

## **Children and Young People Select Committee**

A meeting of Children and Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday 16th July 2025.

**Present:** Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Jack Miller (sub for Cllr Stephen Richardson), Cllr Emily Tate, Cllr Sally Ann Watson and Cllr Katie Weston

**Officers:** Majella McCarthy, Elisha Dyball and Michelle Gunn

**Also in attendance:** Emma Zenaj, Zoe Bradshaw (Stockton Parent Carer Forum), Mark Porter, Martin Short (North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board)

**Apologies:** Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr David Reynard, and Cllr Stephen Richardson

### **CYP/14/25 Evacuation Procedure**

The evacuation procedure was noted.

### **CYP/15/25 Declarations of Interest**

For transparency purposes, Councillor Jack Miller declared an interest in Item 5 – Scrutiny Review of Additionally Resourced SEND Provision, as a teacher who had worked within schools providing SEND provision across both Stockton-on-Tees and Hartlepool.

### **CYP/16/25 Minutes**

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **CYP/17/25 Scrutiny Review of Additionally Resourced SEND Provision**

The Committee received a report from Stockton Parent Carer Forum outlining evidence following a survey of Parent Carers views on Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) in secondary schools. The Forum was the recognised voice of parents and carers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities aged 0-25 in Stockton-on-Tees. They had 2,000 parent/carers on their database and ensured that they focussed the survey on those that would be affected by ARP, receiving 60 responses. Listening events had also been held, which were open to parents from across the Borough and not just members of the Forum, and these had been extremely popular. An email address had been set up as another avenue to communicate.

The key issues highlighted and discussed were as follows:

- Parent Carers had a great understanding of their child's needs and were aware of and supportive of ARP.

- There was a real concern that there was mainstream provision and special provision but nothing in the middle for their child.
- A main theme of the results was that people were feeling scared, especially of the transition from primary schools which were nurturing environments to mainstream secondary which were bigger. The only other option within the Borough was specialist settings which was not always right for their child. It was very clear that there was not enough provision in secondary schools. The Committee acknowledge that the transition from primary to secondary could be scary for all children and therefore understood that it would be even more so for those with SEND.
- Another strong theme of the results was wanting their child to thrive in secondary schools, not just survive, having the same opportunities as other children to learn and do their best. They expressed the wish for secondary schools to “step up” and make the term “every child matters” mean what it said.
- The impact of a child struggling had on families was noted, which included stress and anxiety for parents and other sibling and sometimes even coming out of work.
- Parent Carers were aware sending children outside the borough for their secondary education incurred extra cost for the Council and wanted their child to remain within the borough if possible. Members noted that while it was good they were aware of the costs, this should not be a concern for the parents/carers.
- The Autism Hub at Egglecliffe School was discussed and it was noted that this was a five-place setting who were absolutely committed to supporting those children therefore there would be no impact on their education. However, there would not be any further admissions to the hub, and they were not changing to ARP.
- Members noted that some secondary schools were outstanding at providing provision for those with SEND, but they would like to see all schools being outstanding. Officers believed that the work they are doing around ARP was improving the offer so that all schools were given the support they needed.
- Home learning was discussed. Stockton Parent Carer Forum stated that this was a real option for some of their families as their needs can’t be met within mainstream school, and they were doing a fantastic job getting great results for their child.

The Committee also received a presentation from North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) regarding Stockton-on-Tees ARP Implementation, which included, the background of the implementation, the oversight that had taken place, challenges and mitigation, and next steps. The key issues highlighted and discussed were as follows:

- 155 school places had been created in schools that had come on board. 60 of these were secondary school places and the remainder were primary school places. These were in addition to places at schools that already had ARP places.
- It was believed that the ARP programme would be able to meet the need of SEND children in schools.
- The challenge was to ensure children were placed on the pathways at the right time to ensure that they received the support that they needed.
- It was questioned what safeguards were in place to ensure that schools did not request further funding than the £735,000 that had already been invested. Officers noted that the programme had been co-produced with stakeholders to ensure that the funding was reflective of the costs needed. It would be reviewed

annually, and costs were expected to rise, however the programme was about providing the right level of provision, thereby making sure that children have the right school place for their needs.

- Members questioned how the provision would be monitored to ensure that children were getting the best provision for their needs. Officers noted that there were very clear performance indicators to meet, which were explained to schools when they signed up, and a new post had been created to monitor these. Monitoring would include visits to the schools.
- There was an expected increase of 9% in need of places and the plan for the next 12-18 months was to make sure mainstream schools were supported to support these children. If children had their needs met at an earlier stage they would not need the ARP places later in their school career.

The Scrutiny Officer noted the updated scope and project plan, and informed that in September the Head Teachers for St John the Baptist Primary and Northshore Academy would be attending to discuss their experience of moving to an ARP. Visits to schools with ARPs in place would also be arranged for September and meetings will be held by Trust group in September/ October to explore the reasons and barriers for schools not transferring to ARPs.

#### **CYP/18/25 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme**

Consideration was given to the Select Committee's work programme.

AGREED the work programme be noted.

Chair: .....