

Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 10th May, 2017.

Present: Cllr Carol Clark (Chairman), Cllr Barbara Inman (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Tracey Stott, Cllr Sally Ann Watson

Officers: Peter Mennear, Annete Sotheby (DCE), Martin Gray, Diane McConnell, Joanne Mills, Helen Crawford (Children's Services)

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr Di Hewitt, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley

CYP 7/17 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest from members.

CYP 8/17 **Scrutiny Review of Special Educational Needs and Disability - Preparing for Adulthood**

Review of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Committee members had requested further data following the previous meeting. They were given a bigger picture around SEN including the action plan, Stockton's self-evaluation form and an update of the workstream in relation to preparation for adulthood. The key areas were:

- Self-evaluation – this is continuously updated, with each section giving general points of weakness, areas of development and strengths.
- Need to meet all areas of Children and Family Act and the SEN Code of Practice, focusing on a strong local offer.
- New SEN Development Group linking with all partners to identify key areas of work.
- Impact of areas of development.
- The development of an action plan.

An away day for the Development Group would be held the following week with the opportunity to look at impact measures in greater depth and help determine measurable outcomes.

Members were provided with a presentation of the key points from the SEN Self Evaluation:

- How youngsters with SEN are identified begins with the health visitor service. Liaison and communication around the needs of children is at the heart of this service, looking at their training records and evaluations.
- Autism Spectrum disorder pathways and CAMHS involvement.
- Disadvantaged targeted work – People Select Committee had previously looked at disadvantage in early years, and noted how those links could be improved.

- Need to ensure that Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) meet the timescales - 2/3 are completed in a timely way, but there is room for improvement in this area. Work ongoing with the effectiveness of transitions from statements to EHCPs and improving timescales. The key issue was to ensure that the quality of EHCPs was consistently high.
- Stockton had a disproportionate number of youngsters attending special schools – children require earlier support in mainstream so they do not need specialist places later.
- Enhanced Provision in Mainstream – the new model of enhanced schools in Stockton, delivery proposals were now being assessed.
- The Stockton Virtual School for LAC plays a crucial role in early identification of PEPs and are linked in with special educational needs.
- How we effectively assess early need around SEN support was crucial – new team structure was being developed with 30-day period of consultation to be concluded in June, restructuring staffing to ensure better working and increased focus on those with SEN as well as those on EHCPs.
- Working with schools, training of SENCOs, ensuring school reports up to date, working with new Area SENCO role in early years – all to ensure schools are well positioned to contribute appropriately.
- Identified improvements that need to be made on information sharing.
- How we are engaging parents in terms of the Local Offer.
- Involving speech and language, social care teams, independent advice and guidance to ensure all are working together.
- Personal budgets were an area of development, with attention on the annual review.
- Parental involvement/satisfaction with use of mediation around appeals, tribunals, and complaints.
- Evidence of meeting needs, with schools achieving better ratings.
- Almost 100% of Early Years childminders with good or better ratings was very reassuring.
- Improvements in Key Stage 1, and Key Stage 4 – large majority of SEN youngsters are in special schools and are at risk of not receiving access to the full curriculum.
- Trying to get youngsters back into mainstream schools was an area requiring improvement, although there was evidence of improvement particularly with those with SEN support.
- Figures suggest that schools and colleges are successfully keeping SEN

youngsters in education but there is a need to look at the qualifications they are getting as improvement still required in this area.

- An Action Plan had been drawn up, with multi-agency working groups set up to take forward various themes. Preparation for Adulthood was a key part of the theme of Development of pathways for children and young people with SEND. A high priority had been placed on the development of Joint Commissioning, and a joint strategy would be developed.

Working groups had started to meet including on Preparation for Adulthood, and Members had been invited to attend. A sub group focussing on employability was to be established.

Accountability was provided through the chairs of each working group reporting to Joanne Mills and the health lead, who then updated the Self Evaluation framework as progress was made. The SEF was reported to the Development Group, which included the Director of Children's Services.

The Action Plan was discussed with different timescales explained, for example statutory requirements having a shorter timescale. Completed actions and outstanding actions were discussed.

Hartlepool SEN information had now been shared with CCG to record on their system that a child has an EHCP.

Local Offer – current information could be accessed about Stockton's services for children and young people with SEN (short breaks, statements, application forms etc – a one stop shop of information).

The Committee considered the SEF and Action Plan.

Annual reviews up to the age of 16 were delegated to SENCOs, and there was a need to ensure these had a consistent quality. Improved liaison with social care was needed, although not all children and young people with SEND had a social worker.

Members asked at what age the transition begins from a young person to age 25 – it was noted that transition work now begins from 16-18 years of age from children's social worker to adult social worker. In the past, this work had not begun until age 18.

Members also asked if more staff would be available to cope with the extra workload involved, for example the annual review. It was reported that although there would be no additional education staff, after refocusing and reorganisation there would be some different roles, all within the same funding. There would be no extra social care staffing, however there would be closer working and information sharing in this area.

Discussion took place around the lack of progress with Key Stage 4 – it was noted that some youngsters were doing very well, particularly those on the catering course, although they do not have the range of curriculum as that of mainstream school. It was felt important for youngsters to attend the right school to have access to the curriculum they needed.

Members were concerned that some youngsters who were unable to attend mainstream school were not being given the same chance, having limited courses available to them. It was reported that improvements were being made with more accredited courses available for SEN youngsters, and work was ongoing to increase the choice available to them. Ofsted had reflected a much greater emphasis on aspiration and accreditation for pupils.

Members queried why Progress 8 scores were lower for special schools. There had been some progress with the increase in accredited courses, but generally speaking not many special schools offered the full range of E Bacc. Courses that are used to measure Progress 8.

Following the request that had been made at the previous meeting, information had been gathered on the destinations of young people with SEND.

In terms of those with an EHCP or Higher Needs Funding, it was reported that 47 young people had moved from special school into further education provision – 32 went to Stockton Riverside, 10 to Middlesbrough College and others elsewhere including Cleveland College of Design and Askham Bryan. Most of the students at mainstream provision went into college provision.

Work ongoing with Stockton Riverside and Daisy Chain to try to obtain animal care provision in Stockton so those youngsters interested in this subject could stay within their local area and not have to move further afield.

Work ongoing within the employability task group with Daisy Chain and economic development around employability of youngsters on leaving further education.

STEPS programme supports employment for young people.

Schools and colleges had been asked for case study examples to show if young people had moved into employment or university. This could be presented to other young people in the hope of raising their aspirations.

Members asked if young people could change their mind once they had begun a training course. It was reported that a change in career option would be supported by colleges. Discussion took place around better career advice for youngsters with special needs, hopefully avoiding making the wrong choice and having to change course.

The SEN Team now included two officers who are gaining the Careers Advice and Guidance qualification.

Members wanted to ensure that courses were worthwhile and led to progression. It was highlighted that Supported Internships were increasingly an option.

It was reported that one young person with special needs, following help and support, was now a valuable member of staff at Queensway.

The recommendation from Members to look at Twisting Ducks, a forum of

young people with learning difficulties or special needs, had been followed up. It was felt that this could be developed in Stockton. Further details would be fed back to the next meeting.

Members queried whether there had been any feedback from Government as to why the Tees valley bid for a special Free School had been refused. There had been no further details, but it was thought that the Government may wish to see attempts at stimulating the market, or alternative ideas to be developed first.

Agreed - that the information be noted

**CYP
9/17** **Work Programme**

Members were reminded that meeting dates were confirmed for visits to the Development Group Away Day, and the Parent Carer Group.

It was agreed to change the next Select Committee date from 7 June to 28th June 2017.

Agreed - that the Work Programme be noted

**CYP
10/17** **Chair's Update**

The Chair had nothing further to report.