
OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

Work Programme

2. We continue to give consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee and taking into account the ambitious programme of change across the Council and the key role of Scrutiny in ensuring that the programme is able to deliver the service improvements and the budget savings necessary.

Anti-Racism Programmes in Schools

3. We received a presentation from Jeff Morgan from Show Racism the Red Card which is an anti-racism educational charity established in 1996.
4. The charity work in schools is primarily throughout the North East and Show Racism the Red Card have delivered anti-racism workshops to more than 10,000 young people every year and in most local authority areas it is funded to do this free of charge.
5. A team of educators and ex-professional football players will visit schools to educate young people from the ages of 5 years to 11 years against racism and feedback received from beneficiaries and neighbouring local authorities show that these workshops are very well received and provide education to young people to help them prepare to play an active role as citizens in an increasingly multicultural society.
6. We were advised that Ron Hogg, the Police and Crime Commissioner has funding available for the next 12 months to undertake work in schools on the anti-hate agenda and we aim to encourage schools in the Borough to take advantage of this funding and deliver anti-racism workshops within their school by contacting www.theredcard.org. and also to promote the work of the charity within our Wards.
7. Show Racism the Red Card also offers teaching and promotional resources to outline suitable activities to tackle racism and promote equality in schools.

Raising the Participation Age (RPA)

8. We received an update on the implementation of the requirements of the Raising of the Participation Age and examined the actions being undertaken to ensure that the local authority meets its requirements to promote the effective participation in education and training of all 16 and 17 year olds resident in the area.
9. From 2015 young people will be required to continue in education or training until their 18th birthday however, young people will be able to choose how they participate post 16 which could be through either full-time education; an apprenticeship; or part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week.
10. Department of Education published data for local authority participation levels for the end of 2011 which showed that 84 per cent of 16 year olds participated in education or training, below the North East average of 92 per cent and a national average of 91 per cent. It was also reported that 76 per cent of 17 year olds participated in education or training, below the North East average of 84 per cent and a national average of 84 per cent.
11. Members were encouraged to learn that the latest Not in Education, Employment of Training (NEET) data indicates that participation is increasing at both Year 12 and Year 13, however there remains a core of young people, often with complex social needs and a history of poor engagement in education, who continue not to participate in further education or training.
12. We discussed the availability of places for post 16 education within the Borough; the lack of sanctions available for non-participation; and the partnership working undertaken to target the young people that are NEET who often have multiple social issues preventing them from engaging which include teenage parents, young offenders and care leavers. We will continue to monitor the progress towards full participation.

0-25 Special Needs System

13. We continue to keep informed on the work of Darlington as a national pathfinder in developing new approaches for implementing the reforms associated with the 0-25 Special Needs System.
14. New legislation which comes into effect from September 2014 aims to implement a new approach which seeks to join up help and support for children and their families across education, health and care, from birth to 25 years.
15. The Pathfinder Steering Group and Project Team have finalised guidance and documentation for a smooth and seamless roll out to all professionals and families affected by the implementation of the new legislation and have also identified further work which is required in the development of an ICT system and data sharing protocols; embedding the principles of Key Worker support into the roles of all professionals involved in supporting children and young people; development of

peer support for parents and young people; embedding the principles of person centred planning to ensure the needs of the child/young person are fully identified; and developing a resource allocation system to enable families to understand the funding allocations used to support their child.

16. 97 families are engaged in the new processes and significant consultation and engagement has been undertaken throughout all stages of developing this programme.
17. This Scrutiny Committee will receive an update on the development of the new 0-25 special needs system across Darlington in Autumn 2014.

Schools in Darlington

18. Members continue to receive updated information on the current position with schools across Darlington and any new developments.
19. Out of the 41 schools in Darlington, 28 are now academies, nine are maintained schools and one Free School. The total included two maintained nursery schools, one of all age special school, one primary special school and a Pupil Referral Unit. We also received information on Free School applications within the Borough; School Organisation and supply of school places for all children within the Borough; and the changes under the Education Act 2011 for establishing new schools.
20. We also examined the role of Schools@OneDarlington, established in July 2008 as part of the local school improvement strategy as a way for schools to share best practice and to support each other and the current consultation to consider whether this arrangement should be formally constituted.

Councillor Eleanor Lister
Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee