



Statutory Officers Report for Health and Wellbeing Board

Corporate Director of Children's Services

May 2016

Association of Directors of Children's Services

On 1st April 2016 I commenced my national role as Vice President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS). ADCS is a membership organisation and national leadership association in England for statutory directors of children's services and their senior management teams. They specialise in developing, commissioning and leading the delivery of services to children, young people and their families, including education, health, youth, early years and social care services. Working in partnership with other agencies members work to achieve tailored and joined up services for children, whatever their identified need.

Through the contributions of its members, ADCS provides the collective voice of professionals in children's services leadership roles on policy, practice and resourcing of the wide variety of services available to children, young people and their families. Within local government, ADCS is the professional contact point for children's services issues with central government. The Association works closely with ministers, government officials, the community and voluntary sectors, local government organisations and other professional bodies on designing and delivering integrated services for children and young people.

All posts are elected by Ordinary Members of the Association, it is therefore a real honour to be nominated and elected. From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 I will then become President. It is a huge privilege to occupy the role and will give me the opportunity to work with government and partners in the wider system and join forces with passionate and committed people across the sector during what is a really exciting yet challenging time within Children's Services.

I look forward to relishing the challenge that this national role will bring. You can find out more about the Association of Directors of Children's Services at their [website](#).

Adoption Services and Timeliness Performance

On 30th March we received a letter from Edward Timpson MP, which expressed concern that children in Nottingham are still waiting for too long to be placed for adoption. My response letter to him acknowledges that whilst there is always more we can do to improve the timeliness of adoption for children in our care, our longer time to secure adoption is a consequence of our strong commitment to find adoptive families for children who are deemed hard to place using the Department for Education criteria. It is our belief that the number of adoptions we have been able to make is a testament to the work and dedication of our staff in a climate where adoption numbers nationally have declined.

Recruitment for Director of Public Health

Recruitment for the role of Director of Public Health is now underway; the closing date for applications was 9th May. If you would like to know more about the role being advertised, please follow this link: www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/DPH

Children and Families Direct

We have redesigned the 'front door' to our services by strengthening Children and Families Direct. We have added more specialist expertise into the team to ensure that children are able to access proportionate support that will meet their needs. This will facilitate better pathways into targeted group work for families in Children's Centre's, Targeted Family Support and, where necessary, children's social work. Partners should continue to call Children and Families Direct on 0115 876 4800 where you want to request support for a child or make a referral.

We have launched a new 'locality hub' model which is forging new links between services across Children's Integrated Services Directorate so that as the needs of families change we are able to work collaboratively to meet those needs appropriately. Feedback from frontline colleagues and families is very positive as teams are able to work together and complete joint visits which enable a better handover of cases where they need to transfer so that families experience more joined up support. This has been supported by the development of a new Integrated Working and Case Transfer Procedure which replaces the 'Step Up, Step Down' so that cases can transfer between early help/targeted teams and locality social work teams without going back through C&FD Hub and Duty Teams.

Family Support Pathway

We have refreshed the Family Support Pathway (threshold document) to incorporate learning from Serious Case Reviews and include key areas like Prevent and CSE. This was signed off at the NCSCB.

Priority Families Programme

We successfully reached our 2015/16 national target (852) for number of families worked with. However, national changes to the funding for the PF Programme mean that there are very stretching targets for 16/17. We are currently setting local targets and working to establish stronger links with partners to enable them to support with case-holding.

Leaving Care Service Employability Programme

The Leaving Care Service have launched a new in-house employability programme that supports Nottingham's most disadvantaged and vulnerable care leavers to make positive steps towards training and employment. The DWP now recognises this programme as a valid contribution to the claimant commitment for job seekers.

The programme provides bespoke opportunities that aim to build a young person's confidence and give them the support that they need to develop the good habits and skills that are essential to sustaining mainstream training or employment. Young people are involved in all aspects of planning their programmes, ensuring that they are created around their individual interests, level of commitment and readiness.

Each bespoke programme gives young people the opportunity to gain meaningful work experience under the guidance of a mentor, provided by an ever increasing

network of community partners and internal Nottingham City Council services. In addition, the Leaving Care Service has become an approved centre for the delivery of ASDAN courses and all young people have the opportunity to achieve employability qualifications (entry to level 2) by participating. Young people undertaking work experience with not-for-profit organisations are further acknowledged and rewarded via links to national volunteering schemes (e.g. WWV).

The programme strives for a holistic approach to supporting young people to progress. To support those facing multiple barriers to entering or sustaining training and work, we have piloted a programme of tailored resilience coaching and counselling through a partnership with Lasting Differences (a Community Interest Company). Further barriers to engagement that young people may experience such as the cost of travel and work clothing are supported by the Leaving Care Service.

Preparation and progression are at the heart of the programme and detailed transition planning takes place with each young person to ensure they are supported to continue their positive momentum towards regular training or employment.

Councillor Mellen visited the Leaving Care Service at the beginning of April, where he met two care leavers who have been accessing this programme and they fed back to him how this programme has made a positive impact on their lives and given them confidence to move forward into employment and training. Councillor Mellen made the following statement on Twitter following his visit: Great visit to @MyNottingham Leaving Care Team yesterday, inspirational young people grasping educational and training opportunities#proud.

Since launching this programme in August 2015, the Leaving Care Service has engaged 32 of our hardest to engage young people, with many moving into further training opportunities, employment and apprenticeships in house within Nottingham City Council due to positive links with all internal departments that support our corporate parenting.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

The Imagination Library is a book-gifting scheme that was launched by Dolly Parton in 1995. The charity helps ignite a love of reading and improve literacy in children by delivering a free book to their home every month from birth until the age of five.

We know that the average 5 year old in Nottingham will start school with reading skills which are 14% behind those of other UK children. This means children are spending their primary years 'catching up' with their peers nationally. The Dolly Parton Imagination Library can help to bridge this gap and give children a better start to their school careers.

Did you know....?

- 2,024 Nottingham children currently receive Imagination Library books.
- £213,000 is the total amount of funding raised by Nottingham partners since 2012.
- £500,000 is the amount it would cost each year to pay for EVERY 0-5 year

old in Nottingham to receive the books.

You can sponsor a child through our Imagination Library 'BT My Donate' page. This is a really easy and efficient way to give – every penny you donate will go directly to providing another book to Nottingham's children. This link will take you to the donation page:

<https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/dollypartonimaginationlibrary-nottingham>

For more details about the great work of the Imagination Library and how you can get involved, you can visit the website: www.dollybooksnottingham.org

Alison Michalska
Corporate Director of Children's Services
Nottingham City Council
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