

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

MINUTES

of meeting held on **15 NOVEMBER 2010** at

Loxley House from 2.34 pm to 4.20 pm

Councillor Mellen (Chair)
Councillor Collins
Councillor Griggs
Councillor Ibrahim
Councillor Klein
Councillor Marshall
Councillor Morley
Councillor Urquhart

indicates present at meeting

Also in attendance

Ms L Beedham)
Ms C Brudenell)
Miss H Leung)
Mr E Mesue) Children and Families
Mr C Monckton)
Ms P Thompson-Omenka)
Ms S Whitehead)

Mr S Patel)
Ms S Retzlaff) Communities

Miss C Jackson - Resources

Ms R Galbraith - CitiHealth NHS Nottingham

Ms J Oakley - Connexions

Ms G Moy - Nottingham City Homes

Mr T Harris - Visitor

ACTION

21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Collins, Griggs, and Ibrahim, Sara Parker from the Nottingham Youth Advisory Service and Jennifer Dearing and Satinder Guatam, both from Nottingham City Council.

22 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made.

23 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 20 September 2010, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

24 PERFORMANCE REPORT - CHILDREN IN CARE, NOVEMBER 2010

Consideration was given to a matrix produced by the Head of Insight and Improvement, copies of which had been circulated, which updated the Board with performance information in relation to Children in Care, showing the figures as at October 2010.

The following key figures were highlighted to the Board:

- the number of Looked After Children (LAC) was 523 in September 2010 and had risen slightly to 525 in October 2010. This was above the targeted figure of 480;
- the number of LAC represented a rate of 93.6 children per 10,000 children. The target rate was 85.8 per 10,000 children;
- the number of admissions of LAC was 26 and the number of discharges was 18;
- the timeliness of placements of LAC for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption was 92.9% against a target of 75%;
- the rate of adoptions of LAC was 3.7% against a target of 13 %;
- the stability of LAC in terms of number of moves, based on a rolling 12 months, was 8.3%, well within the target of 12%;
- the stability of placements of LAC in terms of length of placement was 63.8% against a target of 67%;
- the proportion of LAC cases which were reviewed within the required timescale was 87.1% against a target of 90%;
- the percentage of children looked after for more than three months with an up to date health assessment was 62.7% against a target of 80%;
- the percentage of care leavers with a Pathway Plan was 90% against a target of 100%;
- the percentage of LAC with a completed Personal Education Plan was 66%, against target of 100%.
- the percentage of LAC looked after for more than 3 months with an up to date health assessment was 62.7% against a target of 80%;

- the percentage of LAC looked after for more than 3 months with an up to date dental check was 73% against a target of 80%.

In the discussion which followed, a number of further points were made:

- the trend over recent months, which showed a static % in the stability of placements based on length of placement required further investigation and more detailed analysis;
- the figures relating to the health of LAC were disappointing but new processes were being put into place by the Looked After Children Health Team and this should soon result in an improvement in the figures;
- the percentage of children looked after for more than three months with an up-to-date SDQ (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire) was lower than anticipated (40.6%) It was hoped to improve these figures by assigning some of the responsibility for completing SDQ's to foster carers and dealing with the completion of SDQ's at annual reviews;
- a large piece of work was currently being undertaken on the provision of suitable accommodation for care leavers and this should improve the figures from the current 85.2%;

RESOLVED that the figures in the matrix be noted and updated at the next meeting of the Board on 17 January 2011.

25 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN- STATUTORY ASSESSMENT RESULTS 2010

Consideration was given to a report of the Corporate Director of Children's Services, copies of which had been circulated, explaining the recent trends in educational attainment of Looked After Children (LAC) by analysis of their performance at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.

Heidi Leung, Intelligence Manager, Insight and Improvement, summarised the contents of the report for the Board:

- absolute attainment outcomes for Nottingham City's LAC were low compared to other City pupils. However, the figures were affected by the fact that numbers in the LAC cohort groups were low, meaning that the individual performance of one child could have a disproportionate affect on percentages. Also, there was a difference in definition between the provisional data (which calculated the size of a cohort by a headcount of LAC in City schools) and the trend data provided by the Department for Education (which required children in care to have been continuously in care for the previous 12 months). Comparison of provisional data and validated data would not strictly compare like with like;
- at Key Stage 2 (KS2), 16 children were looked after at the time of the 2010 KS2 assessment tests:
 - 31% (5 out of 16) young people achieved level 4 or above in the English test ;
 - 31% (5 out of 16) young people achieved level 4 or above in the maths test.

- the City Council's 2010 targets for KS2 were 45% for English and 54% for maths;
- whilst the figures appeared disappointing, in the last 5 years, Nottingham City's LAC had made nearly 6 times the rate of national progress and nearly one and a half times the rate of statistical neighbour progress in this measure in English and in maths nearly 3 times the rate of national progress and over one and a half times the rate of statistical neighbour progress in this measure;
- at Key Stage 4 (KS4), 66 children were looked after at the time of the 2010 KS4 tests:
 - 3% (2 out of 66) achieved level 2 including English and Maths. The 2009 figure was 6.9% (3 pupils);
 - 3% (2 out of 66) achieved level 2 (5+A*-C grades);
 - 30% (20 out of 66) achieved level 1 (5+A*-G grades);
 - 54% (34 out of 66) achieved at least one pass;

However, 32% (21 out of 66) of the LAC cohort had higher level special needs (Action Plus or statements) compared with less than 11% of the whole Nottingham secondary school population. This limited the attainment levels at KS4;

- there was only one statutory target for LAC at KS4: NI101 LAC level 2 including English and Maths. The City Council's 2010 target for this measure was 12%;
- the make up of the cohort affected the results: four of the 66 young people were unaccompanied asylum seekers, 28 of the year 11 LAC pupils had attended 2 or more schools since their GCSE studies began and 25 of the cohort were not in care when targets were set. All these factors affected their educational attainment;
- the key indicator was 5 GCSE's at A*- C including English and Maths. In England, the average for LAC was 9.8%. Nottingham had only achieved 6.9%. Due to the number in the cohort, this amounted to only 2-3 young people. However, while all LAC had seen an increase in those reaching level 2, Nottingham City performance in this measure had declined and lagged behind the England and statistical average by -9.5% and -17.9% respectively and the gap between Nottingham City and these comparator groups had widened;
- attainment at the lower level of 5 GCSE's A-G was also disappointing. Only a small percentage increase had been observed in the last 5 years and lagged behind the national and statistical averages at level 1, whereas both comparator groups had seen a good level of improvement in the last 5 years.

Lorna Beedham, the Head Teacher of the virtual school, explained her role and advised the Board that a sustained effort was being made to make a meaningful impact on the educational attainment of Nottingham's LAC and young people. The following actions were directed at securing improvement:

- the virtual school was in the process of purchasing a tracking system to monitor the attainment and progress of City LAC regardless of where they were educated. An accurate record was needed of the learning journey of LAC. Progress information was required to put attainment into context;
- from November 2010, Denewood and Unity Learning Centres would provide immediate education for any LAC in KS3 or KS4 who was awaiting a school place or a decision from a Fair Access Panel;
- consultant support was targeted to schools which had children in care in Year 6 or Year 11. Negotiations with schools would determine the focus of their 1:1 support for individual pupils and for designated teachers;
- designated teachers, social workers and foster carers were being asked to complete PEA applications for those who were underachieving to ensure additional support was provided e.g. additional tuition, laptop equipment;
- all schools had been directed to include underperforming LAC within their 1:1 tuition provision funded through National Strategy regardless of year group. School Improvement Partners (SIPs) were monitoring this;
- Personal Education Plan (PEP) forms had been revised to include historical educational data so that progress, as well as attainment, could be judged. Target setting within it was clearer and interventions identified. These would also be used to determine consultant intervention. PEPs were also now Key Stage specific;
- closer working relationships were being developed between the virtual school and social care colleagues especially regarding the educational considerations required when arranging the placement of LAC;
- training for designated teachers and school staff from consultants regarding strategies to keep LAC in school and signposting alternative programmes (equivalent to GCSE) where necessary;
- where young people in care needed to be admitted into schools at times other than ordinary admission periods or needed a decision from the Fair Access Panel regarding a school transfer, education provision would need to be made for them to ensure their studies continued until they got a permanent place in a mainstream school.

In the discussion which followed, it was agreed that whilst the figures were disappointing, the levels of attainment could not be blamed solely on the education the LAC were receiving. There were other factors to consider, including networks and support available to the LAC. The PEP for each LAC had to look at all the issues and risks affecting the particular LAC on review.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the recent trends and current levels of education attainment for Nottingham's Looked After Children be noted;**
- (2) that the proposed interventions to improve attainment for Nottingham City's Looked After Children's performance and that of other pupils in City's schools be noted;**

- (3) that the Head Teacher of the virtual school submit an interim progress report to the Board in six months time.**

26 PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS (PEPs) FOR CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER – NOVEMBER 2010

Consideration was given to a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Families, copies of which had been circulated, informing the Board of the latest position regarding the number of PEPs in place for children in care. PEPs were required to map out the long term educational future of children in care.

Lorna Beedham, the Head Teacher of the Virtual School, advised the Board of the following:

- the PEP completion rate at the end of October 2010 was 71%, a drop from the July rate of 73% but a significant improvement of 44% since April 2010 when the rate was 27%. The target was for a completion rate of over 90% by the end of December 2010;
- the main challenge was completing PEPs for those LAC who were educated outside the City. City schools had a completion rate of 74% in September 2010 compared to 71% in the County and 51% outside of the County. The City completion rate had shown the largest increase (47%) over the past six months;
- in order to increase the completion rates of PEPs, the following actions were in progress:
 - a virtual school had been established to ensure that procedures were effective and PEP rates were improved;
 - consultants and staff within the Achievement of Vulnerable Groups team and Social Workers were contacting designated teachers in schools with LAC whose PEP was over 6 months old to organise meetings to update so that all were completed by the end of December regardless of which local authority the children were educated in;
 - the virtual school team and social care teams were working together to support schools with PEP completion and the completion of PEPS for young people in transition between schools;
 - dates had been set for the year for the virtual school to inform schools and social workers that PEPS were now due for completion and a new PEP form was sent to both;
 - the PEP forms had been updated to be more key stage specific and schools and Social Workers had been sent copies of the revised documents;
 - PEP details were now recorded on the EMS ONE data system so that education teams could access and update the local authority PEP completion records. Completed PEP forms could be sent to the virtual school so that it could ensure records of completion were up to date;
 - social care team leaders and the Virtual School Head Teacher were reviewing procedures and roles and responsibilities of those involved in the

PEP process to increase the number completed by their due date. This included bringing forward those due for completion during school holidays so that they were completed prior to the holiday, rather than afterwards, and ensuring database information regarding school placement of children and young people was accurate;

- training for school designated teachers regarding PEPs, their completion and the Personal Education Allowance process was in place for November.

It was agreed in the discussion which followed that, whilst the need to improve the number of completed PEPs was commended, there was also a need to improve the quality of the completed PEPs and to ensure that they were analysed to ensure that any lack of progress was flagged up and dealt with.

RESOLVED that the report and the progress over the last 6 months be noted

27 15+ YOUNG PERSONS ASPIRATION GROUP- RAISING ASPIRATIONS OF CHILDREN IN CARE

Sue Whitehead, Team Manager, introduced the presentation by Mr E Mesue, a Social Worker in the 15+ Team, and Miss J Oakley of Connexions/15+.

The following information was given to the Board:

- in 2007 nationally, only 66% of Looked After young people achieved a minimum of 1 GCSE or GNVQ compared with 99% of all young people;
- there were currently 187 15-18 year olds in care in Nottingham City. Of those who left school in July 2009, 19% were currently not engaged in education, training or employment compared with 5.3% of the City's young people as a whole;
- the Council's response to Care Matters was the creation of The Aspiration Group where every 15+ young person's unique potential was recognised and nurtured. The group was defined as: 'a fluid group of interchangeable post 15 young citizens in Nottingham City care who want to achieve in life'.
- the aims of the group were:
 - to encourage solidarity amongst young citizens in the Council's care;
 - to raise awareness about the career opportunities open to young people post 16 in the Council's care;
 - to encourage participation in learning (narrowing the NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) gap and tackling two of the CYPP (Children and Young People's Partnership) targets, namely Enjoy and Achieve and Economic Wellbeing).
- the achievements of the group so far were:
 - 4 group sessions had taken place at a range of Connexions and Children and Families venues since the group's creation in August 2010;

- interest from young citizens has increased since the first meeting on 9 August 2010. However, participation had remained fairly constant;
 - 8 British young citizens had attended at least one session and 11 asylum/refugee young citizens had attended the majority of the sessions;
 - examples of partnership working had included Nottingham University, IRise Project, Nottingham Trent University, Connexions and 15+ Team – Children and Families.
- activities to date had included:
 - working together through role play with young citizens;
 - tackling negative labelling for young citizens;
 - progression in the UK education system and career planning;
 - self-awareness and confidence building;
 - inspirational presentations from partners and group cohesion;
 - planning for future events;
 - it had been observed that the majority of consistent attendance so far had come from the asylum/refugee young people and, once on board with the group, motivation amongst young people was high;
 - the outcomes to date were:
 - the long term outcome would be monitored by recording current aspirations and comparing these with ultimate achievements by the young people's 18th birthdays;
 - the short term 'hard' targets would include maintaining EET (Education Employment and Training) status, raising aspirations, engagement in the group and peer-led group activities
 - the short term 'soft' targets would include an increase in confidence and leadership ability.

In the discussion which followed the importance of networking between the various organisations/bodies involved in working with young people in care was emphasised to ensure that all young people in care in Nottingham were made fully aware of the opportunities open to them.

RESOLVED that the thanks of the Board for the informative presentation by Mr Mesue and Miss Oakley be recorded.

28 SPORT AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENTS FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Sports, Culture and Parks, copies of which had been circulated, which aimed to raise awareness of the positive partnerships and delivery work currently taking place between Children's Services

and Sport and Leisure Services and to seek advice as to how to continue the work and secure sources of support.

Ms S Retzlaff, Sports Development and Active Communities Manager, advised the Board that Sport and Leisure Services delivered a wide range of projects that improved access and opportunities for children and young people in care. Over the years the majority of this provision had been funded through Positive Activities for Young People funding (PAYP) of approximately £30,000 each year. All current work would finish on 31 March 2011 and there was no ability to continue this work in the absence of any additional resources being secured.

The Sport and Leisure children in care 'offer' had made significant contributions over the years to the Corporate Parenting Promise Action Plan and had improved ECM (Every Child Matters) outcomes, such as Enjoy & Achieve, Be Healthy and Making a Positive Contribution.

Mr S Patel, Active Communities Development Officer, summarised for the Board the delivery and benefits of the service to children and young people in care:

- a wide range of service areas had been supported to identify and deliver participation opportunities for young people across all types of care using PAYP funding. In 2008/09, this included a wide range of internal services such as the Fostering, Adoption, Residential Care, Leaving Care, Asylum, Education Support and Targeted Support Teams. In total, £30,000 of funding was utilised by all these service areas to deliver over 3,500 hours of sport, leisure and physical activity for children and young people in care. Supported provision had ranged from regular weekly activities i.e. sports clubs, swimming, day trips and activity residential breaks in school holidays;
- an additional £60,000 of funding had been secured to extend support and resources for an additional 2 years, 2009-11. Extensive work had taken place in building new partnerships and establishing delivery agreements with an additional 13 commissioned residential homes in the private sector; including Heronridge Homes (4 Units), Pathway Care Solutions (7 Units) and The Millers Homes for Children (2 Units). Support had also been extended to the new 15+ Service during 2010, enabling improved access and opportunities for more young people in care;
- all service areas and providers working with children and young people in care had also become referral agencies onto City Council holiday activity provision, where currently 25% of free places were reserved for priority marginalised/at risk young people (subsidised through PAYP funding);
- before its conclusion earlier this year, Department of Culture, Media and Support funding was used to encourage and support 31 children and young people in residential and foster care to access free swimming lessons for beginners and improvers at City Leisure Centres (between November 2009 – May 2010);
- a variety of family events were delivered in partnership with both Fostering and Adoption Services throughout the year to support carers and young people. These had included opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity during picnics in the park and Christmas events;
- a rolling monthly programme exclusively for foster families has been

established to provide both a support network and physical activity sessions for carers and young people to engage in together. The 'Active Foster Families' programme delivered pre-school gymnastics, sports day games and family swimming sessions in a secure and comfortable environment. The programme had established a regular attendance of over 18 foster families since its launch in July 2010 and the sessions continued to date;

- a number of workshops had been delivered to support the transition of young people into adoptive families during school holidays, using sport and physical activity as a tool to build relationships between adoptive parents, social workers and young people. Sport and Leisure Services had utilised established partnerships with professional football clubs in the City to improve quality of delivery and engagement of young people;
- physical activity workshops linked to attainment had been delivered in partnership with the 'I Rise' project during 2010. This had led to the development of targeted learning provision within Sport and Leisure Services for young people in care;
- work to support young people in care through sport and physical activity leadership qualifications was currently taking place. Young people would be encouraged and supported to undertake nationally accredited awards and access mentored volunteer opportunities to help improve attainment and future employability.

It was agreed in the discussion which followed that the work undertaken by Sport and Leisure Services was extremely valuable. With only limited funding available for the future, it would be necessary to 'join up' all the resources available in order to provide the best service possible for young people in care. The Children in Care Council should be involved in taking delivery forward.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the positive partnership and delivery work taking place between Children's Services and Sport and Leisure Services be noted;**
- (2) that the Board consider and advise on any future delivery of this work and, specifically, how it could be supported/funded after March 31 2011.**

29 BIG IT UP AWARDS – OUTCOME - CHILDREN IN CARE OCTOBER 2010

Paulette Thompson-Omenka, Head of Service, Children in Care, advised the Board that the achievements of Nottingham's Looked After Children and Young People were honoured at an Oscars style awards ceremony on Tuesday 12 October 2010.

The 'Big it Up' awards recognised the achievements of young people aged 10-18 years who were in the care of, or who had recently left the care of, Nottingham City Council.

Various awards were given out in the following categories;

- Enjoy and Achieve;
- Be Healthy, Stay Safe;
- Economic Wellbeing; and
- Making a Positive Contribution.

The awards were given out by a number of local celebrities and donations were received from a number of local businesses and those providing suitable accommodation for children in care.

Tribute was paid to the hard work and support of foster carers in the City.

It was hoped to continue the awards every year but this would be dependent upon donations from private businesses.

It was also proposed to set up an appeal for presents for Children in Need and children in care, with the aim of collecting a thousand gifts for Christmas. There would be an event in the atrium at Loxley House with a school choir. Details of the event and requests for donations would be published on the Council's Intranet.

RESOLVED that the success of the event be noted and Board members and officers encourage donations of gifts, vouchers and cash for the Christmas appeal.

20 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED that the Board meet at 2.30pm on the Mondays 17 January and 21 March 2011.