

Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee

20 June 2016

Present: Councillor M Madden (Chair)
Councillors K Bolger, P Brooks, J Cassidy, K Clark,
M A Green, A Newman, P Oliver, M Rankin and M
Thirlaway.

Mrs J Little Parent Governor Representative
Rev. M Vine Church Representative

CES01/06/16 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr G O'Hanlon, Church Representative and Mrs M Ord, Parent Governor Representative.

CES02/06/16 Substitute Members

There were no substitute members reported.

CES03/06/16 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made or dispensations reported.

CES04/06/16 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 March 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CES05/06/16 Proposed National Education Reforms

In March, the Government published an Education White Paper, "Education Excellence Everywhere". This was the first meeting of the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee since March and the sub-committee had requested a briefing on the implications of the white paper for North Tyneside.

The Deputy Chief Executive, Paul Hanson, attended the meeting to make a presentation on the white paper and associated education reforms. The presentation provided information on the issues for North Tyneside; the national picture; the North Tyneside landscape; what was changing; what might be coming; and how the authority was approaching the challenge.

North Tyneside had an education system to be proud of and was a top performer regionally and nationally. The education white paper, *Education Excellence Everywhere*, contained a range of proposed changes including governance, head teacher development and handling

curriculum changes; however the headline issues were the proposal to convert all schools to academies by 2020 and to significantly change the role of local authorities in education. On 6th May, the Secretary of State for Education announced that high performing local authority areas would not be required to convert to academies collectively; instead the Government would take reserve powers which would be applied where a local authority area was not performing to a suitable standard. The *Education for All* Bill announced in the Queen's Speech on 18th May 2016 stated an intention that conversion to Academy status of all schools within a local authority would take place in two specific circumstances:

- 1.) Where it was clear that the local authority could no longer viably support its remaining schools because a critical mass of schools in that area has converted. Under this mechanism a local authority would also be able to request the Department for Education converted all of its remaining schools.
- 2.) Where the local authority consistently failed to meet a minimum performance threshold across its schools, demonstrating an inability to bring about meaningful school improvement.

For other high-performing schools in strong local authorities the choice of whether to convert to Academy status would remain the decision of individual schools and their governing bodies.

Members were reminded of the local context of the Education Review carried out in North Tyneside between October 2013 and January 2015 and that the Government's proposals were part of the Comprehensive Spending Review that was expected to save £600m per annum through, amongst other things, a 75% reduction in the Education Services Grant. A new funding formula was proposed for 2017/18 but the implementation of this had been delayed and whilst the presentation included information on the financial incomings and outgoings and expected future changes it was done so on the proviso that the national funding formula had been delayed.

While the case that academisation improved education outcomes was unproven, the Government's view was that the consequent freedoms and school to school support did have positive outcomes. The Fostering and Adoption Act passed earlier in 2016 made it clear that schools judged as "Inadequate" or "Coasting" by Ofsted would be converted to academy status. Nationally 68% of secondary schools were Academies. The main issue for North Tyneside was that it contained a very high performing education system with a very low number of academies; 94.8% of the 30,349 school aged children in the borough attended a Good or Outstanding School and there were only three Academies. The borough therefore started from an unusual position. That success was, in part, based on the support and challenge of the local authority; in North Tyneside there was limited additionality on offer which would be of a benefit to a school which converted, few Head Teachers considered themselves fettered by the relationship with the Local Authority and there was unlikely to be more money available.

However, the lack of an "Outstanding" Academy in the borough meant that the borough did not have a representative on the Headteachers' Board and also no organisation available to sponsor any of the borough's schools should they be required to convert to an academy for whatever reason; a local authority cannot be a sponsor. The impact of this had been recently demonstrated when the local authority and Chair of Governors for Seaton Burn Business and Enterprise College, which had been required to convert to Academy status because it had been judged as "Inadequate", were informed that as no suitable Academy Sponsors existed in North Tyneside, the Department for Education had looked outside the

borough and had asked Gosforth Academy to consider sponsorship.

Five primary schools in North Shields (New York, Collingwood, Percy Main, Riverside and Waterville) had applied to convert to a Multi-Academy Trust. These schools had determined that conversion was the best option to secure their position and protect the significant existing collaboration between them; if one of the schools failed they could support each other without having to seek an external sponsor. These schools had stated their intention to remain committed to working with the local authority.

The White Paper also proposed a significant change to local authority responsibilities. The current position meant that local authorities were responsible for sufficiency, standards and additional needs as well as a list that ran to 43 pages; there was little detail on the proposed change but it would include removing responsibility for school improvement. However, reference was made to a clearly defined role for local authorities which would be:

- a) ensuring every child had a school place;
- b) ensuring the needs of vulnerable pupils were met; and
- c) acting as champions for all parents and families.

In addition, the Government were proposing to consult local authorities on taking over responsibilities for all school admissions and it was expected that the commissioning of new school places would be the responsibility of local authorities.

Since March, the authority had been working with Members, governors and headteachers and had formed the view that the following issues would inform the work ahead:

- Making sure the borough did not lose talent during a period of uncertainty.
- Making sure the officer team were skilled up to support the borough's schools and new demands and continue the successful work on school improvement.
- TUPE and employment issues.
- Preserving and developing successful collaborative relationships and maintaining the positive contribution of the Local Authority during a period of change.
- Framing discussions with schools to be inclusive and flexible.
- Re-shaping, as required, the service offer from the proposed new funding formula in 2017/18.
- Ensuring a focus on inclusion and additional needs.
- Early help, managing demand and securing better outcomes.
- Delivering capital projects.

Whatever schools decided to do, the children attending them would still be 'our kids' and the local authority would do everything to keep the schools in the borough top performers and something to be proud of.

Members sought clarification on the benefits of converting to an Academy; the implications

for the Schools' Improvement Service; the implications for land and property ownership of school sites; what intervention or accountability check on Academies was proposed; and who was responsible when an Academy failed either financially or academically.

Members were assured that their concerns were shared although it was too early to understand the implications in full; once the *Education for All* Bill had been published and progressed through Parliament a clearer picture would emerge.

It was **Agreed** 1) to note the information presented to the committee; and 2) an update on the *Education for All* Bill and the issues raised at the meeting to be presented to the sub-committee at its meeting to be held on 23 January 2017.

(During the discussion on the above item, Councillor P Brooks left the meeting room).

CES06/06/16 Commencement time and date of meetings

At the Annual Council meeting on 19 May 2016 the timetable of meetings for the 2016/17 municipal year was considered. Council agreed that each committee would determine its own commencement time at its first meeting of the year and confirm the dates proposed for meetings throughout the year (minute C14/05/16). The sub-committee considered a report which detailed the options available to the committee and the response received to a canvas of members as to their preference for a commencement time.

It was **agreed** that the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee would start at 6.00pm for the municipal year 2016/17 and would meet on the following dates: 18 July 2016, 19 September 2016, 17 October 2016, 21 November 2016, 23 January 2017, 20 February 2017 and 20 March 2017.

CES07/06/16 Work Programme 2016/17

The sub-committee received a report which detailed its proposed work programme for the 2016/17 municipal year. Due to the time required for other items of business on the agenda, the Chair proposed that discussion on the work programme be deferred to the next meeting of the sub-committee to be held on 18 July 2016.

Agreed to defer the confirmation of the work programme to the next meeting of the sub-committee to be held on 18 July 2016.

CES08/06/16 Attainment of Looked After Children

The sub-committee received a report on the attainment of looked after children (CLA) to raise awareness of the needs of CLA, increase understanding of the factors which impacted on outcomes for CLA and share information on the services provided by the Raising Health and Education of Looked After Children Team (RHELAC) /Virtual School.

Jane Pickthall, the Head of the Virtual School, attended the meeting to present the report to the sub-committee.

The report included were statistics on attainments from Early Years to Key Stage Four with comparative data for all pupils in North Tyneside and national figures for all children and

CLA. Outcomes for looked after children were significantly worse than their non-looked after peers nationally and whilst North Tyneside's CLA's compared badly with national statistics, the authority had small cohorts that made the data unreliable due to the high levels of SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) disproportionately impacting on the figures. Whilst the Key Stage 2 results were below the national outcomes for attainment, progress in Reading and Maths were above the national figures for CLA and a third had made more than expected progress. At Key Stage 4, results were below for both attainment and progress and were disappointing but this had been a particularly difficult cohort with a high proportion attending non-mainstream provision and with significant mental health needs.

The sub-committee was informed that the publication of The Rees Centre / Bristol University Report, 'The Educational Progress of Looked After Children in England: Linking Care and Educational Data' had given a much better understanding of what could be done to improve outcomes. The key findings of the report and the policy and practice implications were included in an appendix to the report. Ofsted figures on the impact of moving schools in Years 10 or 11 on GCSE attainment of CLA were also presented. A child staying at the same school when moving placements achieved similar grades to the general population at GCSE; if a child moved to a different school during GCSE years their attainment dropped. The research had given the team the evidence they needed to challenge managed moves and the assumption that when a child moved placements they should also move schools. School was often the most stable and reliable aspect of a CLA's life and the children often struggled to trust adults and develop relationships with them, moving CLA's from this environment did impact on their attainment. Combining the research and local knowledge the team had been able to increase the effectiveness of targeted support and was working to raise awareness of the key factors that impacted on attainment and progress across the local authority.

Pupil Premium Plus funding had been used to provide additional resources to support CLA, schools were given £900 per CLA and a central pot was retained by the team for crisis support, which meant that the RHELAC team now employed a counsellor, an educational psychologist and an apprentice Teaching Assistant (care leaver). This recruitment had enabled the team to provide more support to schools when a child was at risk of exclusion, provide emotional support and direct classroom support. A couple of teachers within the team had also been funded centrally. It was explained that only 1/3rd of CLA have an Education, Health and Care Plan and their extra support usually looked at social, emotional and mental health issues.

Members sought clarification on what steps could be taken to facilitate a child remaining at the same school if their placement was changed; why the attainment levels were difficult to compare year on year; what earlier research had been done into why children in the care system had worse attainment; and the impact the age of a child when they entered the care system had on attainment.

Members were assured that as North Tyneside was a relatively small authority transporting children across the borough to school was not an issue; taxis could be provided and once the child was old enough most schools had good public transport options. In addition the team would use interventions to ensure children were able to stay in mainstream education and also offer training to schools to help them facilitate the child being able to remain at the school. Members were informed that there were two peaks of children being taken in care; the first was babies under two years old and the second was 15-16 year olds. Children of 15-16 years old did not have a long time to benefit from the additional support available to try and mitigate the impact of being a looked after child; the statistics showed that if a child

entered the care system before age 11 their outcomes were better than a child entering at a older age; it was noted that some children in need did worse than looked after children.

The Chair thanked Mrs Pickthall for her presentation and attendance at the meeting.

It was **agreed** to note the information on the attainment of Looked After Children.

CES09/06/16 Children and Young People's Plan 2014-18

The sub-committee received an end of year performance report on the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan 2014-18. The Children and Young People's Plan provided the strategic framework for the integrated planning, commissioning and delivery of children's services in order to improve the lives of children and young people in the borough. The plan was produced and owned by the Children, Young People and Learning Partnership. The Plan also served as the borough's Child Poverty Strategy, setting out how partners would work together to address the underlying causes of deprivation.

The Research and Intelligence Manager attended the meeting to present the report and answer any questions.

The Plan's priorities were aligned with the 'Our North Tyneside Plan', the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Safer North Tyneside Plan. The report set out the partnership's performance for the 2015/16 as measured through a range of performance indicators and a performance scorecard against each priority for national, regional and statistical neighbour. The common thread throughout the report was one of stability. Key areas to note in the Our North Tyneside themes were:

Almost 6,500 (18.3%) of children under 16 in North Tyneside were considered to be living in poverty, the North Tyneside figure had improved by a count of 990 or 2.9% over the past 5 years. However in relation to childhood obesity at 4-5 years old, North Tyneside was slightly above the national average of 21.9% with 2 in every 10 children (22.3%) overweight or obese at the end of Reception year; a similar picture existed when this was next measured in School Year 6 (10-11 years old).

There was an improved position to report at Foundation stage development with North Tyneside's % of pupils showing a *good level of development* having increased from 58.9% to 64.4%. However this should be set in the context of improvements in the National figures which meant North Tyneside remained below the national average of 66.3% and marginally above the regional average of 63.1%, ranking 6th of the 12 North East authorities.

In North Tyneside, the proportion of pupils gaining 5+ A*-C including English and maths was 62.0% compared to a national rate of 53.8%. North Tyneside ranked first in the region and its statistical neighbours. North Tyneside was ranked 30 of the 151 local authority's, which was top quintile (20%) performance. Its improvement of 5.8 percentage points was the third largest in the country.

However despite these excellent results there remained challenges, particularly in relation to improving education attainment for disadvantaged pupils, as measured by reference to the differences in the Key Stage 4 results between those children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), or who had been in care or adopted. While attainment for this group in North Tyneside in 2015 was higher than the rest of the North East region and the national

average, the gap between these disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils was slightly larger than the national average.

Taking an average of monthly figures between November 2015 and January 2016, 380 (3.8%) of North Tyneside 16-18 year olds were identified as Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET). This compared to a national average of 4.2%, and a regional figure of 5.7%. The 3% fall from the previous year's figure of 6.8% was the biggest fall in the region and the statistical neighbour group, and compared to a 0.5% fall in the national rate. Improvements in the NEET rate for North Tyneside had been seen across all ages this year.

Within Children's Social Care almost all (94.7%) Single Assessments were completed within 45 working days. This was an improvement on the 2015 outturn of 93.6%, which was above comparators and within the top quartile of local authorities. The rate per 10,000 of Child Protection (Section 47) enquiries initiated was 97.0 in 2016, two thirds (66.4%) of Section 47's resulted in an Initial Child Protection Conference, remaining in-line although slightly below the 2015 rate of 68%. This conversation rate was above the England rate of 44.5% and the Statistical Neighbour rate of 46.3% for 2015. The increasing trend in the number of children subject of Child Protection Plans had continued in 2016, with 179 children subject of a plan at 31st March 2016, this was an increase on the 2015 rate of 41.8 (5.3%). Despite this increase there was a reduction in the proportion of children who were commencing their second or subsequent plan. This figure reduced from 14.5% of plans commenced in 2015 to 13.8% in 2016. This rate is within the "Good" banding of 10-15%, and below the comparator rates for 2015 and the authority was confident that intervention was the most appropriate course of action.

292 Children were looked after on 31st March 2016. This was a reduction on the 2015 figure of 304 children. The "per 10k" figure equates to 72.1, the lowest rate since 2011. This placed North Tyneside lower than our statistical neighbours (82.8) and the average North East regional rate (81.8) but higher than the England average (60).

However, the number of children who have been Looked After at any point during the year had increased. 459 children were looked after at some point in 2015-16, compared to 440 children in 2014-15. This continued a growing trend of entrances to the Looked After system, with year on year growth since 2011. There had been a 12.2% increase in children being Looked After since 2010/11, higher than the increase in England (8.8%), although lower than the comparable North East rate (14.0%).

The indicators showed a continuation of high performance of young people in suitable accommodation after leaving care (94.2%). 71% of Care Leavers were in employment, education or training in 2015/16. 7.9% of care leavers were in Higher Education during 2015/16. Although this was above comparator groups, it was a reduction on 2014/15. 25 children were granted an Adoption Order during 2015/16, 13.8% of all children who ceased to be looked after. Despite this proportion showing a decline from 2015 (14%), it was an increase of two children and showed a relatively stable trend of children being adopted over the last four years. The increase in children entering and leaving the looked after system as a whole had contributed to the decline in % adopted, as had the increase in Special Guardianship Orders.

Members sought clarification on the changes to early years intervention services and the co-location of these with health services and concern was expressed about young people who hadn't attained certain educational standards being excluded from apprenticeships.

The Sub-committee was assured that the issue relating to young people being excluded from apprenticeships would be looked into and that work was still ongoing on the proposals for community hubs.

It was **Agreed** that the update report on the Children and Young People's Plan 2014-18 be noted.

CES10/06/16 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Inspections

The sub-committee received a report which summarised the new accountability framework for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) which began in May 2016 and provided information on its implementation within North Tyneside. The Disability and Additional Needs Manager attended the meeting to present the report.

The national accountability framework had been established to ensure partners were working together to enable:

- a person centred and joined up approach to identifying and meeting the needs of children young people and their families;
- a clear understanding of what support services and provision were available and how to raise concerns or seek redress when there were concerns;
- the use of effective practice, data and wider intelligence and independent assessment to drive improvement;
- clearly defined and understood roles, responsibilities and accountability; and
- engagement and participation of young people and families so that they had greater choice, felt that they were in control and being listened to and their concerns were resolved quickly.

There were three elements to the new accountability framework: local roles and responsibilities; national roles and responsibilities; and independent assessment. The local role was to implement the statutory responsibilities; focus on effective local partnerships; share and use effective practice to support delivery; and create and implement local area plans and evaluation to support local accountability. The national role, carried out by a civil servant from the Department for Education, was to set and oversee the statutory framework and guidance; monitor the health and success of the system; support the development of good practice; publish data including using experience; and intervene in cases of failure. The independent assessment consisted of an Ofsted /Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of the local authority and clinical commissioning groups and other independent assessments, for example peer challenge.

To implement local accountability in North Tyneside, the local authority had created a SEND and Whole Life Disability Board which would report to the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Children and Young People Partnership Board. The Board's focus would be on ensuring early identification so that parents, children and young people received the right support at the right time with planned and well managed transitions; and the effective use of current resources to ensure a joined up transparent and accountable system. As a result of this work, the local authority should be able to provide data to demonstrate improved progression and attainment at all ages, have clear and appropriate expectations and create more resilient families. The SEND and Whole Life Disability Board had established three groups (a pathways and assessment group, a local offer and commissioning group and an impact and performance group) to concentrate on specific areas and one strategic group was to have oversight of all elements of the SEN and

Disability agenda.

As part of the independent assessment, all local areas would be inspected, with an inspection interval of up to five years. A three person team would visit including an Ofsted HMI, a CQC inspector and a trained local authority inspector. Inspection would examine effective identification of needs, effectiveness in meeting needs, and local arrangements to achieve better identification and outcomes. They would also review “national data” and “within area inspection CQC/Ofsted outcomes” as well as a local area self assessment. The inspectors were not just inspecting the provision and would focus on the understanding of the SEND agenda. Inspectors would take account of needs, provision and outcomes for children in the early years and for older students who are post 16 or post 19. The local offer would be inspected for the full age range from 0-25 years. The field work would include visits and discussion with a wide range of people including: elected members; key local authority officers from health, education and care; and education and health providers, including leaders of early years, schools and colleges. The views of children and young people and their parents and carers were an important contribution to inspectors’ judgements. In pilot inspections, the inspectors had met with 60 people over 20 sessions.

In preparation for the Ofsted Inspection the following actions are ongoing / had been achieved:

- The development of a briefings schedule for Senior leaders, the SEND workforce and all partners.
- The implementation of the Whole Life Disability Board and associated Boards.
- A self assessment supported by the SEND quality assurance Toolkit. As a result Story Boards have been developed to evidence the current status, impact and next steps.
- Evidence to demonstrate impact to date.
- A timetable of events during the 5 day visit to be assured that the work in the above areas has been covered.

Members sought clarification on what processes were in place to facilitate early intervention and what notice the local authority and its partners would receive of the inspection. Comments were also made on the procedures around the transition between child and adult services.

Members were assured that the team were aware of the difficulties some parents had with early identification and with transition. These issues would be part of the remit of the impact and performance group and the group would be monitoring to ensure that these needs were being addressed appropriately.

It was **agreed** to note the information presented from the Disability and Additional Needs Manager on the new accountability framework for Special Educational Needs and Disability.