
OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under the Children and Young People Portfolio.

Schools

2. Rise Carr College was inspected by Ofsted on 1 and 2 October. The School was rated as Good overall. Quotes in the Ofsted report include:-
- (a) 'Students make rapid progress in their social and emotional development and well-being. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education, employment or training.'
 - (b) 'Teaching is good. Many lessons capture and hold students' interest well, because tasks are very well matched to their individual ability and needs.'
3. Hummersknot Academy was inspected by Ofsted on 15 and 16 October. The School was rated as Good overall with Outstanding grading for 'Behaviour and Safety of Pupils' and 'Leadership and Management'. Quotes in the Ofsted report include:-
- (a) 'The thirst for excellence that leaders show in all aspects of the Academy's work is outstanding.'
 - (b) 'Teaching is mostly good with many instances where it is outstanding. It continues to improve strongly.'
 - (c) 'Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary.'
4. Longfield Academy of Sport was inspected by Ofsted on 7 and 8 November. The School was rated as Grade 3: Requires Improvement overall but with a Good grading for 'Behaviour and Safety of Pupils'. Quotes in the Ofsted report include:-
- (a) 'Teaching in a number of subjects, for example, art, business, design and technology and physical education is typically good or better.'
 - (b) 'Behaviour is good. Relationships between staff and students are positive. Students feel safe.'
5. Longfield Headteacher has commented 'it was very disappointing that historical data contributed significantly to the overall judgement of the report. Parents and

carers will be reassured to know that both English and Maths departments are now fully staffed with specialist teachers, and results already achieved by our current pupils in Year 11 indicate excellent results for the 2014 cohort.'

6. Carmel College was inspected by Ofsted on 19 and 20 November. The School was rated as Grade 1: Outstanding in every category. Quotes in the Ofsted report include:-
 - (a) 'Students' outstanding progress and high achievement are driven by the College's aspirational target-setting. Ensuring success for every student is at the heart of the College's work.'
 - (b) 'Outstanding pastoral care ensures that students feel, and are safe and secure at the College.'
7. Darlington primary schools recently received national recognition as having the most primary aged pupils (ratio per child population) attend good or outstanding primary schools. This is an excellent achievement for Darlington and its schools.

Children Looked After

8. At 30 November 2013, there were 186 children Looked After by the Council. This represents a decrease of three children since 30 September 2013.
9. Ofsted Interim inspections of the Council's Children's Homes have now commenced. The first Interim inspection took place at Gilling Children's Home on 27 November 2013. The rating of Good from the Key Inspection held on 18 April 2013 was endorsed with the judgement of 'making good progress'.

Child Protection

10. At the end of November, 88 children were subject to a child protection plan. 60 per cent of children were placed under the category of neglect, 20 per cent as a result of emotional abuse, 2 per cent as a result of physical abuse (reduction), and 18 per cent as a result of sexual abuse (increase).
11. There has been a significant increase in the number of children registered due to sexual abuse, this relates to large sibling groups who have been made subject to a plan.
12. In November, an 'opt out' system was put in place whereby children attending a conference would automatically be allocated an advocate (unless they were below the age of 11 or did not want an advocate). This is to improve the 'voice of child' in the conference arena and ensure they feel confident to attend.
13. Darlington also use 'My Conference Pack' as a way for children and young people express their views in the conference. This has been well received by the young people who complete the 'Pack' with support of carer or social worker if needed.

Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

14. The LSCB's performance management framework has a thematic approach. The focus for November's meeting was 'Is safeguarding really everyone's responsibility?' The management information that was scrutinised included the number of referrals from agencies and the multi-agency performance activity within the Child Protection Conference process. Throughout the report, Board members were asked to focus on:-
- (a) What this performance meant for the child and family?
 - (b) Was each agency/organisation's performance good enough?
 - (c) If not, what was the Board's view of what the standard should be?
 - (d) What are Board members going to do to improve performance within their organisations where required?
15. An additional meeting was arranged for both members of the LSCB and the Safeguarding Adults Board to jointly discuss the proposal for a Joint Business Unit, which would service both Boards. Board members agreed to the proposal and a final detailed report will be presented to both Boards in January for sign off.

Early Intervention and Family Support

16. In November we ran our first residential parenting programme involving six families. The reports from families 6 weeks after the event are that they have improved their relationships with their children, have learnt new techniques to manage behaviour and have more understanding of their children's emotional needs.
17. The November NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) figures for Darlington are currently 6.8 per cent, the lowest in the Tees Valley and the lowest that Darlington has achieved since the recession commenced. This is coupled with a greater number of children in Education and Learning places.
18. Having successfully run a Home to Nursery Transition programme with ten schools in the summer, we are now embarking on preparing 35 children who have been identified as vulnerable through the transition programme to ensure there are school ready.

Councillor Cyndi Hughes
Children and Young People Portfolio