

15 June 2015

Agenda Item: 08

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, STANDARDS AND
INCLUSION****CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION - UPDATE****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of the report is to provide the Committee with an update on the impact of the Children Missing Education (CME) Action Plan 2014-2015 which is attached as **Appendix 1**. The report also outlines the development of new ways of working across Nottinghamshire County Council teams to ensure that vulnerable children and young people access their full educational entitlement. Finally, the report identifies key priorities for the 2015-2016 CME Action Plan to ensure that all vulnerable children can be identified and supported into appropriate educational provision either within school or through high quality alternative education.

Information and Advice

2. The CME Action Plan focuses on known children and young people who are not accessing their full educational entitlement as a result of failing to secure a school place, refusing to attend their school place, on a school roll but accessing less than their full educational entitlement as well as any child or young person known to services without a school place or refusing to attend school. The CME Strategy, endorsed by this Committee on 23 April 2014 and by Policy Committee on 7 May 2014, has been underpinned by a strong corporate commitment to advocating for vulnerable children and young people who are not accessing their full educational entitlement. Schools continue to be challenged where there is evidence of 'grey exclusions' and applications to academies and other own admission authorities are closely monitored to ensure that all applications are processed within 20 days, in line with the Schools Admissions Code, revised in February 2014. Schools and academies who delay admission, even when cohorts are below the Published Admission Number (PAN), are challenged by the Fair Access officer.
3. The revisions of the Fair Access Process and the introduction of the CME Strategy have secured significant improvement in reducing the number of days a child is without a school place, with the average of 94 days in 2012-13 significantly reduced to an average of 29 days in 2013-14. It is expected that 'In Year' admission applicants will be allocated a school place within 20 days. Applicants who do not secure a place through normal processes are referred to the Fair Access Team who ensure that an appropriate place is fairly allocated by the relevant school based locality partnership.

Fair Access Termly Monitoring Data

	Acad Year 2012-13	Autumn Term 13	Spring Term 14	Summer Term 14	Acad Year 2013- 14	Autumn Term 14	Spring Term 15
Number of children at risk of being without a school place and facilitated back into school under the Fair Access Team	Unknown	56	55	82	193	96	80
Average days missed from school	94	25	30	32	29	29	27

NB. The school age population in Nottinghamshire is 116,125.

4. The Fair Access Team also accepts referrals from other local authority teams and schools when a vulnerable child or young person is unable to access their existing provision for complex reasons. Such children and young people are deemed to be at risk of becoming CME. In exceptional circumstances interim provision is arranged to help transition vulnerable children into appropriate educational pathways.
5. The increase in the number of children supported by the Fair Access Team is likely to be a reflection of more effective partnership working between LA teams and clearer processes for the identification of those children in Nottinghamshire who are vulnerable in terms of access to education.
6. Teams and service areas are increasingly identifying vulnerable pupils to ensure they do not become missing from education. The creation of the Vulnerable Children Education Commissioning, meeting on a monthly basis and chaired by the Fair Access Officer, has ensured that specialist resources can be effectively 'pooled' and focused on those at most of risk of CME (**Appendix 2**). The Service Director for Education, Standards and Inclusion meets on a monthly basis with group managers and other senior officers from Targeted Support, SEND, Admissions and Support to Schools to review service data and focus on cases causing significant concern.
7. Children Missing Education remains a key priority for the department. Children who miss education pose a significant safeguarding risk including risk to child sexual exploitation (CSE).

Other Options Considered

8. The County Council remains statutorily responsible to ensure that all children and young people of statutory school age access full time education. Therefore, the CME Strategy endorsed by the Children and Young People's Committee on 23 April 2014 and Policy Committee on 7th May 2014 continues to be implemented to ensure that every school aged child should be on a school roll, with the exception of those who are electively home educated. No other options have been considered

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

9. Members will wish to be assured that the Council's statutory duty to provide full time education for all children and young people of statutory school age is being properly fulfilled.

Statutory and Policy Implications

10. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

11. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Committee notes:

- 1) the update on the impact of the Children Missing Education (CME) Action Plan 2014-2015 which is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 2) the development of new ways of working across Nottinghamshire County Council teams to ensure that vulnerable children and young people access their full educational entitlement.
- 3) the key priorities for the 2015-2016 CME Action Plan to ensure that all vulnerable children can be identified and supported into appropriate educational provision either within school or through high quality alternative education.

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Constitutional Comments

12. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (SS 29/05/15)

13. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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