

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 21 November 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Ian Saunders (Chair), Steve Ayriss (Deputy Chair), Andy Bainbridge, Olivia Blake, John Booker, Terry Fox, Craig Gamble Pugh, Kieran Harpham, Karen McGowan, Mohammad Maroof, Abtisam Mohamed, Josie Paszek, Colin Ross, Cliff Woodcraft and Douglas Johnson (Substitute Member)

Non-Council Members in attendance:-

Gillian Foster, (Diocese Representative - Voting Member)
Alison Warner, (School Governor Representative - Non-Council Non-Voting Member)
Joanna Heery, (Parent Governor Representative - Non-Council Voting Member)
Peter Naldrett, (Parent Governor Representative - Non-Council Voting Member)

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alison Teal, with Councillor Douglas Johnson attending as her substitute, and Waheeda Din (Education Non-Council Voting Member) and Alice Riddell (Observer - Healthwatch Sheffield).

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 In relation to Agenda Item 8 (Support and Services for Young Carers), Councillor Olivia Blake declared a personal interest as Chair of Sheffield Young Carers' Board.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19th September 2016, were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 There were no questions raised or petitions submitted by members of the public.

6. 2016 PROVISIONAL RESULTS - CITY CONTEXT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE - NOVEMBER 2016

- 6.1 The Committee received a presentation from Pam Smith, Head of Primary and Targeted Intervention, on an interim update in terms of City-wide education attainment in 2016. Ms Smith referred to statistics in terms of attainment at Foundation Stage, and Key Stages 1, 2 and 4, and stated that a more detailed attainment report would be submitted to the Committee's meeting to be held on 20th February 2017.
- 6.2 Also in attendance for this item was Kate Wilkinson, Service Manager, Performance and Analysis Service.
- 6.3 Ms Smith made specific reference to the significant changes made in terms of the assessment framework in 2016, at Key Stages 1, 2 and 4, with the expected standard at Key Stages 1 and 2 being significantly higher compared to previous years, resulting in a smaller percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard.
- 6.4 The Committee also received two documents from Learn Sheffield, the Sheffield School Improvement Strategy 2016-2018 and Sheffield Priorities. It was noted that Stephen Betts, Interim Executive Director, Learn Sheffield, was off work, and unable to attend the meeting.
- 6.5 Members of the Committee raised questions and the following responses were provided:-
- The attainment figures related only to mainstream schools in the City and did not include independent schools.
 - Learn Sheffield had done a very good job in terms of establishing positive relationships between all schools, including academies. There had been huge improvements in terms of schools sharing data between themselves, and with the Council, as well as them engaging in a new school categorisation process. Officers were confident that, with these improvements, together with all the other measures implemented, there would be further improvements in terms of attainment in forthcoming Academic Years.
 - It was appreciated that the statistics set out in the presentation did not provide a complete picture in terms of contrasts in attainment levels at Key Stages 1 and 2, in those schools in deprived areas of the City. Information was available in terms of the breakdown of the statistics in terms of schools' locality, and this would be included in the report to be submitted to the Committee's meeting to be held in February 2017.

- Just over 30% of primary schools in the City were academies, with a few more primary schools looking to convert to academies in the near future. There had been a recent slowdown in terms of the number of schools converting to academies.
- The recent changes in assessment frameworks at Key Stage 1 had been one of the factors which had contributed to Sheffield's low standing in the national rankings with regard to maths. It was considered, however, that as schools became more familiar with the new types of assessments in the future, this ranking would improve. There had also been a number of changes in terms of how school staff were teaching different subjects, and how children were learning, and when such changes became more embedded, it was hoped improvements would be seen. Partnerships between schools were also viewed as an essential factor, and there were seven localities in the City, where schools were working together, and it was hoped that this would also lead to improved attainment outcomes.
- Officers were working very closely with colleagues in Learn Sheffield in connection with schools providing support for each other. There was a very clear set of criteria in terms of how schools were categorised, and what support they could be expected to receive. Steven Betts had held meetings with the Chief Executive Officers of the multi-academy Trusts in connection with the understanding of this process.
- The inequality gap at Foundation Stage was referring to the distribution in attainment, rather than children's disadvantaged status. The statistics referred to a comparison between those lower performing children with their median cohort. Although there was a high number of children performing lower than others, the gap between the two had decreased over the years. Details of attainment levels regarding disadvantaged children could be included in the report submitted to the meeting in February 2017.
- There were no statistics in terms of the inequality gap at Key Stage 4.
- Overall performance in schools was improving, with specific reference being made to the percentage increase in pupils at Foundation Stage achieving a good level of development, from 59.5% in 2014 to 68.6% in 2016.
- The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, at Key Stage 2 was 52% this year, which meant that the gap with the national average, at 53%, had narrowed to 1%. This was a very positive improvement.

- Learn Sheffield had tried, where possible, to use headteachers who had achieved National Leaders of Education or Local Leaders in Education status, but not on an exclusive basis. Learn Sheffield had commissioned work in the summer regarding school improvement.
- Whilst there had been an increase in the number of exclusions at both primary and secondary schools in the City, figures had not been at such a level to lead officers to believe that such exclusions had been made in order to ensure that such pupils, many of whom were lower performing, would not be included in the school's attainment figures.
- The number of schools "below floor or coasting" was expected to reduce from nine in 2015 to approximately four in 2016, and further details on this would be included in the report submitted to the meeting in February 2017.

6.6 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes (i) the information reported as part of the presentation, together with the responses to the questions raised and (ii) that a more detailed report on City-wide attainment in 2016, could be submitted to its meeting to be held in February 2017; and
- (b) thanks Pam Smith and Kate Wilkinson for attending the meeting, and responding to the questions raised, and also expresses its thanks to officers, teachers and pupils with regard to the positive attainment figures now reported.

7. SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR YOUNG CARERS

- 7.1 The Committee received a report of the Acting Director, Children and Families, containing details on the support and services for young carers, with specific reference to the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014. The report set out details of the requirements under the Act, the progress made against such requirements and what the requirements meant for the people of Sheffield.
- 7.2 The report was supported by a presentation from Nicola Shearstone, Acting Head of Service, Children and Families, and Chair of the Sheffield Young Carer Strategic Board, and Sara Gowen, Managing Director, Sheffield Young Carers. Prior to the presentation, the Committee viewed a short film made by young carers in the City.
- 7.3 Nicola Shearstone reported on the requirements of the legislation, which came into force in April 2015, the main requirement of which had been the extension to the right for young carers to have an

assessment. She reported on what this meant for young carers in Sheffield, the Act in terms of the Sheffield context and the implementation of young carer assessments. Sara Gowen reported on the data on assessments, the ongoing developments with regard to data collection, future developments of the young carers' assessments, feedback provided by young carers and some of the broader developments that impacted on young carers. Ms Shearstone concluded by referring to the next steps and recommendations for consideration by the Committee.

7.4 Members of the Committee raised questions and the following responses were provided:-

- Referrals regarding young carers were received from a wide range of organisations and agencies, with the majority coming from schools or Multi-Agency Support Teams (MASTs). Whilst it was not stipulated in the Act that there was a requirement on health services to support young carers, it was hoped that, through the support of this Committee, as well as other agencies, there should be some form of mechanism to ensure that all organisations and agencies could be held to account in terms of supporting young carers. There was a wide range of responses in terms of the level of support received by young carers in schools, and although there had been a considerable level of work with schools in terms of providing support for young carers, it was apparent that there were still a large number of organisations which were not aware of where young carers could be sent to receive relevant support. Work had commenced with Council partners with regard to identifying the most appropriate services available in terms of the provision of support.
- Whilst officers were comfortable with the level of policies and procedures in place to provide relevant levels of support for young carers, it was hoped, and acknowledged, that all young carers did not require a high level of support. It was acknowledged that there was a need to identify the young carers, at the earliest possible opportunity, and then identify the level of support they required.
- In terms of trying to identify young carers, and to make it easier for young carers to identify themselves, a considerable amount of work had been undertaken in schools, which had included all schools having at least one assembly during each school year, on the subject. Following this, all pupils would then complete a questionnaire, which would provide an opportunity for young carers to identify themselves in confidence, if they felt it necessary. It was hoped that the National Health Service would adopt a similar practice. It had also been identified that there was a need for people to be trained to be able to identify young

carers, specifically in terms of noticing certain signs and asking relevant questions. There needed to be continuous assessment on the basis that young carers' needs could change at any time.

- There was a range of support measures that schools could offer to young carers, including showing leniency in terms of the times they arrived at school, making concessions in terms of homework and allowing reasonable access, when appropriate, to their mobile phones.
- The Local Authority has a responsibility for the assessment of young carers under the Act, although officers were aware that a number of assessments were carried out by other organisations or agencies. There was no accurate record in terms of the number of young carers and assessments, and it was hoped that, by better information-sharing between relevant organisations and agencies, this could become a lot clearer. One of the main challenges was how the Local Authority could influence/request other organisations and agencies to undertake assessments. It was hoped that a move towards locality-working would enable the Local Authority to gain better knowledge of the position.
- It was appreciated that 36 assessments undertaken in 12 months appeared a relatively low figure, but it was believed that many more assessments had been undertaken, albeit not recorded, or notified to the Local Authority. It had been identified that there was a need to ensure that both Council officers and officers from other organisations and agencies logged details of all assessments made. Work has commenced on rolling out early help meetings, with around 60% of schools being involved. Handsworth Grange Secondary School send out an information pack to all new starters, which included information on this issue. Also, Sheffield Young Carers ran a school network, with 54 schools involved.
- The level of co-operation from schools, in connection with identifying and offering help and advice to young carers, varied considerably. Whilst, ideally, the Local Authority would welcome a high level of co-operation from all schools in the City, it was appreciated that this was not always possible due to other pressures placed on schools.
- Referrals in terms of assessments were received from across the City. However, there tended to be more referrals from deprived areas, where people's health wasn't as good.
- The Local Authority did not have any specific powers to request schools to co-operate in terms of referrals, or provide assistance

for young carers already identified. It was suggested that contacting school Governing Bodies or Multi-Agency Support Teams may help to make schools more aware. There was also no legal requirement on the part of the Health Service to make referrals or undertake assessments, although progress had been made in terms of raising the awareness of the issue with colleagues in the Service. It was believed that at the present time, a higher number of children were receiving support, than the number of assessments made. One other initiative that had been identified was making a request for all schools to identify a Young Carers' Champion.

7.5 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the report now submitted, the information reported as part of the presentation, and the responses to the questions raised;
- (b) further notes:-
 - (i) that the current revision of the Young Carer Multi-Agency Action Plan will ensure further development of the needs around the young carer assessment; and
 - (ii) notes and supports further developments that are required in relation to:-
 - (A) improving transition arrangements for young carers into adulthood;
 - (B) statutory and voluntary services working with young carers to continue to implement the legislative requirements;
 - (C) statutory and voluntary services continuing to identify ways in which to increase the number of young carer assessments being completed;
 - (D) identifying ways in which to improve the processes that will allow for a whole family approach to caring; and
 - (E) the Local Authority continuing to work to strengthen the local data available in relation to young carers and their needs, which in turn, will support commissioning arrangements;
- (c) requests the Chair to contact Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families) and the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, to ask that they write to all schools in the City to encourage them to nominate a Young Carers' Champion; and

- (d) thanks Nicola Shearstone and Sara Gowen for attending the meeting, and responding to the questions raised.

8. WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

- 8.1 The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer, setting out the Committee's remaining Work Programme for 2016/17.
- 8.2 The Chair stated that, at present, the further report on attainment was scheduled to be submitted in the form of a briefing paper, to the Committee, at its meeting on 20th February, 2017. However, given some of the points raised at this meeting, and in the light of the remaining items on the Work Programme, the Chair proposed that the Committee agree that the nature of the further report be discussed by himself, the Deputy Chair and the Policy and Improvement Officer, to agree a suitable way forward.
- 8.3 Alison Warner raised the point that the Government's "Education For All" Bill had now been dropped, so the briefing paper on "Education Excellence Everywhere White Paper", scheduled for 20th February, 2017, could now be removed from the Work Programme. However, it was accepted that this was a policy area that the Committee would want to keep a watching brief on.
- 8.4 RESOLVED: That, subject to the amendments relating to the issues now reported, the Committee approves the remaining Work Programme for 2016/17 as detailed in the report now submitted.

9. SCHOOL PLACES PLANNING UPDATE

- 9.1 The Committee received and noted a report of the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, providing an update on school places needs in Sheffield, together with details of the Government's recent announcement on grammar schools and, attaching as an appendix, an analysis of need in the south west of the City.

10. SHEFFIELD PARENT CARER FORUM - STATE OF SHEFFIELD 2014 - UPDATE

- 10.1 The Committee received and noted a report of the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, providing an update on the Sheffield Parent Carer Forum – State of Sheffield 2014, setting out an update on the actions underway, describing the activity still to be completed and further work to be undertaken, and proposing a number of actions to improve co-working between the City Council and the Sheffield Parent Carer Forum in the future.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 11.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday, 19th December 2016, at 1.00 pm, in the Town Hall.

