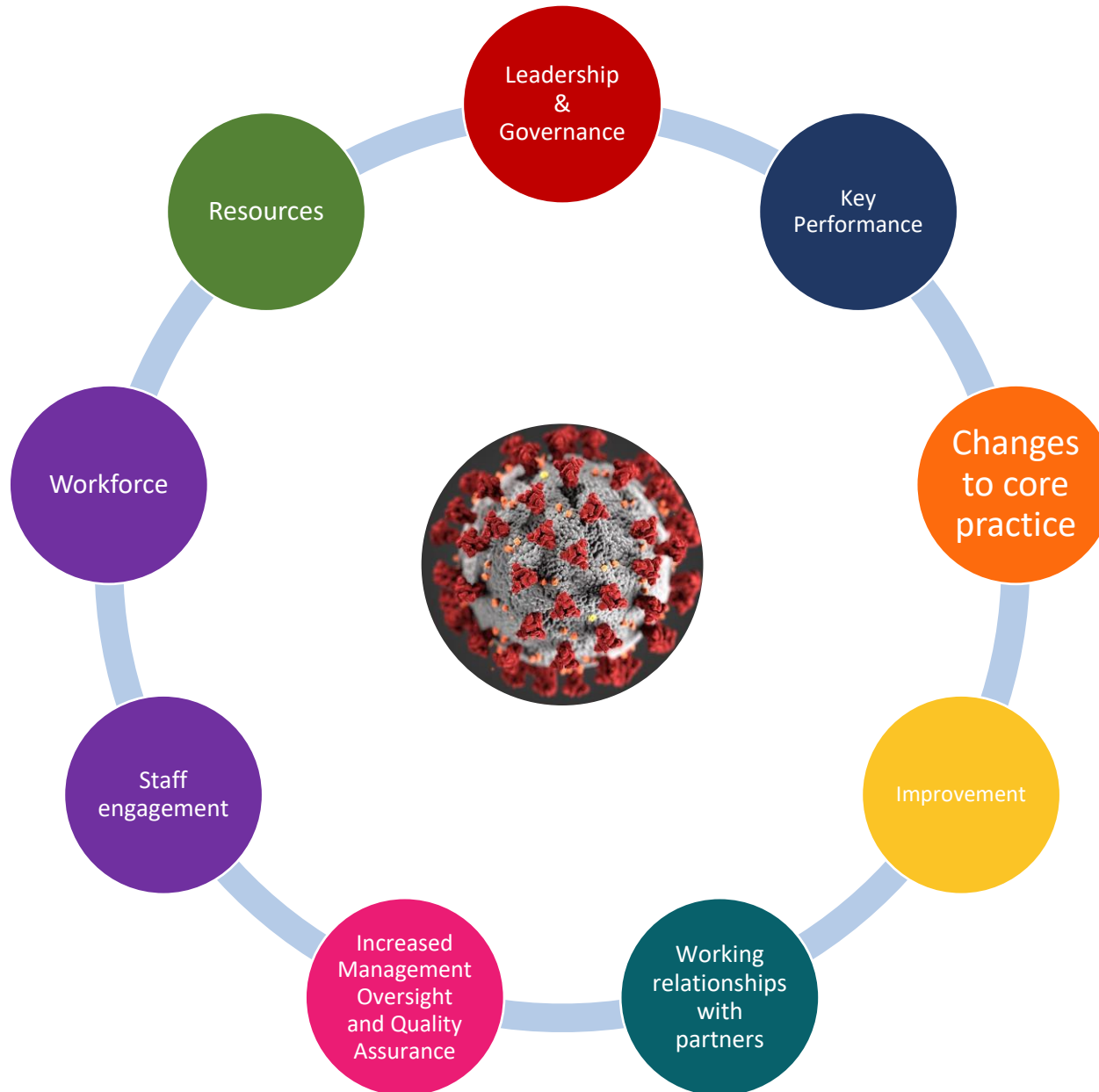
- what has happened for children & families in the 6 months before the visit - their experiences
- child-centred practice that has been carefully risk assessed to result in best possible decisions for children in the context of the pandemic locally
- evaluating & seeking assurance about quality & impact of practice within a challenging context, when circumstances may have resulted in decisions that may have been different to those taken in normal times
- give credit to evidence of practitioners & managers doing the right thing for children in the circumstances
- understand how any of the changes to regulation set out in The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 have impacted on the experiences of children and families

Schools HMI

A schools HMI will be present during the assurance visit and will seek assurance on:

- the educational progress of children in care
- children missing education
- electively home-schooled children
- how the local authority has promoted school attendance
- partnership working between schools and the local authority
- the effectiveness of the virtual school
- the experiences of care leavers not in education, employment or training (NEET)

Impact of COVID-19



Practice response to the pandemic

- Majority of staff working from home
- Implementation of pre-visit risk assessments
- Supply and use of Personal Protective Equipment
- Virtual Visiting – changes in legislation
- Identification and recording of families who are self isolating and shielding
- Multi-agency discussions to decide whether a child was safer at school or at home
- Face to face contact between children in care and their families moved to virtual arrangements – most have now been reinstated

Increased Management Oversight



- COVID-19 management decisions
- Identifying the children most vulnerable during the pandemic (prioritisation of services)
- Automated dashboards for monitoring virtual visits and new covid 'hazard flags'
- New performance reporting for school attendance
- Temporary increase in frequency of performance boards
- Redirection of QA resource to undertake targeted auditing
- Response to serious incidents

Improvements in our practice during the pandemic



- Significant incidents plan – improved our pre-birth assessments
- Simplified the pre-meeting assessment
- Closer links with HR and better information from exit interviews
- Strengthened work around court hearings – an opportunity to capitalise on technology - improved reputation in court
- Threshold discussions held prior to ICPC's
- We are seeing more cultural genograms
- Themes from Learning Reviews have influenced practice development

Key performance

- We have managed a higher number of referrals from police and health, with greater complexity.
- We have utilised forecasts to estimate our lost demand, which has allowed us to put into place arrangements for this surge.
- We have had handled nearly 100% of our contacts within timescales.
- We began to visit children less (appropriately) once we entered lockdown (on average 50-60% of children were visited face to face), but since June we have visited children face to face more often (average 70% - 80%)
- We have maintained good assessment timeliness (80-90% assessment completed on time) and audit outcomes (80% RI or better)
- We have not had more than 3 cases unallocated for longer than 5 days throughout the pandemic
- ICPC timeliness has been consistently above 80% (mostly over 90%) throughout the pandemic

Workforce

- Between June and September; 12 permanent social workers joined SCT and 5 have left; 11 agency social workers joined SCT and 9 have left
- Enhanced LinkedIn recruitment activity to adjust the way we advertise and to increase our direct connections (357 connections)
- Social Work Together Programme
- Social media campaign underway
- 'get to know us' briefing with our agency suppliers
- Updating our career's page on our website
- A refreshed 12 Reasons Communication Programme

Staff engagement - SWOT

Strengths

- Much better work / life balance
- More organised with fewer interruptions
- Exploiting technology...finding ways to make it work for us
- Feel supported, connected and trusted
- Less time getting ready and travelling, more productive

Weaknesses

- Isolation and loneliness impacting on mental health & wellbeing
- Missing face to face contact and the buzz of the office
- Feel less connected to team and Trust
- Technology not fit for purpose
- More difficult to engage children and families virtually

Opportunities

- Redesign our accommodation to meet our needs
- Embrace technology for visits, supervision, training and more
- Plan our days more effectively work smarter
- Attract, recruit and retain staff from further afield
- Windows 10, Teams, SharePoint and Outlook to be used to their full potential

Threats

- Remote working leads to isolation
- More difficult to embed the culture of the organisation
- Families can 'hide' when working virtually
- Relationships harder to develop virtually
- Fewer opportunities to learn from each other especially new starters and ASYEs

Wellbeing and Resilience through the pandemic



- Individual risk assessments for front line operatives
- In August colleagues who had identified as shielding were encouraged to remain shielding
- Staff who had identified a concern with being able to work normally have individual agreements
- Reopening of the Hollies centre for contact time for children with families
- A survey is underway to understand their experiences of working during Covid-19 so they can be better supported
- SCT incident management form and process for managing identified cases of Covid-19 within the workplace
- Our message is that staying in touch with colleagues and friends is essential

Continuous Improvement - SCT Learning HUB Framework

Practice Framework

The Childs Journey

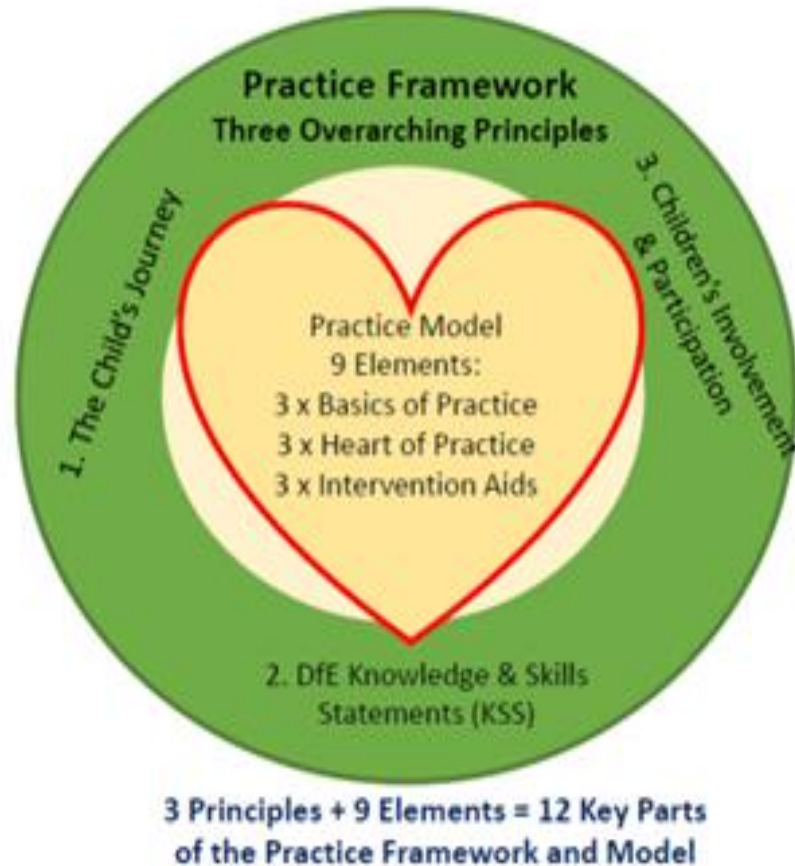
My CPD Journey

CPD Journeys with our Partner Agencies



PRACTICE LEARNING
CORE TRAINING OFFER
TLNA
12 REASONS
IMPACT EVALUATIONS
TRAIN THE TRAINER
CHAMPIONS GROUPS
CAREER PATHWAY
MANDATORY v DEVELOPMENTAL

Continuous Improvement - Beyond Auditing



Modelling of Good SW Practice – improving practice

Safe environment for practice learning

Embedding of practice framework

Facilitated practice learning – building confidence

"I found the beyond auditing sessions very helpful to improve my practice, using direct work, assessment writing and understanding the child's journey. My BA auditor Eileen was brilliant and very supportive"

Quality Assurance



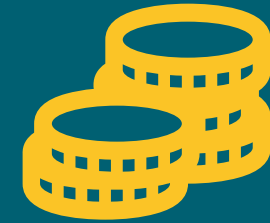
Continued rigour within our Quality Assurance:

- Ensured that our learning audits demonstrate we are firmly within the RI space
- More and more evidence of good practice; audits with features of good practice – building confidence within our practitioners
- Enabled audits to become more learning based through increased practitioner involvement and adding value, empowering and being more of a collaborative process
- Increased trust in the QA process through improved moderation of audits that accurately and consistently reflect good thresholds for audit ratings
- Helped and supported all managers to become better auditors as a window back in to practice
- Seeking more feedback in different ways
- SEND and diversity issues at the forefront of discussion



Ensuring we support and look after the right children

Budget pressures which mean we have to make each penny go further



Our challenges

Relentless continuous improvement journey



Attracting, recruiting, retaining and developing our workforce



Leadership Messages

- We are committed to ensuring children are safe and get the best possible service in the face of the challenges the pandemic brings
- We continue to be ambitious for our young people and adults
- We routinely capture the voice and lived experience of children and make sure they are fully involved in decision making
- We have a relentless focus on continuous improvement
- We have a safe and supportive environment where practice can flourish
- We have visible and connected leadership
- We have a clear management grip, and robust oversight

Things to think about if you are interviewed by an Inspector



- Demonstrate aspiration for our children and young people and being ambitious as an organisation
- Bring the child / young person to life
- Talk about their wishes and feelings and any direct work with them
- Working in partnership with others and having a focus on the young person
- Know your children – if things haven't gone well, be able to explain what you've done about it!
- Be confident



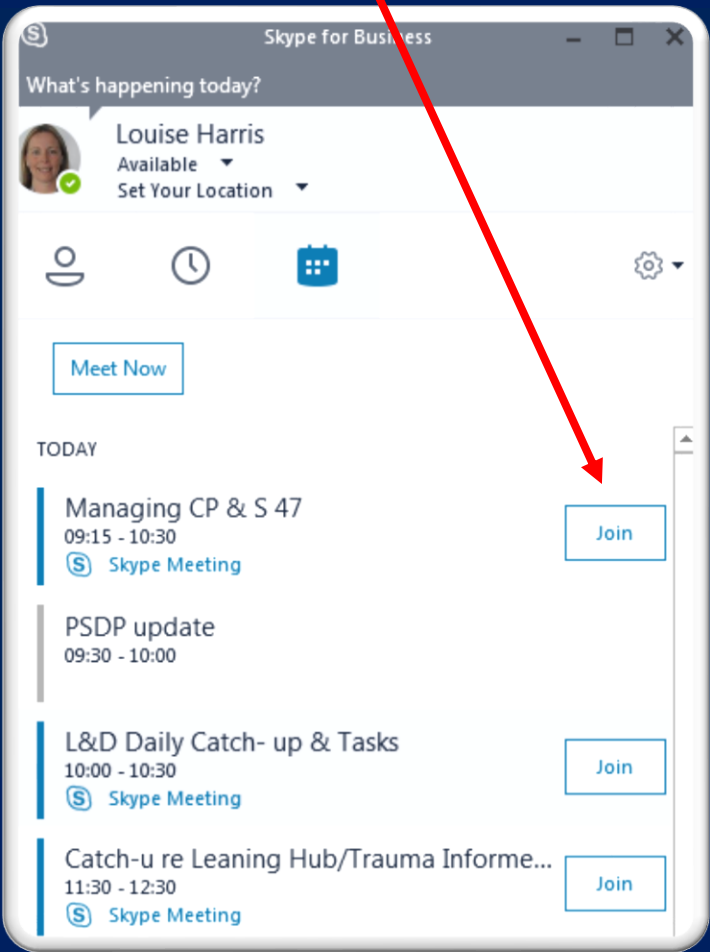
Support for staff during inspection

- Preparation and support if Ofsted choose one of your children to 'deep-dive'
- Quality Assurance overview on the case – with a focus on good practice and how to best evidence this
- Beyond Auditing Practice Learning – Facilitated sessions with all social workers, managers and IRO's – themes and individually
- Support from Beyond Auditing to put in place any remedial action
- One to one offer of support in sharing screen and navigating Skype / LCS
- Engagement session prior to the visit
- Debrief after the visit to offer support and capture key lined of enquiry
- All correspondence with inspectors through CS_Inspect mailbox

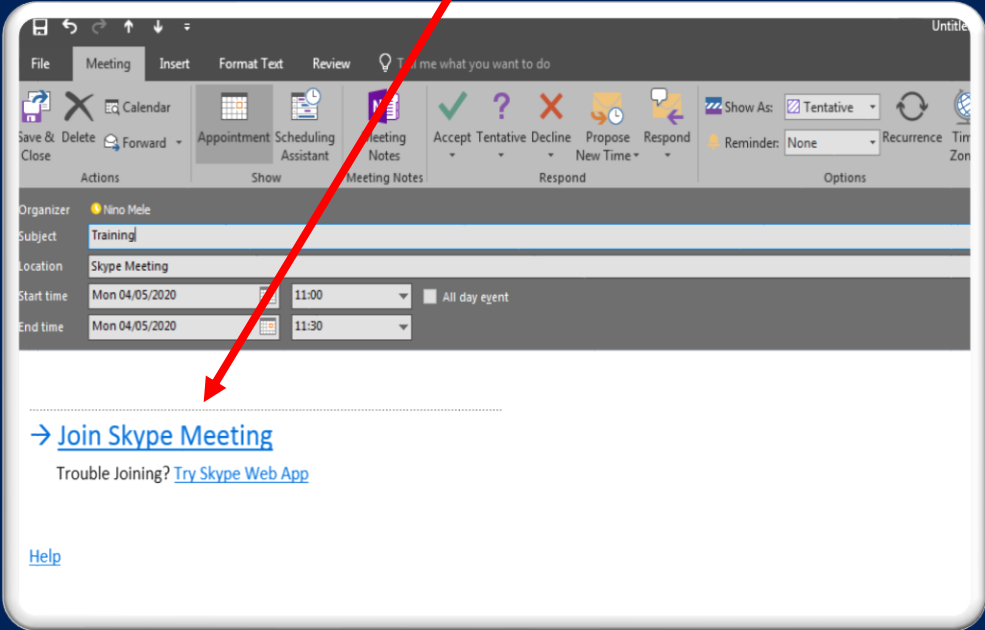
Sharing Your Screen

How to join a Skype Meeting

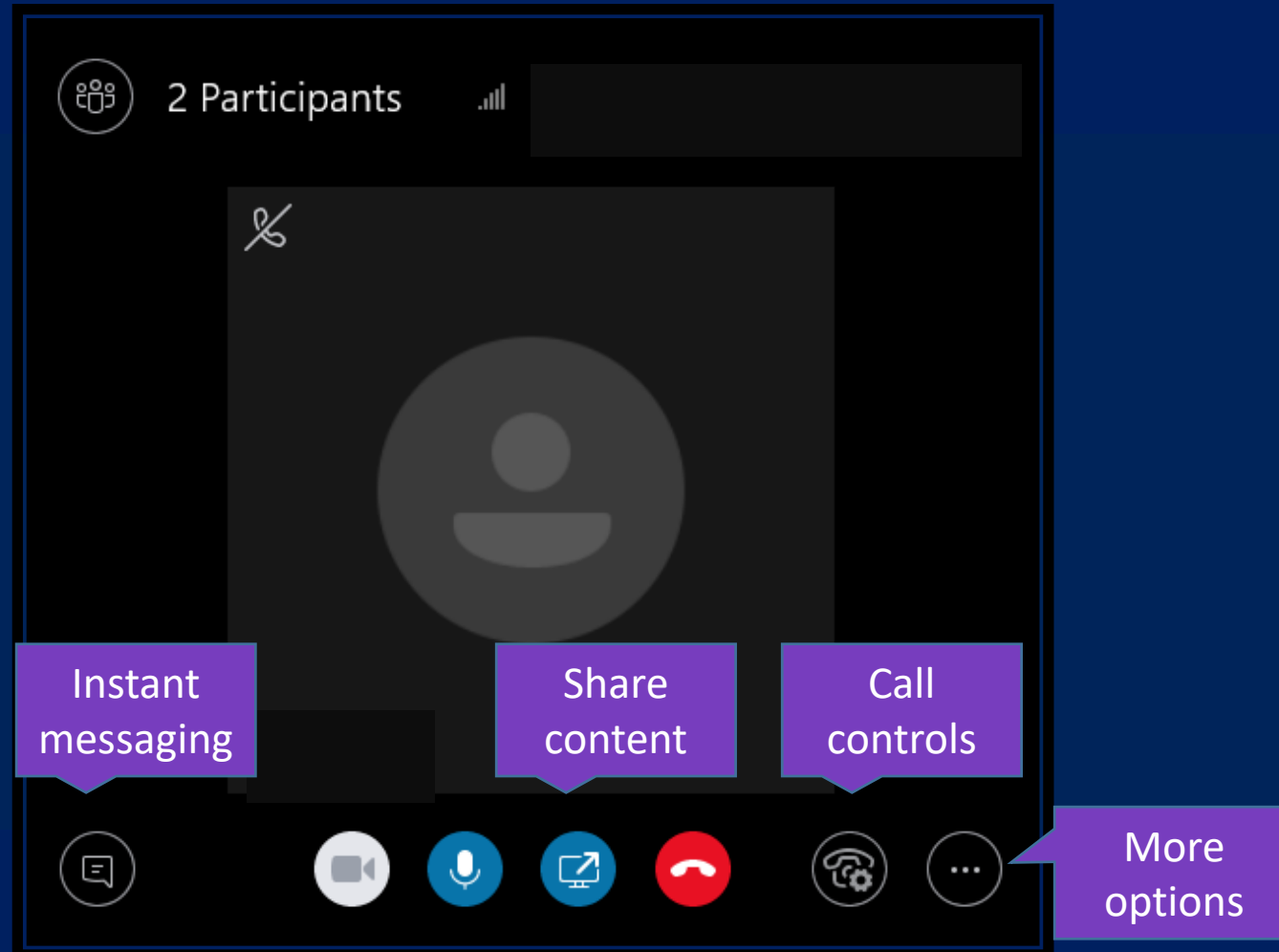
Click the **Meetings** tab, and
Click on > “join”



In your calendar appointment
Click on > **Join Skype Meeting**



Skype meeting icons



How to share your screen

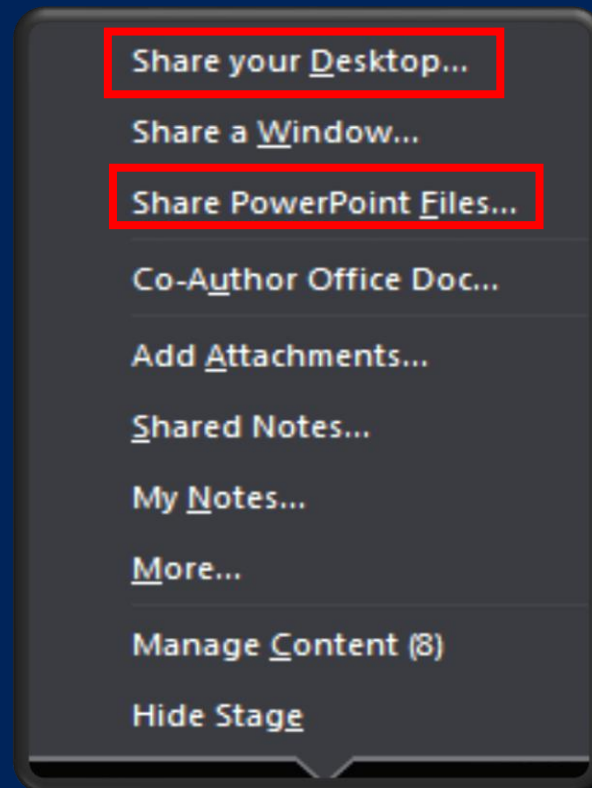
Important: When sharing your desktop, everyone in the Skype meeting can see your programs, files, and notifications. If you have confidential information or files that you don't want people to see, close them.

1

At the bottom of the conversation window, click the **share content** button

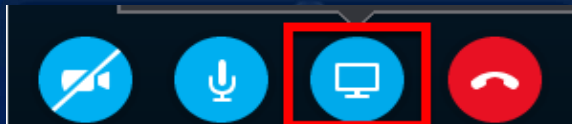
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Remember to minimize your screen once it has been shared



2

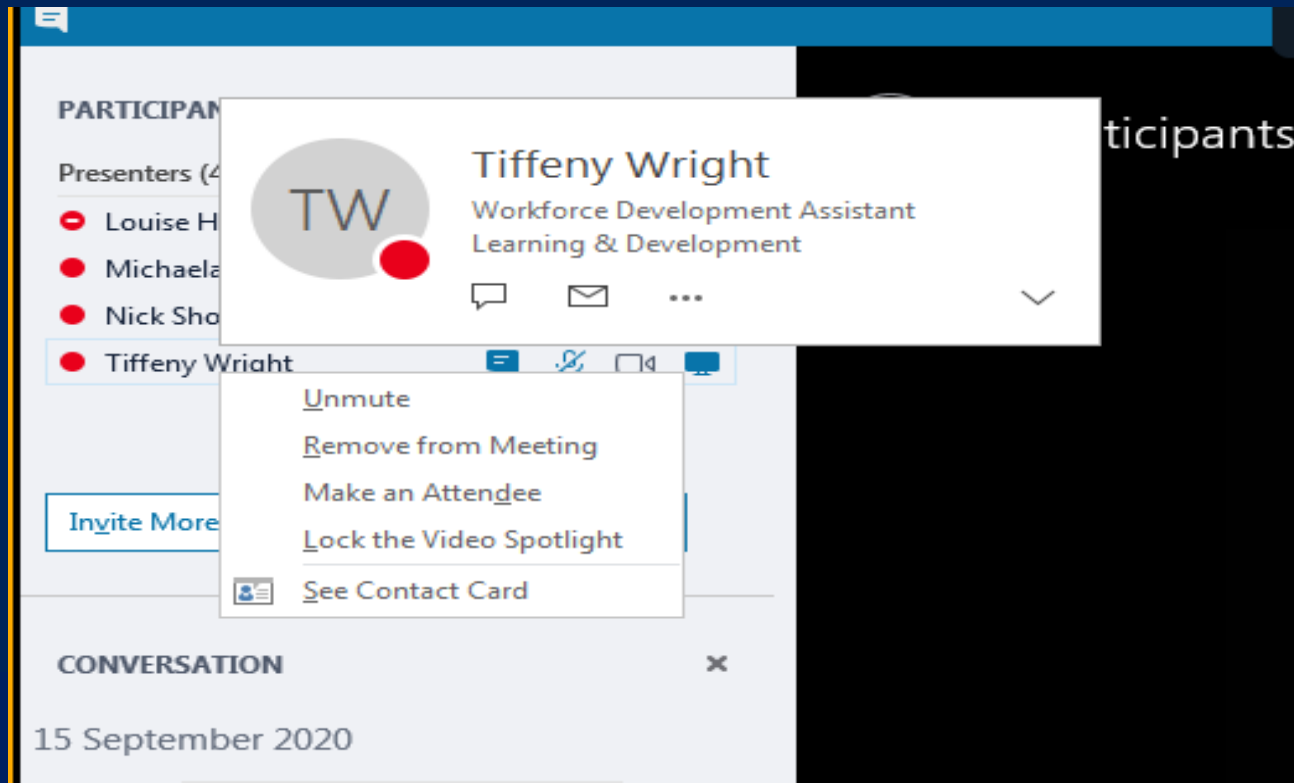
Choose one of the following:
To share the content on your desktop, click **Share your Desktop** or click **Share PowerPoint Files**, and then select the specific file.



Managing Participants

Right click on a persons name in the participant panel to:

- See their contact information
- Mute/unmute
- Remove them from the meeting



If there is an external person in the meeting right click on their name to do all of the above and:

- make the a presenter

This means they will be able to share their screen and/or PowerPoint presentation

⚠ Access to Liquidlogic Children's System

Unauthorised access to this system is an offence.

Personal information held within the system is subject to the provisions of Data Protection legislation and you must only access personal information where it is necessary to perform your work duties. Unauthorised access to data for any use which is not strictly for SMBC could lead to disciplinary proceedings and, in some cases, criminal prosecution.

You must not disclose personal information within the system to third parties unless they have a lawful requirement to access that information and you should ensure that you are familiar with the Council's Electronic Communications Policy.

Further information on Data Protection can be found on the Council's Intranet.

Personal information held within the system is subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Legislation and the Computer Misuse Act 1990.

★ Legislation

Access to and use of the Liquidlogic Children's System and all data held within, is covered by legislation concerning the protection and use of personal information. This legislation includes:

- * **The Data Protection Act 1998**
- * **The Computer Misuse Act 1990**
- * **The Human Rights Act 1998 (article 8)**
- * **The Freedom of Information Act 2000**
- * **The Common Law Duty of Confidence**
- * **General Data Protection Regulations – GDPR (from 25 May 2018)**

📞 Helpdesk

If you experience any systems problems, please contact the helpdesk by logging a call on the ICT Helpdesk Portal and selecting SCSS Systems Administration

📅 Systems Training

All systems training courses can be booked via OLM Learning and can be found by searching for LCS in the course catalogue. If you need on site support please email SCSS_ChildrensTraining@sandwell.gov.uk

Sign In

Please enter your Login ID:

OK

Thankyou for your time



Please put any questions you might have in the chat bar or send to trust_comms mailbox. We will answer these questions as soon as we can.

