

10 November 2014**Agenda Item: 08****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION STANDARDS AND
INCLUSION****IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RAISING OF THE PARTICIPATION AGE
STRATEGY FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide the Committee with an update on implementation of the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) in Nottinghamshire and to present the RPA Strategy for the Council and our partners.
2. To invite the Committee to comment on the Department's Raising the Participation Age Strategy (attached as **Appendix 1**) and recommend it to Policy Committee for approval at its meeting on 10 December 2014.

Information and Advice

3. The Raising of the Participation Age came into effect from June 2013, when all young people completing year 11 became subject to a duty to participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 years of age. RPA is being phased in and, as such, from 26 June 2015 the duty to participate will be extended to a young person's 18th birthday. The three primary routes for young people to participate are:
 - full-time study in a school, college or with a training provider
 - full-time work or volunteering combined with part-time education or training
 - an Apprenticeship/Traineeship.
4. Under RPA, the duty to participate resides with the young person. In order to satisfy that duty, young people in full-time learning will access 540 guided learning hours per year. Those in employment or volunteering will do so for an average of 20 hours per week as a minimum, and in addition will access 280 guided learning hours a year. Young people in an apprenticeship and the new traineeships also meet the duty to participate.
5. For young people who are being home educated, there is no hourly requirement of education, and the amount and content of that education is at the discretion of the home educator. In most circumstances it will be the young person themselves who will state that they are home-educated. Where a local authority believes there is some doubt in the

matter they may wish to seek confirmation of this from the parent or guardian, but no on-going monitoring of the education is required.

6. Local authorities have existing responsibilities to support young people into education or training. These include a responsibility to:
 - secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for 13-19 year olds
 - make available support to encourage, enable and assist young people aged 13-19 years and young adults aged 20-24 with a Learning Difficulty Assessment to participate in education and training.
7. In order to meet these responsibilities, local authorities are expected to track participation in line with National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS) requirements and to ensure that young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) are supported.
8. The Education and Skills Act (ESA) 2008 places two new duties on local authorities in relation to RPA:
 - promoting the effective participation of all 16 and 17 year old residents in the local authority area, and
 - making arrangements to identify young people resident in the local authority area who are not participating.
9. Local authorities are expected to meet any costs incurred in the delivery of these duties from their overall budgets. In addition, local authorities are expected to lead the local implementation of the September Guarantee, which is an offer of a place in learning for young people leaving year 11 and all 17 year old Nottinghamshire residents.
10. In relation to RPA, schools and colleges are under a duty to secure access to independent face-to-face careers guidance for pupils in year 8-13 where it is the most suitable support for young people to make successful transitions. The duty particularly applies for children from disadvantaged backgrounds or those who have special educational needs, learning difficulties or disabilities. An equivalent requirement applies to 16-18 year olds in colleges through funding agreements. Schools are expected to engage, as appropriate, in partnership with external, expert careers providers, but are otherwise free to make arrangements that fit the needs and circumstances of their students.
11. Under the ESA 2008, providers of education or training for 16 and 17 year olds are under two duties in relation to RPA. They must:
 - promote good attendance of 16 and 17 year olds
 - inform local authority support services if a young person (aged 16 or 17 years) has dropped out of learning. This is so the young person can be contacted swiftly and offered support to help them re-engage.
12. The Education and Skills Act 2008 also placed a requirement on employers to take certain actions in respect of young people who meet the duty to participate in order to enable and encourage them to combine work with education/training.

13. Although the 2008 legislation contains an intention to apply enforcement options on young people and employers who fail in their duties, these are not being implemented at this stage. However, they remain in statute and could be introduced in the future.
14. In November 2012, the Local Authority assessed its readiness to implement RPA against a DfE Toolkit and following this a Raising of the Participation Age 'Action Plan' was developed for Nottinghamshire to ensure that the Local Authority had adequate arrangements in place to meet its duties.
15. According to draft RPA participation data released by the DfE in March 2014, 92.7% of young people aged 16 and 17 in Nottinghamshire were participating in education and/or training compared to 90.8% regionally and 90.3% across England.
16. During 2014 the RPA Plan was reviewed and a more detailed Raising the Participation Age Strategy was developed. The proposed Strategy, attached as **Appendix 1**, describes the activities the Local Authority is committed to delivering through both its Targeted Support services and School Improvement service alongside its partners to ensure we can continue to deliver our obligations under RPA with more limited resources.

Other Options Considered

17. No alternative options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

18. The rationale for the recommendation is to ensure that the Local Authority with its key partners has in place a Strategy for the Raising of the Participation Age which enables us to continue to fulfil our duties under RPA and has engagement with key 14-19 partners and stakeholders.

Statutory and Policy Implications

19. 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.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Committee:

- 1) notes the update on implementation of the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) in Nottinghamshire
- 2) comments on the proposed Raising the Participation Age Strategy and recommends it to Policy Committee for approval at its meeting on 10 December 2014.

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Constitutional Comments (LM 23/10/14)

20. The Children and Young People's Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (KLA 23/10/14)

21. 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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