

## People Select Committee

A meeting of People Select Committee was held on Monday, 17th October, 2016.

**Present:** Cllr Eileen Johnson(In the chair), Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Lisa Grainge, Cllr Di Hewitt, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley

**Officers:** Diane McConnell (Assistant Director - Schools & SEN), Deborah Merrett (Chief Advisor), Janet Marriot (Early Years Manager), Vanessa Housley (Senior Inclusion Adviser), Peter Mennear, Jenna McDonald (DCE)

**Also in attendance:**

**Apologies:** Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell

**PEO  
33/16**      **Evacuation Procedure**

The evacuation procedure was noted.

**PEO  
34/16**      **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**PEO  
35/16**      **Minutes for signature - 18 July 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2016 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

AGREED that the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**PEO  
36/16**      **Draft Minutes - 26th September 2016**

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 26th September 2016.

AGREED that the minutes be approved.

**PEO  
37/16**      **Scrutiny Review of Disadvantage in Early Years and School**

The Committee was presented with information on the use of Pupil Premium in Schools and Early Years.

Members were provided with the opportunity to review how the Education Improvement Service responded generically to schools receiving Pupil Premium and also to focus on Pupil Premium for Looked After Children.

Members received a presentation on Pupil Premium. Key points and questions were highlighted together as follows:

- It was asked how schools managed Pupil Premium in a classroom environment, ensuring that those children who were not eligible for Pupil Premium, particularly those whose circumstances were just above the threshold of eligibility, were not treated any differently to those that were eligible. In response, it was noted that it was the schools responsibility to understand the

needs of every child and therefore identify and remove any barriers where possible. It was explained that children were not singled out and those children that were not eligible for Pupil Premium still benefited from Pupil Premium funded class trips and transport.

- Schools have wide discretion in the spending of Pupil Premium but must account for the specific impact Pupil Premium has had on the pupils it is allocated to. All spending must be published on school websites. It was recognised that the choices schools are able to make when using Pupil Premium will differ depending on the size of their allocation, and some schemes will benefit other children in addition to those eligible for the Premium.

- Members were keen to understand how Pupil Premium was promoted in order to ensure that those who were eligible, had a clear understanding of how to apply. Parent Support Advisors had been effective in undertaking promotional work. An emerging issue was that following the introduction of universal free school meals for Key Stage 1 children, the need to apply for Free School meals has become less apparent to families. As the numbers on free school meals is one of key methods via which schools are allocated their Pupil Premium funding, it will be necessary to ensure eligible families still come forward to register.

- Queries were raised around the governance Academies in relation to how they ensured they developed a focus on the needs of disadvantaged children. It was noted that attendance at school cluster and partnership meetings was monitored and academies continued to engage with these.

- Guidance was available to identify effective interventions that could be funded by Pupil Premium. Examples were highlighted at the meeting and it was noted that these were based on a cost/benefit analysis therefore although each of these may have some impact, some interventions are seen as more effective than others.

- It was suggested that the approach to monitoring the use of the new Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) in the private sector will mirror the approach taken with schools. In Stockton, EYPP is seen as an opportunity to: build resilience and self-regulation; secure the vocabulary base; and improve mental health.

Members also received a presentation on the use of Pupil Premium for looked after children and young people (LAC). The following points and questions were raised:

- It was noted that in Stockton, agreement between the Schools Forum and EIS means that £500 from each LAC Pupil Premium payment is top-sliced for use by the Virtual School, and is monitored and spent by the Virtual School Board. A top slice of £500 is in the mid-range when compared nationally. This creates a Borough-wide fund that can be spent on individual pupils if appropriate. Schools are able to bid for funding from it, but borough wide interventions can also be developed. Current spending includes two Educational Development Advisors.

- It was asked where Councillors, as Corporate Parents could access information on Pupil Premium with regards to Looked After Children on an on-going basis. In response, it was noted that such information was reported

through MALAP and was included in an Annual Report which was reported to the Council's Cabinet. Members asked whether it would be possible to arrange a Members Seminar on the subject in the future. In response, it was noted that a Corporate Parenting conference was due to take place in December 2016.

- It was believed that the Virtual School enabled the Council to have a good understanding of its Looked After Children both in its schools and in other areas.

- It was asked how long Virtual School Headteachers had been in place. In response, it was heard that Pupil Premium had been in place for around eight years and was a statutory requirement for Local Authorities.

- The Virtual School was working with settings to implement a monitoring system in relation to the use of Pupil Premium for LAC, similar to its work with schools.

- The Virtual School Headteacher recognises that outcomes for Looked After Children (LAC) in EY needed to improve (38% achieved GLD in 2016 although this was out of a total small number of 8 children).

- A working party has identified a number of recommendations including ensuring PEPs are in place, ensuring EYPP is used effectively, and encouraging attendance at early years settings to support assessment of their needs. It was recognised that there needed to be a balance between encouraging attendance of LAC at EY settings, and ensuring they were settling into their new placements.

AGREED that the presentations be noted.

**PEO  
38/16**      **Work Programme**

Consideration was given to the Committee work programme 2016-17.

AGREED that the work programme be noted.