
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.

Early Years

2. Darlington has fully introduced the free childcare for two year olds national eligibility criteria including children who:
 - (a) are 'looked after';
 - (b) have left care through special guardianship or an adoption or residence order;
 - (c) have a current statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care plan;
 - (d) attract Disability Living Allowance;
 - (e) meet the Free School Meals criteria; or
 - (f) live in families who are in receipt of Working Tax Credits and have annual gross earnings of no more than £16,190 per year.
3. This eligibility criteria has been implemented six months earlier than the national requirement of September 2014.
4. At the end of the Summer 2014 term, funded places for two year olds in the Borough were being provided by 18 private day nurseries, 10 playgroups, 21 child minders and 1 maintained nursery school. During the past year a programme to expand the supply of places has been implemented, which will result in 651 funded places being available by early Summer 2015, compared to the target provided by the Department for Education of 634 places.
5. In order to stimulate demand a marketing campaign has been undertaken over the last year and as a result, the number of funded two year olds accessing a free 15 hours a week childcare place, has increased from 50 to approximately 300 children at the end of the Summer 2014 term.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results

6. There is a 5.9 per cent increase in children achieving a good level of development compared with 2013. The gap between the lowest achieving 20 per cent and the cohort median has remained static.
7. The Department for Education (DfE) has published changes to assessment in the reception year. This will capture the school's starting point from which the progress

of a cohort will be measured. The baseline will be age appropriate, and schools will be able to use it from September 2015. The Early Years Foundation Stage continues to be statutory, supporting children to experience a broad and engaging programme of learning in reception. Once the reception baseline has been fully implemented in September 2016, the EYFS Profile will no longer be compulsory.

End of Year One Phonic Screen Check

8. The trend of improvement continues in Year One with 82 per cent of pupils achieving the national bench mark or above. Of the 298 pupils re-taking the phonic screen check in year two, 93 per cent reached the performance level.

Key Stage One

9. The trend of improvement is marginal across Level 2 and Level 3 in combined Reading Writing Maths (RWM).

Key Stage Two

10. There is a marginal increase in the performance of KS2 attainment at Level 4+ in (RWM) and an increase at Level 4 in the Grammar Punctuation and Spelling performance. The percentage of pupils making expected progress has increased and the percentage attaining Level 4B+ and being 'secondary ready' has increased by 2 per cent. There are more pupils performing at Level 5 and 6.

Summer Programme

11. The Learning and Skills and 11-19 Team are currently delivering their third round of the European Social Fund (ESF) funded Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) engagement programme. The last project (Skills4me) which ran from 2011-13, supported 345 young people with 261 qualification achievements, 171 progressions into further education and 24 into employment. The project also supported a number of young people from the priority groups such as teen parents, learners with learning difficulties and disabilities, young offenders and looked after children.
12. The current project (the YES Project) which runs until July 2015, has a target of 249 participants (110 young people have participated to date). As part of the project, we have repeated the very successful Summer Programme, which has now run for a number of years.
13. The Summer Programme offers a range of opportunities to support young people and keep them engaged in learning with a view to progressing them to full time education. This Summer we have run courses in care, customer service, construction and motor vehicle. Alongside the vocational courses there have been two programmes specially tailored for teen parents and one for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. Around 50 young people have participated in the programme this year and many are now preparing to move on to further

education in September.

GCSE Performance 2014

14. There have been a number of changes to the way in which secondary school performance will be recorded this year and this will make it difficult to identify trends in performance against previous years. Most notably the restriction of recognised qualifications to those considered to be high quality, the way in which non GCSE qualifications are counted and the counting of first result rather than best result (where pupils resit an examination) will have a significant impact. For example, a BTEC previously counting for two or four GCSEs will now be capped as one when it comes to performance reporting and school league tables.
15. In addition, there have been a number of changes to the qualifications themselves and the entry patterns of pupils. In particular there has been a move to a linear approach to GCSEs with exams at the end of a course rather than modules throughout and further changes in specific subjects such as English and Geography. As a result of these significant changes Ofqual (The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) warned that there would be less stability this summer than in previous years and that comparisons between results in 2013 and 2014 should be approached with caution.
16. For some schools the changes to 2014 performance tables and qualifications has had a significant impact, for others there has been less movement. Data is still coming in and the validation process will need to be completed before we have the final picture. The data in the table below is provisional and is based on the data held by schools to 5th September 2014. Further updates will follow as re-marks and supplementary data become available.
17. National data for 2014 is not yet available for comparisons but we know that there has been a fall in the percentage of pupils achieving a C grade or above nationally in some key subjects such as English. Yet despite the volatility in the system Darlington's performance remains strong. The percentage of students achieving 5A* - C grades at GCSE (including English and Maths) at the best result grade for each student remains strong at 63.4%. This compares favourably with the Regional levels in both 2013 and 2014 where the performance of students in Darlington schools exceeds the North East averages and above the National averages for 2013.

Provisional GCSE Data Analysis to 5th September 2014

	2013	2014
	5+ A*-C (Inc. GCSE E&M)	5+ A*-C (Inc. GCSE E&M) 2014 Calc
Darlington	64.8%	63.4%
Regional Average	59.3%	59.5%
National	60.8%	N/a

Notes	Methodology for calculating A* - C Grades was amended in 2014
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A Level Pass Rates

18. The A level pass rate for Darlington remains above the national average with Carmel College's overall pass rate standing at 99.7 per cent and Queen Elizabeth's at 99.3 per cent.

Looked After Children and Young People

19. There are currently 23 young people placed in private children homes in Darlington, placed by other local authorities. In addition, there are 146 placed in foster homes (independent fostering agencies). At 31 July 2014 there were 186 children looked after by Darlington Borough Council. This represents an increase of two children since 31 May 2014.
20. The theme of the Corporate Parenting Panel on 9 September 2014 was The Education and Health of Looked After Children and included attendance by the Virtual School Head (Mr Calvin Kipling) as well as representation from Leisure, Sports and Health Services.
21. Monthly meetings have been established with Managers of these homes to look at a range of issues relevant to the young people and community. The Police attend the meetings alongside Council Officers. Impact of the improved relationship and joint working is a significant decrease in number of incidents and children reported missing from placement.

Child Protection

22. By the end of April 2014, 141 children were subject to a child protection plan. By the end of June, 135 children were subject to a plan (58 families). The rate of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC's) has reduced. Over half of the 58 families have between 3 and 6 children.
23. By the end of June 2014, 56 per cent of children on a plan were as a result of Neglect, 27 per cent as a result of Emotional harm, 5 per cent due to Physical abuse and 11 per cent as a result of sexual abuse. The sexual abuse category contains large family groups. With regards to age profile, there has been an increase in unborn babies being made subject to a plan. 42 per cent of children subject to a plan are aged below 5 years. 35 per cent are aged 5-10 years; 20 per cent are between 10-15 years; and 3 per cent over 15 years old.
24. The number of children being removed from a plan has also increased. For the period 2013-2014 99 children were removed from a plan. Over this first year quarter alone 45 children were removed from a plan. This indicates a reduction in the level of risk to those children as a result of the multi-agency intervention.

Local Safeguarding Children Board

25. In July the Local Safeguarding Children Board agreed its Business Plan. The plan is based on 4 key priorities:
- (a) **Is safeguarding really everybody's responsibility?** The Board will continue to closely monitor and scrutinise organisations' ownership of 'safeguarding'.
 - (b) **E-safety** - The Board will support agencies, children, young people and families in recognising the importance of e-safety (internet safety) and the linkages with Child Sexual Exploitation.
 - (c) **Self- Harm** - The Board will support professionals in particular, education settings, in dealing with reports of self-harm.
 - (d) **Improved multi-agency working arrangements for families** - The Board will have an active role in disseminating and implementing new 'tools' for practitioners in their work with families.
26. In line with this, the Board has reviewed its current arrangements. The Board will now receive reports from each of the sub groups, via its Chair, at every meeting. This will ensure the Board can closely scrutinise and monitor the effectiveness of the Board and its priorities.
27. Further details regarding the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board can be found on its web site www.darlington.gov.uk/lscb.

Councillor Cyndi Hughes
Children and Young People Portfolio