

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL
22.09.2021

1. South Tees Youth Offending Service

The South Tees Youth Offending Service has recently received thanks from DJ Harrison and the outgoing Chair of the Youth Bench, both of whom are retiring after a significant period of time working in the youth justice arena. Both took time to write thank you cards thanking the service for their support and professionalism over the years, which has been gratefully received by staff.

2. Risk and Resilience Service

The number of young people reported to the Police as missing has remained consistent this quarter, however the number of missing episodes have decreased. This is largely due to a small group of Children Looked After whose plans have been reviewed and this has subsequently had a positive effect for those young people as their missing episodes have significantly reduced or ceased.

A VEMT (Vulnerable Exploited Missing Trafficked) project with MFC Foundation has continued to go from strength-to strength, with excellent outcomes being reported for young people involved in the programme. One young person previously categorised as 'very high risk' in 2020 engaged with the programme and has subsequently had 100% attendance at education, sat functional skills in Maths and English, completed the National Citizen Service programme.

3. Back to school

Pupils have returned to school and whilst the majority of Covid measures have now been removed, preventative measures such as risk assessments and proportionate control measures will remain.

4. GCSE results

GCSE results for Middlesbrough this year showed an overall improving pattern, though work is ongoing to ensure the validation of data sets and comparison with the rest of the region and the country as a whole. This work will confirm if the improvements seen in Middlesbrough are in-line with national outcomes and if the achievement gap remains the same or has worsened/improved.

5. Achievement

The Learning and Education Strategy is now out for consultation with Head Teachers and stakeholders. The strategy clearly sets out what, why and how we will work collaboratively with schools and other educational settings to support and challenge them, to ensure the Quality of Education offered is meaningful and teaches exactly what the pupils of Middlesbrough need to know. The strategy is underpinned by a three-stage roadmap (recovery, reset and sustain), exemplifying the learning journey required as we emerge from the pandemic, thereby helping to secure sustainability in schools for pupils by outlining how

through collaboration with schools, a universal teaching support, targeted support and wider strategic support can achieve this. ¹

Separately, our new Schools Safeguarding Compliance Officer has started in role and is already working on developing a service level agreement with schools external to the local authority, following an approach made by a large multi-academy trust. Her role will be focused primarily on supporting schools to develop increasingly effective safeguarding practice by providing supervision and professional development, thus ensuring appropriate referrals are submitted in a timely fashion.

The Ethnic Minority Team (EMAT) have successfully planned joint working with our schools for the new school term to ensure international new arrivals are fully supported to achieve great outcomes in their academic journey.

Throughout the summer and into the autumn term, reading activities have been underway, wherein a range of council service areas and officers have hidden books for pupils and their families to find, read and then re-hide.

Ten schools participated with the DfE Summer Schools initiative and provided a range of curriculum based learning activities for the year 7 cohort assisting them in their preparedness for secondary school. In addition, the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) also offered a range of enrichment activities for pupils including: free swimming, netball tuition led by a premier league netball player, canoeing, arts and crafts and bush-tucker trial experiences.

6. Access to Education

The DfE has extended the remit of Virtual School Heads to include strategic oversight of the academic performance of children involved with Child Protection and Children in Need Social Care services. Funding has been provided to support this and is time limited to March 2022- the DfE will decide shortly whether to extend this funding period. Within Middlesbrough Virtual School we are well placed to implement these new responsibilities The Virtual School began to track and analyse the school attendance of children open to Social Care in June and we have put in place robust systems to support this and to improve the attendance of these vulnerable children. Good attendance is the pre cursor to improved achievement so we have made a good start on getting the foundations in place.

Further to the above, DfE has also invited bids for funding to pilot new approaches to supporting post 16 looked after children; we have submitted a bid and will find out if we are successful in early September.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion within timescales is very good at around 95%. All of the looked after children of school age have a PEP, which is co-produced by the school, social worker and Virtual School, with input from the child.

Virtual School took 10 Looked after Children to visit Darlington Hippodrome to watch Horrible Histories Barmy Britain! The children had a wonderful time viewing the 3D special effects and enjoyed watching the performers who brought the history of Britain alive.



¹ [Learning and Education Roadmap \(002\).docx](#)

7. Inclusion and Specialist Support Service

Nationally, the requests for an Education, Health and Care Assessment are increasing and some of this pressure is down to COVID. This is reflective across the SEND service within Middlesbrough, as we have seen the number of requests for statutory EHC assessment increase. Currently, the number of EHCPs which we have in place and which require a statutory annual review, has increased from 1224 in 2019 to 1303 for this year. To support this increase in demand, we have reviewed key processes and service delivery models. We have also increased capacity within the SEND Team, and will continue to monitor the number of requests received from schools and academic settings.