

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2013 FROM 7.30PM TO 9.20PM**

Present:- Pauline Helliar-Symons (Chairman), Ian Pittock (Vice-Chairman), Chris Bowring, Abdul Loyes, Ken Miall, Sam Rahmouni, Bob Wyatt and Shahid Younis,

Also present:-

*Pauline Maddison, Interim Strategic Director, Children's Services
Martin Baker, Interim Head of Learning and Achievement
Judith Ramsden, Head of Safeguarding and Social Care
Jim Mathieson, School Improvement Officer (for Item 30)
Tricia Harcourt, Senior Democratic Services Officer*

Members had undertaken a training session prior to the meeting.

23. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 September 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following corrections:

- page 2 minute 16, second paragraph – change 'young'; to 'young people';
- page 2 minute 16, second paragraph – delete 'highlight the issue' add 'replace with 'raise the awareness and empower young people';
- page 2 minute 16, seventh paragraph - add to end 'In the main the Referral and Assessment Team or the Police should be contacted;
- page 5, minute 19, second paragraph – 'wold' should be 'would';
- page 6 minute 20, last paragraph replace 'lowest' with 'low' and 'now' with 'not'.

24. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Parry Batth substituted by Chris Bowring, Andrew Bradley substituted by Abdul Loyes and Karen Knight, Parent Governor Representative.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Ken Miall declared that his wife was a governor of The Holt School. Shahid Younis declared that he was a governor of Bulmershe School.

26. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

27. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

28. NARROWING THE GAP – PROGRESS IN PUPIL PERFORMANCE

The Committee received and considered a report set out on Agenda pages 8 to 12 detailing the progress made on narrowing the gap in the performance of pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant.

Jim Mathieson went through his report and gave a presentation to explain the initiative to 'narrow the gap' in achievement between those pupils who are in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) and the Pupil Premium. The gap was unacceptably wide at Key Stage 2 and key Stage 4. A copy of the presentation is attached to these Minutes.

He indicated that there was an issue of self-esteem and that some schools were using their Pupil Premium to raise self-esteem which has led to improved performance. Results for the 2013/13 academic year show that the gap at Key Stage 2 has reduced.

The presentation and report set out the work that has been undertaken since 2011. Members asked how confident Officers were that the strategies put in place would address the issues. Officers responded that the progress is clearly tracked and the report shows what has been done and the outcomes achieved. The evidence shows that there has been improvement. Jim indicated that pupils in current Year 5 are on track to significantly close the gap because of focussed teaching.

Some Members were concerned that the focus for improvement was on FSM pupils whereas there were other groups of pupils who would benefit from targeted teaching. Jim explained that the focus is on FSM pupils because there is a specific measure. However every single child's progress is tracked. It was recognised that not all FSM pupils will be low achievers

Early intervention and work with families is important to raise the generational lack of opportunity and lack of self-esteem and expectations. There is a project at Keep Hatch Primary School to move learning forward; using the Teaching and Learning Advisors in a different way. All schools are to be encouraged to have Pupil Champions.

Comment was made that not all those parents eligible for Free School Meals do claim it, so the figures may be wrong.

The Key Stage 4 measure of achieving specific levels at GCSE is going to change, so will be reported when it happens. Officers indicated that at the beginning of the Summer term they should have an idea of schools' expectations. A progress report will be brought to the meeting in May/June.

RESOLVED: That the report detailing the progress made on Narrowing the Gap in the performance of pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant, be noted, and a further progress report will be presented to the meeting of the Committee in May/June 2014.

29. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN REVIEW – MONITORING REPORT

The Chairman indicated that following discussions with Officers, it had been suggested that this item be deferred until the next meeting. Pauline Maddison said that all the recommendations of the Looked After Children Review had been completed and Officers will prepare a report showing the actions that had been taken against each of those recommendations.

For future monitoring, the Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Board, including the Children in Care Council's review of the delivery of The Pledge will be brought to the Committee for review. Issues relating to the recommendations of the Looked After Children Review will be typed in italics to continue to distinguish them from the rest of the progress being made, just for clarification.

RESOLVED: That a report detailing the actions taken to implement the recommendations of the Looked After Children Review be presented to the January meeting of the Committee. Future monitoring will be through the review of the Corporate Parenting Board's Annual Report and the Children In Care Council's review of the delivery of the Pledge.

30. EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNING BODIES REVIEW – MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received and considered a report set out on Agenda pages 13 to 25, detailing the actions taken in response to the recommendations of the review into the effectiveness of governing bodies and local authority support, which were agreed by the Executive. The report included the initial Officer response to the recommendations.

During the discussion and in response to Members' queries the following points were made:

- Members noted that there was training available for aspiring new Chairs, and around succession planning. Martin Baker indicated that training was popular and the aim is for continuous improvement. Governors are also encouraged to improve their challenge of achievement of pupils in various groups, and training opportunities are available.
- It was noted that the outcomes from the discussion at the Chairs' Briefings and in cluster groups would be fed back at the next briefing.
- The Chairman asked whether Ward Members are made aware of governor vacancies in their local schools; they may have knowledge of people who might be suitable for the role. It was suggested that Ward Members should be informed when vacancies arise.

RESOLVED: That the report detailing the actions taken in response to the recommendations of the review of the Effectiveness of Governing Bodies be noted.

31. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND OFSTED REPORTS

The Committee received and considered summaries of the recently published Ofsted reports for the following schools:

- Addington Special School – overall rating 1 'outstanding', previous rating 1 'outstanding'
- St Crispin's School – overall rating 2 'good', previous rating 1 'outstanding'
- The Colleton Primary School – overall rating 2 'good', previous rating 1 'outstanding'
- St Dominic Savio Catholic Primary School – overall rating 3 'requires improvement', previous rating 2 'good'.

The Committee noted that Addington School had retained its outstanding rating, and Pauline Maddison stated that nationally it was unusual for a special school to be rated 'outstanding'. The Committee agreed that the school should be very proud.

In relation to St Crispin's and The Colleton Primary whose assessments had gone down from 'outstanding' to 'good', Martin Baker said that there were no concerns with these schools, and the lower assessment was a reflection of the new Ofsted measures which focus on outcomes.

In relation to St Dominic Savio Primary, which had been assessed as 'requiring improvement', Martin Baker said that the Local Authority was working with the School and the Governing Body, to support and challenge them in preparing the required Action Plan to address the issues for improvement identified in the inspection report.

RESOLVED: That the recently published Ofsted reports be noted.

32. CHILDRENS' SERVICES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Committee received and considered the tables and commentary circulated separately, detailing the Children's Services Performance Indicators now set out as part of the overall

Balanced Scorecard, and grouped under the following headings : Keeping Children Safe; Narrowing the Gap; and Opportunity for All.

The Committee noted that some indicators were red, but accepted the explanations given in the commentary: However it was noted that indicator 15, -*Youth Offending – Rate of Re-offending* was getting better and the rate reducing. Martin Baker said that the high quality targeted work of the Youth Offending Service was being effective.

Pauline Maddison indicated that in relation to indicator 18a – *Raising standards in schools – percentage of primary schools in Ofsted categories good or better*, the expectation was that all schools should be at the 'good' level.

33. FORWARD PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Forward Programme of work as set in the revised version circulated at the meeting, and following decisions made above agreed that the following amendments be made:

- Change the date of the January meeting from 15 to the 13 January
- Looked After Children Review Monitoring Report to the January meeting
- Report on Progression of 16 plus pupils to the January meeting
- Update report on Narrowing the Gap to the May/June meeting
- Annual Report of Corporate Parenting Board to the May/June meeting
- Implications of changes to Assessment to the May/June meeting

Pauline Maddison mentioned that the Children and Young People's Partnership would be asked to develop a new planning framework to replace the Children and Young People's Plan, which was no longer statutory. A report on the initial thinking on any new plan would be brought to the committee for its input in the summer.

These are the Minutes of a meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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