

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL

Setting the Scrutiny Panel's Work Programme 2019/2020

29 July 2019

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To invite the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel to consider its work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year.

BACKGROUND

2. At the start of every municipal year, scrutiny panels discuss the topics that they would like to review during the coming year.
3. Work programmes are useful as they provide some structure to a scrutiny panel's activity and allow for the effective planning and preparation of work.
4. As part of the process for establishing the work programme, support officers gather information/views from a number of sources. Below is a list of topics which are anticipated to be of particular interest to the scrutiny panel. Members are advised that the list of possible topics is not exhaustive and that additional topics can be added and considered at the scrutiny panel meeting.

Topical issues

Topic	Details
School place planning	<p>In March 2019, following the sharing of school allocations data with other school admissions authorities, it was identified that there would be a shortage of 108 secondary school places for pupils seeking entry to Year 7 in September 2019.</p> <p>The shortfall is a result of Middlesbrough Council receiving more applications than anticipated and an increase in the popularity of Middlesbrough's schools with families living inside and outside of Middlesbrough. While roll projections initially led the Council to understand that there would be a shortage from 2020, these changes effectively brought the shortage forward by one academic year.</p> <p>Over the previous 10 years, 89.6% of the Year 6 cohort in Middlesbrough primary schools had gone on to attend a Middlesbrough secondary school. For September 2019 the planning assumption was that 91% of pupils would transfer but on allocations day the actual rate was 95.5%. This is the highest rate that has been observed and is attributable to the growing success of Middlesbrough's secondary schools over recent years which, as a</p>

	<p>result, have become increasingly popular with parents.</p> <p>A total of 122 additional places were agreed at Outwood Academy Ormesby, King's Academy, Trinity Catholic College and Unity City Academy. Unity City Academy subsequently found it necessary to withdraw their offer. The 92 places at the remaining three schools have been allocated to pupils. Simultaneously, the movement of pupils to other local authority areas, pupils securing places in independent schools and pupils winning admission appeals has reduced the unmet demand.</p> <p>At the meeting of the Executive, held on 11 July 2019, the allocation of £865k was approved to create three general teaching spaces and increase dining capacity at Outwood Academy Ormesby.</p>
<p>Bullying in schools</p>	<p>Ofsted recently published a new education inspection framework, which is planned to take effect from September 2019. The framework introduces a new 'behaviour' judgement to provide parents with reassurance on bullying.</p> <p>In an article published by the Independent in January 2019, Luke Tryl, Ofsted's Director of Corporate Strategy, stated that "disruptive behaviour and bullying is the number one concern for parents when they look through school inspection reports".</p>
<p>Education for immigrant children</p>	<p>The 2018 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) reports that a number of relatively small, transient immigrant groups appear among school-age children population figures for the town, which have been loosely grouped together into two broad categories: Middle Eastern and Eastern European.</p> <p>While the numbers of children in these groups do not appear to be growing significantly, they are concentrated in a small number of schools and the rate of turnover within these groups of children moving in and out of the town from one year to the next is very high, presenting a particular problem for the schools involved.</p> <p>The majority of the children in these groups are of primary school age, which means their English language skills may not be strong enough when they start at school to enable them to fully participate in and benefit from their time in school.</p>
<p>Addressing poverty issues and the impact on learning</p>	<p>Loughborough University's Centre for Research in Social Policy published local indicators of child poverty for 2017/18. In terms of the top 20 local authorities with the highest levels of child poverty across the UK (before housing costs), Middlesbrough ranks 17th with 31.9% (11,555) of Middlesbrough's children living in poverty.</p> <p>The Child Poverty Action Group reports that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children from poorer backgrounds lag at all stages of education. • By the age of three, poorer children are estimated to be, on average, nine months behind children from more wealthy backgrounds. • According to Department for Education statistics, by the end of primary school, pupils receiving free school meals are

	<p>estimated to be almost three terms behind their more affluent peers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 14, this gap grows to over five terms. • By 16, children receiving free school meals achieve 1.7 grades lower at GCSE. <p>In 2016 Newcastle University published a document entitled Poverty Proofing the School Day: Evaluation and Development Report. Poverty Proofing the School Day is an audit for schools, developed by the charity Children North East with the North East Child Poverty Commission. Support is provided to schools to enable them to identify and remove barriers to learning, which exist because of the impacts of living in poverty. Following the audit, an action plan is developed that is individually tailored to meet each school's needs.</p> <p>Newcastle University reported that overall, the programme is clearly very impactful. There is evidence of significant impacts on school culture and ethos and some direct impacts on pupils and their families.</p> <p>Through Poverty Proofing the School Day and research undertaken by Citizens UK, the Just Change campaign was launched by Tyne and Wear Citizens. Pupils involved in the Just Change campaign specifically highlighted being treated differently from their peers in the way they may be limited to the most basic meal options and unable to use their 'change' on subsequent days, for example to buy breakfast. The Just Change campaign states that this is a longstanding injustice which needs addressing urgently.</p>
<p>Support for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)</p>	<p>The 2018 JSNA reported that in 2014/15, Middlesbrough had a higher proportion of pupils with SEN Statements or Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and a significantly higher proportion of pupils within SEN support, than regional and national averages.</p> <p>Between 20 March 2017 to 24 March 2017, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Middlesbrough to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. The local area has been required to produce and submit a Written Statement of Action to Ofsted that explains how the local area plans to tackle the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A weakness in the strategic leadership, governance and implementation of the disability and special educational needs reforms in the local area. • Children, young people and families have too little involvement in discussion and decision-making about the services and support they need. • Leaders have an inaccurate view of the local area's effectiveness. They do not gather, analyse and use information and data to drive improvement in provision and outcomes for children and young people who have special

	<p>educational needs and/or disabilities in the local area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic planning is weak and there is no strategy for joint commissioning services across education, health and social care.
Promoting the education of looked-after children	<p>In February 2018, the Department of Education published statutory guidance for local authorities to support looked-after and previously looked-after children's aspirations to achieve in further and higher education.</p> <p>Looked-after and previously looked-after children start with the disadvantage of their pre-care experiences and, often, have special educational needs. Virtual School Heads have a key role to ensure these children have the maximum opportunity to reach their full educational potential - an important part of why this role was made statutory.</p> <p>For looked-after children, as part of a local authority's corporate parent role, the Virtual School Head needs to be the educational advocate that parents are for others.</p> <p>Progress against the Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 and financial position at Year-End 2018/19 reported that the Looked After Children rate rose from 155.6 per 10,000 in Q3 to 157.1 in Q4.</p>

Suggestions

Suggestion	Details
DfE education provision for Sex and Relationships Education (SRE)	<p>Suggestion from a Councillor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and to what extent have schools taken on board the mandatory curriculum? • Do we need to scrutinise the quality of this new provision and share good practice? • Does the curriculum include aspects of digital resilience and internet safety, respectful relationships and citizenship values?
Attainment and progress in Middlesbrough's schools and colleges	<p>Suggestion from a Councillor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are our educational establishments doing to seriously tackle low/under achievement? • Are we sure that we understand the underlying issues and are we convinced that everything possible is being done to tackle underachievement and raise achievement for all?
Youth services	<p>Suggestion from a Councillor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the full overview of current provision in different areas of our town? • Is existing provision adequate and successful?
Corporate parenting	<p>Suggestion from a Councillor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this responsibility work within our schools? • What are the numbers of children and young people

	<p>concerned by this issue?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are we sure that we are successful as corporate parents in schools and in the Council?
Parental involvement	<p>Suggestion from a Councillor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are schools working with parents? • Are we convinced that there are successful links and support mechanisms in place for children, young people and their parents?
Integration of all communities	<p>Suggestion from a Councillor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination of issues related to the successful welcome and integration of children and learners into our schools and communities. • Issues related to the value we attach to being part of a rich and diverse society in our town.
Regular updates	<p>Suggestion from a Councillor</p> <p>Regular updates, including statistics and data, on areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) • Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) • Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) issues • Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) • School exclusions and attendance • Elective home education • Virtual School • Youth Offending Team
Future of education in a world where work is going to be highly automated?	<p>Suggestion from a Councillor</p>
Support for children with additional needs	<p>Suggestion from a member of the public</p> <p>To investigate whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools are equipped to assess and support pupils with additional needs; • pupils are being diagnosed swiftly and gaining timely access to appropriate specialist interventions and services.

5. It should be noted that the suggested topics outlined above are exactly that, suggestions. The content of the scrutiny panel's work programme is entirely a decision for the panel to make. When considering the work programme, the panel is advised to select topics that are of interest to it, as well as topics that the panel feels by considering, it could add value to the Local Authority's work.
6. In addition to undertaking the agreed work programme, scrutiny panels have also previously responded on an ad-hoc basis to emerging issues - such as considering relevant new legislation, guidance or Government consultation documents. This approach occasionally results in further topics being identified for investigation or review throughout the year.

7. On occasion ad-hoc scrutiny panels may also be established throughout the year to undertake additional investigations, for example to examine areas of work which overlap more than one scrutiny panel.
8. The scrutiny panel is also advised that, under the terms of the Local Government Act 2000, local authorities have a responsibility of community leadership and a power to secure the effective promotion of community well-being. Therefore, in addition to the scrutiny panel's generally recognised powers (of holding the Executive to account, reviewing service provision, developing policy, considering budget plans and performance and financial monitoring), panels also have the power to consider **any** matters which are not the responsibility of the Council but which affect the local authority **or** the inhabitants of its area. For example, nationally, local authorities have undertaken scrutiny work on issues such as post office closures, rural bus services, policing matters and flood defence schemes.

Scrutiny work plan prioritisation aid

9. Members may wish to use the aid attached at **Appendix 1** to prioritise issues where scrutiny can make an impact, add value or contribute to policy development.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

10. The scrutiny panel is asked to consider and agree its work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year.
11. When considering its work programme, the scrutiny panel is asked to ensure that topics agreed for inclusion:
 - Affect a group of people living within the Middlesbrough area.
 - Relate to a service, event or issue in which the Council has a significant stake or over which the Council has an influence.
 - Are not issues which the Overview and Scrutiny Board or the scrutiny panels have considered during the last 12 months.
 - Do not relate to an individual service complaint; and
 - Do not relate to matters dealt with by another Council committee, unless the issue deals with procedure.
12. It is suggested that the scrutiny panel has a mixture of working styles in its programme. This can include detailed and in-depth reviews, shorter topics, or one-off investigations.
13. Once the scrutiny panel has identified the areas of priority, support staff will draw those topics into a programme for approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

RECOMMENDATION

14. That the scrutiny panel identifies two topics it would like to include in its work programme for 2019/20, for consideration/approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

15. Throughout the report, reference is made to information published by the Child Poverty Action Group, the Department of Education, the Independent, the Local Authority, Loughborough University's Centre for Research in Social Policy, Newcastle University, Ofsted, Tyne and Wear Citizens and Citizens UK.

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