

**CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY PANEL
26 MARCH 2014
5.00 - 7.07 PM**



Present:

Councillors Heydon (Chairman), Mrs Birch, Mrs Temperton (Substitute) and Mrs McCracken (Substitute)

Apologies for Absence were received from:

Councillors Mrs Barnard and Ms Brown

44. Apologies for Absence/Substitute Members

The Panel noted the attendance of the following substitute members:

Councillor Mrs McCracken for Councillor Mrs Barnard
Councillor Mrs Temperton for Councillor Ms Brown

45. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

46. Minutes and Matters Arising

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2013 be agreed as a correct record.

47. Panel Announcements

Sheila McKeand announced that she would be retiring at the end of June 2014.

More dates were coming up for the 'Do You Know?' training. Panel members who had participated in the training said what a good experience and how valuable it was; they encouraged other Panel members to take part in this two way experience. Members gave examples of how they had used this training in their work as school governors.

There would be a member development session on Corporate Parenting.

It was suggested that someone should attend the South East Corporate Parenting Regional Network; invitations would be sent out directly.

48. Briefing on Preparation for Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care

Sandra Davies, Head of Performance Management and Governance, was present at the meeting to give a presentation on preparation for Ofsted's Inspection of Children's Social Care.

Key messages from Ofsted:

- Inspection improved lives and life chances.
- The bar had been raised; how well and what difference were central to the process.
- Good was the minimum; all children deserved good, anything less required improvement.
- Many authorities were less than good.
- Adequacy was a vulnerable position given the pressures on local authorities.
- There was a need to be more ambitious for children in all settings.

What mattered in the framework:

- How well things were done and the difference made; evidence was important.
- How Social Workers and others worked directly with families and managed the risks involved; what the quality of this work was.
- The quality of interventions in families, when risk remained or intensified.
- The quality of management oversight and decision making.
- How well children were helped, protected and cared for in a statutory service.
- How much was known about the services provided for children living in violent homes; where there was drug or alcohol misuse or mental ill health of a parent or carer.
- Leadership grip; all levels of management.
- Clear priorities, seeking and learning from feedback.
- Accountabilities; Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and operational practice.

New single inspection framework overview:

- Universal, unannounced and on a three year cycle.
- Three key judgements: protecting children, looked after children and achieving performance, leadership, management and governance (+2 graded judgements adoption and care leavers).
- Good was the minimum to aim for.
- Undertaken over a four week period with one days notice on the Tuesday of first week and inspectors on site 11 days total.
- Seven HMI on site in weeks three and four.
- Components included case file tracking, visiting children in residential placements out of area, observation of practice, adoption and fostering, and meeting with children, young people, families, and foster carers.

There was an emphasis on children and young people missing from care, education and risks of sexual exploitation, promotion of education and schooling for children looked after, children living in residential care out of area, early help offer and assessment, and whether assessments were events or engagement with families. Quality of work with families where the plan was for children to return home, quality of care planning for looked after children, and quality of housing and support for care leavers. There would be a focus on 'closing the gap' and pupil premium.

A good grading by Ofsted would rest on identifying issues and acting in good time, assessing and managing risk, clear professional decisions about protection and care, decisions reviewed regularly, early help, co-ordination with partners, and recording actions and decisions.

Leadership management and governance was important including effective strategy and good quality services for children, young people and their families, quality of

practice, care and commissioning, suitably experienced and qualified workforce, a senior team with comprehensive knowledge about what was happening at the front line and the difference practice was making, systematic performance management and monitoring, and partners helping to deliver early help, protection and care. A strong and effective Corporate Parent, including for care leavers, evidence of continuous improvement, partnerships supported by transparent and rigorous governance, shared priorities clear and resourced, and effective engagement with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the LSCB.

An LSCB Review would be run in parallel with the Single Inspection with a whole focus on the LSCB including partner members, but this would be a separate inspection. This was introduced to identify the strategic and professional commitment and contribution of all statutory partners to early help, care and protection.

What the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel had undertaken over the past few years could be reviewed. Sandra had a template which could be used.

There was much work underway, for example, on the self-assessment, and briefings would be circulated to partners periodically regarding the Ofsted inspection. Examples of good practice that could be demonstrated, knowing areas for improvement and what was being done to tackle these were being looked at. Inspectors would look at information available on the public website and in the media.

The senior team in Children, Young People and Learning and Sandra would be involved in the inspection. Councillor Dr Barnard emphasised the need for training to be delivered for members as soon as possible.

49. Pupil Premium for Looked After Children and the New Role of the Virtual School Head

Bob Welch, Chief Adviser, Learning and Achievement, and Kashif Nawaz, Assistant Virtual School Head were present at the meeting to discuss a report on Pupil Premium for Looked After Children and the New Role of the Virtual School Head.

The current arrangements would cease on 31 March 2014 and new arrangements would be in place from 1 April 2014 in relation to changes to Pupil Premium. A child would need to be in care for one day in order to be eligible for Pupil Premium. The appropriate use of Pupil Premium would be a focus; it would need to address educational needs. The use of Pupil Premium would be monitored and schools would be held to account.

Plans were in place across the year and they needed to be relevant and accountable. Welfare Call Monitor had been commissioned to monitor attendance, progress and attainment of Bracknell Forest's looked after children. This involved making a telephone call to the school every day to make sure that the child was in school. Accessing data from schools not under Bracknell Forest could be an issue. The Bracknell Forest Virtual school now determined how the Pupil Premium funding was spent for each looked after child and this was a new role for the Virtual School Head.

A substantial amount of money was involved; £1,900 per pupil if the child was looked after for one day. Steps could be taken if Pupil Premium was not used effectively by a school. There were conditions attached to the grant funding and plans to aid progress.

The panel suggested that a list of initiatives for which Pupil Premium had been used in Bracknell Forest be collated. This information was recorded in individual PEPs and there was an expectation for schools to know this information.

(Action: Bob Welch / Kashif Nawaz)

The panel commented that governors also needed to understand and know what Pupil Premium was spent on as part of their responsibility.

Bob and Kashif had been invited to a conference in London by Ofsted.

The Panel noted the updates of the work of the Virtual School in relation to Pupil Premium and the changes expected from April 2014.

50. **Report on Looked After Children's Engagement in Universal Services and the Role of the LAC Youth Worker**

Darren Berry, Senior Youth Worker, and Katya Tagon, LAC Youth Worker, were present at the meeting to give a presentation on Children's Engagement in Universal Services and the Role of the LAC Youth Worker.

The role of the LAC Engagement Youth Worker was to develop support to Looked After Children (LAC), contributing to placement sustainability and increased life chances outside of the formal education setting.

Interventions included development of youth programmes for looked after children, identifying out of school leisure and educational activities and opportunities, co-ordinating life skills training for LAC, and developing multi-agency working to enhance the understanding of the needs of young people.

A survey had been undertaken with the aim of consulting looked after children placed locally, regarding the social activities and personal development opportunities they wished to participate in. There was also a focus on improving the engagement of looked after children with the Youth Service and voluntary/ private sector provision.

Looked after children were engaged in face-to-face consultation with the LAC Youth Worker:

- 37 looked after children aged 11 to 18 years were contacted and 26 participated;
- 62% of participants took part in two or more social activities;
- 57% of participants accessed Youth Service sessions and had worked with Youth Workers;
- 83% of 11-13 year olds and 71.3% of 14-19 year olds had visited a Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) Youth Centre;
- 33% of 11-13 year olds expressed a wish for a LAC only Youth Group;
- the 14-19 age group expressed a wish for improved communications and dialogue;
- 87% of 11-13 year olds and 60% of 14-19 year olds felt that they could benefit from more Life Skills sessions to enhance tools for independence.

Sports and performing arts were the most popular activities amongst the looked after children consulted. The 14-19 age group were more interested in social media and communications.

The panel queried whether funding for social activities or residential activities for looked after children could be sourced from pupil premium funding. Activities for

looked after children were part of the Youth Services budget but pupil premium could be used, for example, for a LAC residential trip. The panel also informed the youth workers that Bracknell Forest Homes had a community fund which could be a source of funding for residential trip.

A report on the Life Skills Programme would be brought to the next meeting of the Panel.

(Action: Sheila McKeand)

51. Review of Auditing Arrangements in Relation to Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust

Sarah Roberts, Policy and Research Officer, gave a brief update on the review of auditing arrangements in relation to Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust. The audit had been undertaken and the data was currently being analysed. This would be reported to the Panel in June 2014 as part of the Health of LAC Annual Report.

52. Regulation 33 Visits

Sonia Johnson, Service Manager, Specialist Services was not present at the meeting. The Panel noted the report regarding Regulation 33 Visits. These reports were circulated to the Chief Officer: Children's Social Care and Ofsted and were highly valued as an outside view. Councillor Mrs Birch commented that after she gave her observations last year that changes had been made regarding her suggestions.

53. Update Report on Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing of Looked After Children

Sheila McKeand, Head of Service, LAC Children's Social Care, presented an update report on Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing of Looked After Children.

There were challenges identifying mental health resources for LAC following the end of previously commissioned specialist service from CAMHS. CAMHS could offer training for a wider workforce and Tier 2 provision would be considered as well. CAMHS provided good high risk support but lower level support could be improved. Councillor Mrs Temperton commented that training in schools could help to provide effective social skills for pupils.

Councillor Mrs Birch commented that obtaining information and statistics could be difficult but that this was being addressed through, for example, the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Chairman of the Panel was asked to write to the Health and Wellbeing Board requesting this data.

(Action: Councillor Heydon)

Councillor Mrs Temperton commented that in relation to self harming and depression in schools, MIND had an online teaching tool which could be used and it had been queried as to whether this could be run in schools, with an emphasis on recognising signs and symptoms. These issues affected all children and not just looked after or adopted children.

54. Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item which

involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (1) Information relating to any individual (Item 55).

55. Performance Management Information

Lorna Hunt, Chief Officer: Children's Social Care, presented the latest performance management information.

Stability had dipped in relation to the length of placements and matching children with long term carers could be difficult; children needed to move placements for a variety of reasons and sometimes these were unforeseen, such as the death of a carer. 16-18 year olds would be considered in more detail at the next meeting of the Panel.

(Action: Sheila McKeand)

Adoption figures had increased, which was good news for the team. An adoption activity day had been held with 38 adoptive households and approximately 40 children; this was the first of its kind. It was important that children attending these days had fun but also that they were prepared and children received debriefing afterwards.

There would be an adoption annual report presented to the Panel at the June 2014 meeting. The speed for adoptions was getting better. In relation to fostering, the team aimed to place children locally but with adoption children may be placed further away. If children were on a care order and were returning to their parents, there would be a reunification plan to monitor this.

Adoption and fostering was a key priority. The Panel could ask questions regarding the recruitment and effectiveness of this, and how the plans for the coming year would be met.

Councillor Temperton informed the panel that the Bracknell Forest foster carers group session was due to be held at Great Hollands Community Centre fortnightly, supported by the Community Association, from May 2014. The sessions would be free of charge.

Fostering fortnight would be held in May 2014 and councillors suggested that some panel members should attend this.

56. Dates of Next Meetings and Forward Plan

25 June 2014	Adoption Statement of Purpose and Annual Report Fostering Statement of Purpose and Annual Report Participation Annual Report and Action Plan Virtual School Head Annual Report
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24 September 2014	Educational Outcomes LAC and Care Leavers Health of LAC Annual Report
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10 December 2014	Pledge to Looked After Children
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25 March 2015	
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