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**OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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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.

**Performance Management Framework – Quarter 3 Performance**

3. The Business Manager provided us with graphical information on Quarter 3 performance relating to those strategic indicators for areas under the remit of this Scrutiny Committee ‘giving children and young people the best start in life’ and ‘enough support when needed’.
4. We will continue to receive quarterly overviews of the strategic indicators and shorter term indicators including costs of service to enable us to monitor and understand more clearly the services being delivered and outlining the desired outcomes.

**Pupil Premium**

5. We received a report on pupil premium funding and the amendments and refinements since it was introduced.
6. The Pupil Premium (PP) was introduced in April 2011 as additional targeted funding for schools to work with pupils who have registered for Free School Meals (FSM) at any point in the previous six years and to children ‘looked after’ continuously for six months.
7. The funding has increased since its introduction and in 2014/15 the total fund will be £100m, which equates to £935 for pupils in Year 7 to Year 11 and £1,300 for pupils in Reception to Year 6.
8. Amendments and extensions since 2001 now include a Service Pupil Premium (SPP) which covers Reception to Year 11 and amounts to £300 per eligible pupil; Pupil Premium Plus for eligible children which amounts to £1,900 and the Virtual School Head is responsible for managing the PP funding for looked after children; and Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) which was implemented in April 2015 via

the Dedicated Schools Grant.

9. We examined how Pupil Premium was working and best practice since its introduction in 2011.
10. We also received two very interesting presentations from Christine Boyce, Head Teacher, St. Teresa's RC Primary School and Calvin Kipling, Head Teacher Darlington School of Mathematics and Science (DSMS), attended the meeting to advise Members on how they use the Pupil Premium (PP) funding allocated to schools to improve the outcomes of their pupils on Free Schools Meals (FSM).
11. The Head of St. Teresa's RC Primary School highlighted the key areas where the school had focused on which were support for learning; support for social development; support for family; and support for curriculum. She also advised that the School had offered intensive support 'after school' which had been closely targeted and monitored; concentrated on literacy; employed an additional teacher for one and half days a week; offered support to Year 2 pupils also; family learning within the school had been offered to the high percentage of pupils within the school who were EAL (English as an additional language); and offered speech and language development.
12. St. Teresa's RC Primary School receives £75,000 PP funding for a school in a Ward with high levels of deprivation and also includes a large number of travelling families and EAL. Some discussion ensued on travelling families and the fact that they do not qualify for PP funding.
13. The Head of DSMS advised us that the school had a proportion of pupils with reading levels below the expected levels for their age. To address these problems the Head explained how the school had put in place an accelerated reading programme which had proved to be very successful and invested in age appropriate reading material to engage the older children. He also advised Members that the school had re-introduced reading to pupils; introduced mixed-age tutor groups; encouraging older children to hear the younger children read which had resulted in presently 90 per cent of his Year 7 pupils having an increased reading level.
14. The Head also explained that he felt raising aspirations of young people was very important and outlined various ways to address this i.e. engaging Future First Charity to bring inspirational speakers into the school; working with Martyn Grey, Manager of Darlington Football Club on a programme to encourage pupils to attend classes and thereby entitle them to attend the Football Academy; and work with the Army to establish a Cadet Unit which will ultimately lead to a qualification.
15. With regard to Looked After Children (LAC), in his role of Virtual Head to LAC, Calvin advised Members that he had responsibility for PP funding and received regular reports on the LAC and how he monitors their progress. The PP plus funding is targeted via the "Education Plan" to ensure it provides individualised support.

## **Raising the Participation Age (RPA)**

16. We received an update on the implementation of the requirements of the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA), look at the impact locally and to give details of work being undertaken to meet the local authority's responsibilities.
17. The Education and Skills Act (2008) places a duty on local authorities to promote the effective participation in education or training of all 16 and 17 year olds resident in their area and to make arrangements to identify young people who are not participating.
18. Department for Education (DfE) published details of local authority participation levels for March, June and December each year and the latest data from June 2014 showed that 93.6 per cent of 16 year olds participated in education or training which was above the North East average of 92.7 per cent and the national average of 93.1 per cent.
19. Data for Not in Employment, Education or Training data for January 2015 showed that 96.37 per cent of the Year 12 cohort and 88.56 per cent of the Year 13 cohort were participating. This is higher than June 2014 published figures.
20. We were pleased to hear that at 89.1 per cent participation, Darlington is in the top 32 per cent of the 151 local authorities where figures range from 73.3 per cent to 97.7 per cent; and following the release of the December 2014 data participation has now risen to 92.7 per cent, putting Darlington in the top 19 per cent of local authorities.

## **Extension of Funding to 21 for Children in Foster Care**

21. We received further information on the requirements to enable Looked After Children to remain with their foster carers up until the age of 21 in 'Staying Put'.
22. Section 98 of the Children and Families Act 2014 addresses the arrangements for care leavers living with former foster parents after reaching adulthood and places a duty on the local authority to provide 'Staying Put' arrangements.
23. We examined how the local authority plan for and implement the 'Staying Put' arrangements in Darlington; monitor 'Staying Put' arrangements; offer advice, assistance and support to the young person and the former foster carer; the key aims of the 'Staying Put' arrangements; future 'Staying Put' arrangements in Foster Placements and Children's Homes; and the costs to the local authority for 2014/15 based on the current numbers.

**Councillor Eleanor Lister**  
**Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**