

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL

| |
|---|
| Date: Monday 20th March, 2023 Time: 10.30 am Venue: Mandela Room |
|---|

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes - Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel - 13 February 2023 3 - 6
4. Learning and Education Strategy Update 7 - 10

Officers will be in attendance to provide an update on the Learning and Education Strategy, outlining:

- current priorities, key issues and challenges; and
- Middlesbrough's headline facts and figures.

5. Overview and Scrutiny Board - An Update

The Chair will present a verbal update on the matters that were considered at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 22 February 2023.

6. Any other urgent items which in the opinion of the Chair, may be considered.

Charlotte Benjamin
Director of Legal and Governance Services

Town Hall
Middlesbrough
Friday 10 March 2023

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors D McCabe (Chair), M Saunders (Vice-Chair), A Hellaoui, T Higgins, C Hobson, D Jones, M Nugent and G Wilson

Assistance in accessing information

Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Georgina Moore, 01642 729711, georgina_moore@middlesbrough.gov.uk

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel was held on Monday 13 February 2023.

PRESENT: Councillors M Saunders (Vice-Chair), C Hobson, D Jones, M Nugent and G Wilson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: E Craigie (Teesside Live)

OFFICERS: R Brown, C Cannon, K Dargue, T Dunn, I Hanif, G Moore and K Smith

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors D McCabe, A Hellaoui and T Higgins

22/40 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

22/41 **MINUTES - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL - 16 JANUARY 2023**

The minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel held on 16 January 2023 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

22/42 **FREE SCHOOL MEAL PROVISION FOR NURSERY AGED PUPILS IN MIDDLESBROUGH**

At the Council meeting held on 30 November 2022, a Notice of Motion had been submitted, which requested that an assessment of the costs associated with an extension of Middlesbrough's free school meal offer (to include 3 and 4 year olds) be considered by the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel.

The Head of Achievement was in attendance to provide an overview of the proposal and the associated costs.

Members heard that the Government recognised the benefits of providing a healthy school meal to the most disadvantaged pupils. It was highlighted that the Education Act 1996 required maintained schools and academies (including free schools) to provide free school meals to disadvantaged pupils who were aged between 5 and 16 years old.

Members heard that in 2011 the pupil premium had been introduced to provide additional funding for local authority maintained schools in England, to increase the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers. Children eligible for free school meals also received pupil premium for their school. The funding was paid directly to the school as they were best placed to determine what additional provision was required.

The scrutiny panel was advised that from September 2014, Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) had been introduced for pupils in reception, year 1, and year 2.

In respect of the Notice of Motion, three lines of enquiry had been explored and those were outlined to the scrutiny panel:

1. It was advised that extending free school meal provision to ALL 3 and 4 year olds would have cost the Council £1, 748,000. The daily cost of school meals (£2.30) had been multiplied by the number of academic days (190) to give the price per head of £437 annually for 4,000 children (2,000 3 year olds and 2,000 4 year olds).
2. Members heard that extending free school meal provision to 3 and 4 year old attending maintained settings for both 15 and 30 hours of nursery provision, would have cost the Council £201,894. The number of pupils in the cohort was 462, however, the majority of those children only attended nursery provision for 15 hours.

3. It was advised that extending free school meal provision for those 3 and 4 year old attending maintained settings for 30 hours (49 children), would have cost the Council £21,413.

It was commented that the plans would have needed to be extended to include children in all types of provision, otherwise it would have left the Council open to being challenged for discrimination. It was advised that, to only provide free school meal provision to those attending maintained settings would have excluded a large proportion of Middlesbrough's children as those attending Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI), childminder and academy sector provision would not qualify or benefit.

The Head of Achievement advised that, given that proposal to extend free school meals to nursery-age children was highly expensive, it was not affordable at present.

A Member queried whether the costs outlined were purely for the meals or whether the logistics of serving those extra meals had also been considered. In response, the Head of Achievement confirmed that only the cost of the meals had been calculated.

A discussion ensued. The scrutiny panel recognised the key benefits of providing a healthy school meal, especially given the cost of living rise and the increased use of foodbanks. However, Members highlighted concerns that extending free school meal provision to only the 3 and 4 year old cohort attending maintained settings would have been considered discriminatory against those children attending Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) nurseries, childminders or academy sector provision. Subsequently, the scrutiny panel considered that the only option available would have been to extend free school meal provision to ALL 3 and 4 year olds and that would have resulted in the Council incurring significant costs (£1,748,000 in the first year). Therefore, given the Council's current financial position, the scrutiny panel supported the officer's recommendation - That the extension of free school meal provision, to include 3 and 4 year olds, would have been highly expensive and was not affordable at present.

The Democratic Services Officer advised that the appropriate elected members would be notified of the scrutiny panel's comments.

AGREED

That the extension of free school meal provision, to include 3 and 4 year olds, would have been highly expensive and was not affordable at present.

22/43

DRAFT FINAL REPORT - YOUTH OFFENDING AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

The Democratic Services Officer presented a brief overview of the draft final report on the topic of Youth Offending and Partnership Working with Schools. The following information was provided:

1. The purpose of the review was to examine how the South Tees Youth Justice Service (STYJS) worked in partnership with schools in Middlesbrough to improve school attendance, educational engagement and attainment for those young people involved in the criminal justice system.
2. The terms of reference, for the review, were detailed at paragraph 3 of the report.
3. Evidence in respect of Term of Reference A was included at paragraphs 9 to 24 and provided details on the role of the STYJS.
4. Evidence in respect of Term of Reference B was included at paragraphs 25 and 35 and provided details on the barriers to young people in the youth justice system engaging in education, such as drug and alcohol issues, serious youth violence and complex needs.
5. Evidence in respect of Term of Reference C was included at paragraphs 36 to 61 and provided details on how the STYJS worked with schools and covered the support provided by the service's Education, Training and Employment Team, the

development of the Inclusion Pathway and the contextual safeguarding approach that had been promoted.

6. Evidence in respect of Term of Reference D was included at paragraphs 62 to 71 and provided details on national effective practice in respect of partnership working with schools, as identified by HM Inspectorate of Probation.
7. The report contained 7 conclusions, which were detailed in full at paragraph 77 of the report. The conclusions summarised the main points of the report and identified key areas for further consideration.

Following discussion, the following recommendations were agreed for inclusion in the final report:

- a) *That the STYJS supports Children's Services to undertake a review of Middlesbrough Council's contextual safeguarding/risk outside of the home approaches to ensure delivery of a robust and co-ordinated whole-system/multi-agency response to violence and exploitation; which:*
 - *allows schools and education providers to react swiftly and firmly to early signs of criminal behaviour;*
 - *improves ETE outcomes for young people involved in the criminal justice system; and*
 - *supports the work of the Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence (CURV).*
- b) *That each young person who goes into custody is assessed to determine whether an educational psychologist should be allocated to them, to ensure their educational needs are being met (especially during the transition periods into and out of custody).*
- c) *That data is collected, analysed and evaluated to demonstrate the impact of the STYJS Inclusion Pathway on school attendance, exclusions and attainment.*
- d) *That a system, data management arrangements and information exchange agreements are put in place to ensure the STYJS can access a wealth of data and information, from partner agencies, to:*
 - *drill down to an individual level;*
 - *determine trends;*
 - *develop summary dashboards for key areas;*
 - *report on the progress of young people and their successes;*
 - *identify barriers and challenges; and*
 - *improve service delivery.*
- e) *That, in 6 months' time, the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel receives:*
 - *a detailed account of the work that has been undertaken to implement recommendations a) to d); and*
 - *an effective analysis of data from partner agencies (including schools), reporting on:*
 - *the profile of children/young people who come into contact with the STYJS, their needs, challenges and experiences of education; and*
 - *the STYJS's performance, specifically the impact of the STYJS Inclusion Pathway on school attendance, exclusions and attainment.*

AGREED

That, subject to the inclusion of the agreed recommendations, the final report on Youth Offending and Partnership Working with Schools be approved and submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for consideration.

considered:

- the Executive Forward Work Programme;
- an update on ongoing work and current key issues from the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Safety; and
- updates from the Scrutiny Chairs.

It was advised that the meeting of the Board that had been scheduled to take place on 8 February 2023 did not go ahead.

NOTED

MIDDELSBROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY REPORT

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL

20 March 2023

LEARNING AND EDUCATION STRATEGY UPDATE

ROB BROWN, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Summary

To provide the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel with an update on the Learning and Education Strategy.

Introduction

1. The strategy outlines our commitment to ensuring the very best education provision in Middlesbrough, working in collaboration, with the aim of providing a framework to support and challenge schools and education providers, and to continue to deliver great outcomes improving the life chances of our children and young people within the current context for learning. We have the vision 'that every child and young person in Middlesbrough has access to high quality education that increases and improves life chances, through achievement of the best possible outcomes at every stage of their learning journey and beyond'.
2. Although schools faced disruption due to Covid absence in autumn 2021, this academic year schools have returned to some sort of normality for young people and school staff. However, the impact of the pandemic on children and their families has proved to be significant. Schools have had to adapt what they do; because many pupils have missed out on learning, more of our young people are struggling in education.
3. The Learning and Education Strategy is based on the premise that all schools seek to continually improve outcomes for their children. It provides: A structure for schools to work collaboratively to innovate and develop practice; the mechanism by which good practice is shared, underperformance is challenged and implementing targeted support to achieve improvement. The Learning and Education Strategy aims to increase attainment and achievement across all schools and settings in Middlesbrough, and for all learners from early years (EYFS) to key stage 4 (KS4).
4. Raised educational attainment and achievement increases personal, social, cultural, and economic opportunities, and ensures that young people are in a position to fulfil their potential and contribute to the improved social and economic wellbeing of children and young people in Middlesbrough.

Evidence/Discussion

5. School inspections from Ofsted resumed in academic year 21/22. Middlesbrough had 10 school inspections - 93% schools good or better; 7 retained judgements of good; 2 improved judgements from requires improvement and 1 downgraded. The proportion of all schools judged to be at least good in Middlesbrough is lower than the national average which is lower than 2019 results where Middlesbrough was above national average. Whilst we are confident that this will improve over the coming year, improving education in Middlesbrough remains a priority.
6. The 2022 results are the first to be published since 2019:
 - 71% of pupils met the expected standard in reading, down from 72% in 2019.
 - 68.1% of pupils met the expected standard in maths, down from 79% in 2019.
 - 68% of pupils met the expected standard in writing, down from 78% in 2019.
 - 67% of pupils met the expected standard in grammar, punctuation and spelling, down from 76% in 2019.
7. The proportion of Middlesbrough pupils achieving a Good Level of Development in Reception, meeting standards in phonics and meeting the expected standard in key stage 1 were below the national average in 2022 - GLD Gap widened by 8.7% compared to LA data in 2019 meaning that the gap between LA and National has also widened a further by 8.7% since 2019 despite the national score also being lower in 2022.
8. The Learning and Education Strategy set out six thematic areas to support schools and target improvements: Early Years and Childcare, School Improvement, Supporting the Vulnerable, Health and Wellbeing, English as an Additional Language pupils and Transitions and added an addendum to incorporate lock down working restrictions in 2021.
9. The Achievement Team aim to support and work with school leaders to improve pupil outcomes, leadership, teaching, learning and assessment, as well as pupils' personal development, behaviour and well-being; all visits to Schools and Early Years settings are intended to support this improvement and inform future actions.
10. To evaluate the impact of support, Strategic Partners from the Achievement Team undertake activity reviews and monitor overall progress against objectives. They work with leaders to evaluate and challenge achievement of objectives and re-evaluate the direction of travel. For the academic year 2021/2022 there were 87 Advisor, Early Years, Ethnic Minority Team, Safeguarding and Gypsy, Roma Traveller visits to Primary Schools and 29 visits to Secondary Schools. In Primary Schools, 185 attendees have attended training and development (CPD) in 63 schools' sessions, for Secondary 16 attendees in 3 schools' sessions have attended. We established network meetings and for Designated Safeguarding Lead network: 134 attendees; Early Years Foundation Stage network (EYFS) (schools): 39 attendees; English as an Additional Language network (EAL) (schools): 21 attendees. We have undertaken 13 EAL/EYFS audits, had 28 strategic level conversations and formed 1 Monitoring and Support Group, with a school led system, working with leaders to drive improvement and progress outcomes.

Conclusion

11. Local Authorities retain the statutory duty “to promote high standards so that children and young people achieve well” (2011 Education Act).
12. Schools have engaged positively with LA delivered CPD and Advisor visits - all support and underpin the Ofsted Inspection Framework. The goals for academic year 22/23 are:
 - encourage schools that are good or outstanding to support other schools and develop capacity to bring about system wide and sustainable improvement across Middlesbrough
 - school to school support, placing this at the heart of system wide arrangements to help ensure a good school for every child
 - Identify and create diverse curriculum opportunities to support schools to help pupils to remain engaged in school and in their education
 - to establish learning hubs for Early Years Foundation Stage, English as an Additional Language and to build on the work of the English/Literacy Hub already in place.
 - target funding and resources to facilitate rapid improvement
 - support and challenge schools to remain Ofsted good or outstanding, and improve from Ofsted ‘Requires Improvement’ and ‘Inadequate’ judgments in the shortest possible time
 - support schools in responding to national policy changes and government initiatives

This page is intentionally left blank