

## **EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL** **16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019**

### **Inclusion**

Although secondary schools are continuing to permanently exclude significant numbers of children, the Alternative Provision team are working hard to try to ensure that suitable and appropriate education placements are found for the children concerned. This term we have successfully re-integrated two permanently excluded children back into mainstream and have nine 'managed moves' on going which we hope will result in positive outcomes.

We have now completed the consultation on the new Inclusion Strategy which has been a result of year of planning with Head teachers and lead professionals. We are ready to implement the action plan and have work stream leads who are eager to ensure the actions are effective in supporting more children in our mainstream schools and improving the transitions for children moving across settings. The Director of Education and the Education team continue to work with all Head teachers but most especially our Secondary Head teachers and CEOs to challenge the levels of exclusion and support inclusive practice through school improvement strategies. There is interest in this work from other local authorities and from the DfE as inclusion has become a high priority nationally.

### **Virtual school for Looked after Children**

The new Virtual Head for Looked After Children was appointed on 8<sup>th</sup> October and is building upon the improvement work started by his predecessor. The Virtual School has a highly motivated, child-focused specialist team of staff drawn from a diverse range of backgrounds. The new ePEP system is now live and after a few expected implementation issues it is being increasingly used by schools and social workers and is being embedded into practice. The Virtual School has published its annual calendar which includes a bespoke professional development programme for the new team and training events for Designated Teachers, Foster Carers and the wider workforce. Plans are in place to recruit an apprentice to support the work of the Children in Care Council which will lead to the creation of more groups and further opportunities to listen and act upon the voices of a greater number of children and young people, particularly those out of borough.

## Stronger Families



Five factors largely outside of councils' control account for half of all variation in spend on children's services

1. Deprivation
2. Population size 0-25
3. Disposable household income
4. Unemployment
5. Crime

Nationally, there was a £8.85 billion overspend against a budget of £8.03 billion.

- Nationally numbers of children in care are at record levels.
- Child protection enquiries have increased by over 150%
- Looked After Children account for approximately 70% of the total spend on children's services nationally.

**National evidence suggests we need to avoid children going into care and focus on early help.**

Early Help in Middlesbrough is made up of:

- Family Partnership Team –Trauma Informed Team
- Work Readiness Team
- Family Casework Team
- School Readiness team
- Representation at the 'front door' for Children's Services enquiries'

### **Family Partnership Team**

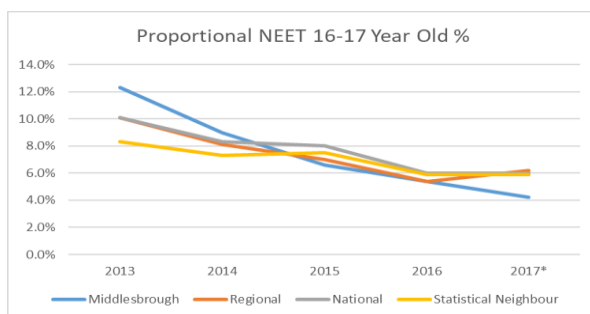
The role of this team is to increase the confidence of partners in taking on the role of Lead Practitioners. From the point that the Family Partnership Team commenced the number of partners acting as Lead Practitioner has increased significantly with an increase in numbers of My Family Plans and Early Help being offered to families from partners including schools, health and the voluntary sector. In March 2018, 176 Families which equates to **362** children were being supported by partners and by September this has increased to 370 Families and **789** children.

In order to increase skills and knowledge of partners in early help, over the last year the team has trained partners in Thresholds/Early Help (**250+**) and My Family Plans (**100+**). The Early

Help Forum is up and running on a fortnightly basis and provides partners with a group supervision model where they can seek advice in a multi-agency forum about managing risk and providing services to families.

### **Work Readiness Team**

The Work Readiness Team work with young people who are Not in Education or Training (NEET). The team has been incredibly successful in recent years and our proportional NEET rate (NEET and Not Known combined) is 4.2%. This is better than national, regional and statistical neighbours



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017*
Middlesbrough	12.3%	9.0%	6.6%	5.4%	4.2%
Regional	10.1%	8.1%	7.0%	5.4%	6.2%
National	10.1%	8.3%	8.0%	6.0%	6.0%
Statistical Neighbour	8.3%	7.3%	7.5%	5.9%	5.9%

### **Family Casework Team**

This team delivers early help to families where there are complex issues which often requiring multi-agency involvement.

- 78.2% of all family casework open cases had previously been open to Children’s Care which demonstrates that the Family Case Work team are working with the right families
- 15% of the cases were stepped down from Children’s Social Care (whilst Early Help is traditionally seem as limiting demand on social care by preventing entry into the social care system- the step down statistic also demonstrates that it is managing demand out of social care too)

There are currently over 600 children open to the Family casework team.

The Family casework team is successful with its work with families:

- 85% of families do not re-enter Children’s Social Care 12 months after the early help intervention closes
- 74% of families do not re-enter Early Help 12 months after the early help intervention closes

## **School Readiness Team**

Our Children's Centres are assessed as 'Good' against the Ofsted Framework for registrations and 'Outstanding' for reaching our target groups (vulnerable families in Middlesbrough).

The team have won the Council's staff awards three years in a row with the most recent being for the Children Centre Mobile free zone campaign which attracted local and national media interest.

The Team have brought over £120k into the Council by successfully bidding for early years grants. This has been used to complete a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (which is a statutory duty for Councils) along with promotion of funded childcare in Middlesbrough to parents and £800k of this was awarded to schools to help provide high quality childcare in Middlesbrough.

The team are involved in the HENRY research programme which promotes health eating in children and prevents childhood obesity and has recently been involved in advising Hull (statistical neighbour) on good practice with the School Readiness Model. We have recently been approached by Public Health England who will be working with Middlesbrough to use our models as good practice examples to be shared nationally.

## **Customer Feedback**

Customer Feedback is gathered in the ways listed below and 98.5% of customers are satisfied with the early help service they receive.



**Councillor Janice Brunton Dobson**  
**Executive Member for Education & Skills**