

# MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL

### Setting the Scrutiny Panel's Work Programme 2020/21

27 July 2020

#### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To invite the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel to consider its work programme for the 2020/21 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.

#### Topic carried over from 2019/20

- Addressing Poverty Issues and the Impact on Learning

#### Topics agreed in 2019/20, which have not been investigated

- Parental Engagement (in-depth review)
- Education of Immigrant Children (short review)

#### Topical issues

Topic	Details
<b>Tackling the impact of lost teaching time</b>	<p>Children in England are set to benefit from a £1 billion Covid "catch-up" package to directly tackle the impact of lost teaching time, the Prime Minister and Education Secretary have confirmed.</p> <p>As plans continue for a full return to education from September 2020, the Government has announced £650 million will be shared across state primary and secondary schools over the 2020/21 academic year.</p> <p>Whilst head teachers will decide how the money is spent, the</p>

	<p>Government expects this to be spent on small group tuition for whoever needs it.</p> <p>This one-off grant to support pupils in state education recognises that all young people have lost time in education as a result of the pandemic, regardless of their income or background.</p> <p>Separately, a National Tutoring Programme, worth £350 million, will increase access to high-quality tuition for the most disadvantaged young people over the 2020/21 academic year.</p> <p>This will help accelerate their academic progress and prevent the gap between them and their more affluent peers widening.</p> <p>This £1 billion package is on top of the £14 billion three-year funding settlement announced last year - recognising the additional work schools will need to do to help students to catch up.</p>
<b>Using digital technology to improve learning</b>	<p>In December 2019, the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) published guidance entitled 'Using Digital Technology to Improve Learning'. The guidance includes a number of practical examples of technology being used in ways which support improved teaching (e.g. by increasing the accuracy of teacher assessment) or improve pupil learning (e.g. by increasing the quality and quantity of pupil practice).</p> <p>To develop the report's four recommendations for using digital technology to improve pupils' learning, the EEF not only reviewed the best available international research, but also consulted with teachers and other experts.</p> <p>In April 2020, the Department for Education published online educational resources for schools and parents to help children to learn at home during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.</p>
<b>Behaviour, discipline and bullying in schools</b>	<p>In July 2020, the Government re-published guidance on how school leaders and staff can develop a school behaviour policy, this includes checklists to support full school opening following the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The guidance provides advice to head teachers and school staff on developing the school behaviour policy and explains the powers members of staff have to discipline pupils. It is for individual schools to develop their own best practice for managing behaviour in their school.</p> <p>In 2019, Ofsted published a new education inspection framework, which introduced a new 'behaviour' judgement to provide parents with reassurance on bullying. 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>
<b>Support for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)</b>	<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 was</p>

	<p>required to produce and submit a Written Statement of Action to Ofsted that explained how the local area planned to tackle the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A weakness in the strategic leadership, governance and implementation of the disability and special educational needs reforms in the local area.</li> <li>• Children, young people and families have too little involvement in discussion and decision-making about the services and support they need.</li> <li>• 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 educational needs and/or disabilities in the local area.</li> <li>• Strategic planning is weak and there is no strategy for joint commissioning services across education, health and social care.</li> </ul> <p>The SEND Needs Assessment 2019 reported that in January 2018 there were 3,439 children and young people attending mainstream settings in Middlesbrough with SEND Support, which was 14.2% of pupils compared to 12.4% in the North East and only 11.7% in England. That represented an increase of 0.8% since 2016 in Middlesbrough compared to a 0.1% decrease in the North East over the same period and a 0.1% increase in England. Middlesbrough recorded a figure of 1,137 children and young people with EHC Plans in January 2018.</p> <p>The School Census January 2018 reported there was a total of 4,336 pupils recorded, of the entire SEND cohort 31.85% had a Moderate Learning Difficulty, followed by 16.54% with a Severe Learning Difficulty and the third highest proportion was Social, Emotional and Mental Health with 14.14%.</p> <p>In March 2020, the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) published a document entitled 'Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools'. The report presents five recommendations for mainstream primary and secondary schools seeking to improve their provision for pupils with SEND. Some of the recommendations included will also be helpful for pupils in special schools, although the EEF recognise that the approaches might need to be adapted and supplemented with specialist support for pupils with profound learning needs. The EEF is currently considering how it can support special schools in the future with tailored guidance and resources.</p>
<p><b>Improving social and emotional learning in primary schools</b></p>	<p>In January 2020, the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) published guidance entitled 'Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools'.</p> <p>The document reviews the best available research to offer school leaders six practical recommendations to support good SEL for all children. It stresses this is especially important for children from disadvantaged backgrounds and other vulnerable groups, who, on</p>

	<p>average, have weaker SEL skills at all ages than their better-off classmates.</p> <p>Evidence from the EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit suggests that effective SEL can lead to learning gains of +4 months over the course of a year. Yet, even though SEL is already a large (and often unrecognised) part of their current job - few teachers receive support on how they can develop these skills in their everyday teaching practice. This is particularly important at a time when schools are reviewing their core vision and curriculum offer, and planning to implement statutory Relationships and Health education</p>
<b>Keeping children safe in education</b>	<p>A document has recently been re-published by the Department of Education, which will come into force on 1 September 2020. The document is entitled 'Keeping children safe in education'. The document contains statutory guidance for schools and colleges</p> <p>Schools and colleges and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.</p>
<b>Pupil premium: effective use and accountability</b>	<p>In 2019, the Department for Education published guidance on how school leaders can manage their pupil premium funding, including reporting procedures and online statements.</p> <p>In June 2019, the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) published a new guide on the Pupil Premium. The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium aims to support schools in spending their Pupil Premium to maximise the benefit for their students.</p> <p>The report recommends schools take a tiered approach to Pupil Premium spending. Teaching should be the top priority, including professional development, training and support for early career teachers and recruitment and retention.</p> <p>Targeted support for struggling pupils should also be a key component of an effective Pupil Premium strategy; as well as strategies that relate to non-academic factors, including improving attendance, behaviour and social and emotional support.</p>
<b>Promoting the education of looked-after children</b>	<p>In February 2018, the Department of Education re-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</p>

	<p>advocate that parents are for others.</p> <p>The Council's Strategic Plan 2020-23 - Progress at Year-End 2019/20 reported that local Looked After Children rose from 175.0 per 10,000 at Quarter Three to 191.9 at year-end, and the Child Protection Plan rate also rose, from 93.2 per 10,000 to 98.4.</p>
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### **Suggestions**

<b>Suggestion</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>School place planning</b>	<p><b>Suggestion from the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel</b></p> <p>As part of its review of Infrastructure Delivery, the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel put forward a recommendation that in order to ensure the Council fulfils the duty to ensure sufficient school places are available for the town's children, a review be undertaken into school place planning and how academies in particular can be encouraged to work more closely with the Local Authority.</p>
<b>Provision for children with additional needs</b>	<b>Suggestion from a Councillor</b>
<b>How is funding affecting the ability of schools to provide effective learning and resources?</b>	<b>Suggestion from a Councillor</b>
<b>What is being done to help students 'catch up' on learning they have missed during the pandemic - how will this missed learning affect life outcomes?</b>	<b>Suggestion from a Councillor</b>
<b>Could children who have done better with remote and virtual learning, than in-school learning, be supported in continuing remote/virtual learning, where possible?</b>	<b>Suggestion from a Councillor</b>

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 2020/21 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 2020/21, for consideration/approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

15. Throughout the report, reference is made to information published by the Department of Education, the Education Endowment Fund (EEF), Ofsted and the Local Authority.

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