

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON MONDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 2019

PRESENT:

Councillors: Mahir Demir (Chair), Josh Dixon, Tammy Palmer, Dana Carlin, James Chiriyankandath, Julie Davies and Khaled Moyeed

Co-opted Members: Mark Chapman (Parent Governor representative), Yvonne Denny (Church representative), Luci Davin (Parent Governor representative)

10. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to item 1 on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting and Members noted the information contained therein.

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

12. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

14. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

15. MINUTES

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of 18 December 2018 be approved.

16. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND PERFORMANCE

James Page, the Chief Executive of Haringey Education Partnership, reported on educational attainment and performance data for children taking tests and exams within Haringey schools in 2018. The data from these had only recently been

validated externally. It had previously been presented to the Panel by the relevant Assistant Director within the Children and Young People's Service but responsibility had now passed to Haringey Education Partnership.

He reported that 76% of Haringey pupils within early years had reached a Good Level of Development (GLD), which was above the London average. There was nevertheless some evidence of lower performance by Turkish children. In Key Stages 1 and 2, there had been a considerable increase in performance in phonics but there was evidence of slight underperformance in this by Black Caribbean and Turkish children. In Key Stage 1 tests, outcomes at the Expected Standard and the higher Greater Depth standard were now above national averages in all subjects. However, there were lower levels of performance amongst Turkish and Black Caribbean children. For Key Stage 2, attainment in all subjects was in line with or above national averages. A high percentage of those achieving the Greater Depth levels of performance were from the affluent white communities within the borough.

For Key Stage 4 (GCSE), Haringey pupils scored 0.16 in the Progress 8 figures, which was above the national average. Haringey was 24th out of the 32 London boroughs. Pupils from white British backgrounds performed substantially better than other groups. Black Caribbean, black African and Turkish pupils were not performing to quite the same levels though. However, there was evidence that the gap in attainment for Turkish pupils was diminishing. In respect of post 16, the Panel noted that 51% of young people, including 80% of those in the east of the borough, went outside of the borough. The average grade achieved at 'A' Level was C+.

In answer to a question regarding what was being done to improve the performance of Turkish children, Mr Page reported that work was taking place with schools and Key Stage 2 was being looked at specifically. There was a BAME Achievement Group that was looking at underperformance and, in particular, linking up with similar London boroughs. The underperformance of Black Caribbean and Black African children was a national issue but that of Turkish children was a more localised matter. All schools received a data pack outlining performance, including those of different groups and how results compared with those in London and nationally. School improvement partners visited each school that had bought into the services of Haringey Education Partnership at least three times per year. Some schools had bought additional support. Schools also learnt from each other through the peer partnership programme.

Mr Page stated that school improvement partners looked at relevant data with schools and worked with their leadership teams. They also went into classrooms and made suggestions on how teaching practice could be improved. High quality teaching was the most effective way of addressing underperformance and, in particular, overcoming language difficulties and disaffection with school.

In answer to a question regarding supplementary schools and additional tuition, Mr Page stated that it was difficult to determine how effective they were. The boroughs which had the most of such provision tended to have the 11 Plus. Haringey performance at early year's stage was near the top in London. By Key Stage 1, it was just above average and it was in the bottom third for London by Key Stage 4. The boroughs near the top tended to be those with selective schools.

Councillor Elin Weston, the Cabinet Member for Children and Families, commented that there was no suggestion that Haringey schools were underperforming. Haringey was one of only five local authorities where all schools were rated as either being good or outstanding.

In answer to a question regarding ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes, Mr Page stated that the College of North East London was able to provide teaching for this and were keen to assist.

In answer to another question regarding help for children who found it difficult to access quiet space and the facilities to complete their homework satisfactorily, the Cabinet Member stated that there were examples of schools that provided additional help. However, there was pressure on all school budgets and, whilst they did their best, it was difficult for them. She stated that Haringey Education Partnership was contracted to deliver school improvement services for those schools that had bought into the service. Specific recommendations could be made to schools if necessary and this was something that could be considered.

17. HARINGEY LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDRENS BOARD

David Archibald, Interim Chair of Haringey Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB), reported on the LSCB's Annual Report for 2018. The period covered by the report included the appointment of a new Director of Children's Services and LSCB Board Manager, as well as the publication of the new "Working Together". From September this year, there would no longer be a requirement to have a LSCB and it would be the responsibility of each local authority and Police and NHS partners to agree suitable local arrangements. In the meantime, the focus was on ensuring that it was business as usual. There had been 11,827 contacts with the service during 2018 and 327 child protection plans had been put together by partners by the end of the year.

He reported that consideration was being given to what would work best regarding future safeguarding structures. The new guidance in "Working Together" had also suggested that different arrangements would be needed for child death reviews in the future. However, it needed to be noted that 90% of child deaths arose from medical issues and were not connected to safeguarding issues.

In answer to a question regarding the merger of Haringey and Enfield Police functions, the Cabinet Member for Children and Families stated this had resulted in Police responsibility for safeguarding being brought back into the borough. Police officers who were now leading on safeguarding had also worked in Haringey before and she had therefore been reassured that there were unlikely to be adverse effects arising from the merger. Mr Archibald commented that he had been impressed by the involvement of the Police in the LSCB.

Gill Gibson, Assistant Director for Early Help and Prevention, reported that demand for Early Help services had doubled with 1004 and families contacting the service. Ofsted had commented that the service was working well with the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). It was noted that work had taken place to look at where

contacts with the service were coming from. There had also been training regarding thresholds. OFSTED had commented that there appeared to be a good understanding of thresholds amongst safeguarding partners.

In answer to a question regarding the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Mr Archibald stated that the low number of referrals was consistent with national patterns. The Panel noted that the recent OFSTED inspection report had praised the performance of the LADO. Suspension of staff who were the subject of allegations was a last resort. The LADO worked closely with Human Resources and consulted with Headteachers. There was also a written protocol. It was agreed that the LADO would be invited to attend a future meeting of the Panel to present the annual report of the LADO.

Ms Gibson reported on progress with the implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) that had taken place last year. She stated that progress was closely monitored. Some of the recommendations were for individual agencies whilst others were for the partnership as a whole. Each recommendations had either been allocated to a sub group of the LSCB or an individual agency. 56 recommendations had so far been completed. Progress of 42 of the remaining recommendations had been RAG rated as green, 6 were amber and 3 were red. Further work was being undertaken on the recommendations that had not yet been completed. The focus was on making sustainable progress. Further reports on progress would be made in due course.

AGREED:

That the LADO be invited to attend a future meeting of the Panel to present the annual report of the LADO.

18. SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS

Eveleen Riordan, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning, reported that a review of exclusions had been undertaken by the Council's Corporate Delivery Unit. This had begun in the autumn and the final report of this was due shortly. Findings had so far shown that the rate of exclusions in Haringey was increasing and was above that of neighbouring boroughs. Disproportionate numbers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities were being excluded. The Council had a statutory duty to ensure that children and young people who had been excluded received an education. A review of alternative provision would take place once the review on exclusions had been completed.

The Panel noted that the number of fixed term exclusions was now going down. However, it took time for relevant data to filter through. Figures for permanent exclusions from secondary schools were as follows:

- 2014/15; 36
- 2015/16; 19
- 2016/17; 16
- 2017/18 (1 term only); 28

The figures for 2017/18 were of some concern, particularly as they only covered the Autumn Term of 2017.

In answer to a question, Ms Riordon stated that exclusions were not concentrated on any specific schools and there was no clear pattern. The Panel noted that primary schools were in a better position to support pupils as they were smaller in size. Some children could find it difficult to adjust to secondary school after moving up from primary school. Efforts were being made to encourage secondary schools to work closely with the Council to address these issues.

In answer to a question regarding alternative provision, Ms Riordan reported that there was a range of provision. The upcoming review would look at whether it was meeting the needs of children and young people in the borough. In answer to another question, she stated that exclusions were for a wide range of issues including bringing weapons into school, drugs and persistent bad behaviour. It was generally used as a very last resort. Some pupils were placed in alternative provision as a short term temporary measure. There was an in year fair access panel that allocated pupils who were being re-integrated into mainstream schools. Each school was expected to take a proportion of these.

She reported that the review on exclusions had looked at children with SEND and whether exclusions were due to unmet need or behavioural issues. On a national basis, children with SEND were six times more likely to be excluded but the level for Haringey was slightly below this. The Cabinet Member for Children and Families commented that all excluded children had some sort of need that required meeting. Schools needed appropriate challenge regarding how well they were managing the process. It was not being suggested that schools were using exclusions inappropriately. Schools already tried to avoid exclusions and consideration was being given to what additional support they might need. Headteachers needed to ensure that the school community was safe and exclusions were sometimes necessary as a last resort to ensure this.

Ms Davin commented that a disproportionate number of children who were excluded appeared to live in housing provision that was insecure. Ms Riordan agreed to look further into this issue.

AGREED:

That a further report on exclusions be made to the Panel when the final report of the review of exclusions has been completed.

19. REVIEW ON SUPPORT TO CHILDREN FROM REFUGEE FAMILIES

Ms Gibson reported that good progress had been made in implementing the recommendations of the review. 160 cases had been audited and key areas of practice examined. Action had been taken to address issues that had come to light in the course of this, including revision of the NRPF policy, regular "Child in Need" meetings on all open cases and work to reshape existing resources allocated to the NRPF team. An experienced NRPF social work practitioner had also recently been recruited and undertaken reviews of cases leading to a reduction in the number of

NRPF cases. Where there were disputes with other local authorities regarding responsibility for support of NRPF families, addressing and meeting the family's needs were now prioritised. There was also closer work with the voluntary and community sector, with regular meetings taking place and better relationships established.

In response to a question regarding whether consideration could be given to paying for legal advice up front where necessary and cost effective, she agreed to report back to the Panel in due course. The Panel also requested further information about comparative levels of subsistence paid by other boroughs.

AGREED:

That further information be provided to the Panel on:

- The provision of legal advice for NRPF and whether consideration is given to the payment up front of legal costs where this might be cost effective; and
- Comparative data on levels of subsistence that are payable in different boroughs.

20. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

AGREED:

1. That the work plan for the Panel be noted; and
2. That the meeting scheduled for 7 March be moved to 19 March 2019 and take place immediately following the joint meeting with the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel meeting already arranged for this date, that will be looking at the issue of transition.

CHAIR: Councillor Mahir Demir

Signed by Chair

Date