

Meeting	CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE
Date	Monday 9 June 2014 (commencing at 2.00 pm)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with an 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Liz Plant (Chairman)

John Allin
Alan Bell
Steve Carroll
Boyd ElliottA Kate Foale
Philip Owen
Sue Saddington
Jacky Williams**Foster Carer**Dawn Clements
Sarah Maiden**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Rachel Coombs	-	Group Manager, Children, Families and Cultural Services Department
David Ebbage	-	Assistant Democratic Services Officer, Policy, Planning & Corporate Services Department
Linda Foster	-	Team Manager, Support to Schools Service
John Slater	-	Service Director, Education Standards and Inclusion
Wendy Rylands	-	After Care Team Manager
Philippa Milbourne	-	Business Support Assistant, Children, Families & Cultural Services Department.
Sharon Thompson	-	Designated Nurse, Children in Care & Adoption
Jayne Austin	-	Service Manager, Fostering
Helen Daft	-	Service Manager
Yvonne Cottingham	-	Team Manager, CAMHS Children Looked After and Adoption team

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

That the appointment of Councillor Liz Plant as Chairman of the Sub-Committee by the County Council of 15th May 2014 for the forthcoming year be noted.

TO NOTE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

That the membership of the Sub-Committee as listed below be noted:-

Councillor John Allin
Councillor Alan Bell
Councillor Boyd Elliott
Councillor Kate Foale

Councillor Colleen Harwood
Councillor Philip Owen
Councillor Sue Saddington
Councillor Jacky Williams

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2014, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

Councillor Steve Carroll replaced Councillor Colleen Harwood for this meeting only.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SUMMER TERM REPORT FOR THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

John Slater, Service Director, Education Standards and Inclusion, and Linda Foster, Team Manager, Support to School Services, gave the Sub-Committee the latest figures for the summer term.

During their presentation, the following points were made:-

- That the proportion of Nottinghamshire Looked After Children achieving at least level 2 is above the national average in each of reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1.
- The proportion of Nottinghamshire Looked After Children achieving at least level 4 in each of reading, writing and mathematics is below the national average for Looked After Children in Key Stage 2.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of Looked After girls making expected progress across Key Stage 2 is higher than the proportion of Looked After boys making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics, which indicates that Looked After Children need to make more than expected progress across Key Stage 2 in order to increase the proportions making age related expectations and an increasing proportion of Looked After boys need to make at least expected progress.
- The proportion of Notts' Looked After Children making 3 levels of progress in English and 3 levels of progress in mathematics from Key Stage 2 to 4 is below the proportions making 3 levels of progress nationally.

- The progress of Looked After Children needs to be accelerated across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 to ensure that more looked after children reach age related expectations at the end of Key Stage 4. Transition plans are essential for any LAC obliged to move schools.
- The Library Service and Virtual School work together to offer the 'Letterbox Club' to Looked After Children in Years 3, 5 and 7. This aims to provide enjoyable educational support for LAC. Children will receive personalised parcels to their direct address which contain books and educational games.
- The Virtual School has written to every school asking for their Year 6 to 7 transition plans and has carried out on site visits to primary and secondary schools to support the planning process.
- Follow up visits to secondary schools will be arranged in the autumn term 2014.

The Chair thanked John and Linda for their informative presentation as previously the Sub-Committee has not had that sort of data. There is a real rigour there now regarding finding out why schools are not achieving.

Following questions from Members, the following points were made:-

- That the schools which are chosen for LAC are wherever possible good or outstanding. The main priority is that the school allocated is safe for that individual to attend. Moving a LAC to different schools on a regular basis can affect their performance.
- Each school should have a strategy with reference to LAC.
- Members were impressed with the Letterbox Club idea and thought it was vital to provide enjoyable educational support for Looked After Children.
- The report states (paragraphs 15/16) that 7.1% of LAC attend a school that Ofsted had judged as inadequate. This data will be updated at the end of this year with the recent Ofsted inspections. Also, a new tracking system is being piloted regarding this; the feedback makes the system rigorous.

The Chair thanked them both for their presentation.

RESOLVED 2014/008

That the update on the virtual school for the summer term 2014 term be noted.

FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

Jayne Austin, Service Manager Fostering, provided information to Members on the activity and performance of the fostering service from April 2013, highlighting the following:

- Nottinghamshire saw a rapid increase in the number of children in care during the period 2008 to 2012.

- The average weekly cost of an independent fostering placement is £829, a residential placement is £2,149, and Nottinghamshire's foster care provision is £414.
- The authority has to find a way to spend their money differently with an ambitious saving target of £6,59m over the next three years (2014-2017) and plans to do are already taking place reducing reliance upon high cost independent fostering and residential provision.
- To help achieve this, the authority needs to recruit 160 new foster households over the next three years.
- The changed advertising and marketing approach has resulted in positive outcomes. In 2013/14 46 new foster households were approved compared with 32 in the previous year which is an increase of 40%.
- The retention of foster carers was less positive in 2013/14 with 36 foster households in 2013/14 compared with a loss of 10 foster households in 2012/13. Reasons for people ceasing to foster were choosing to retire, a change in circumstance or for safeguarding reasons.
- The service has strengthened its support strategy to foster carers and birth children. In 2013/14 the first Countywide Sons and Daughters event took place and a future one is planned in October 2014.
- The service has a good reputation to help support foster carers. The support strategy helps to increase the level of engagement and participation for carers. It also helps with their involvement in the recent recruitment activity, media interviews, and with the web site.

The Chair thanked Jayne for her informative update and expressed how positive the report was.

Following questions from Members of the Sub-Committee, the following points were made:-

- Members were very pleased with the Sons and Daughters initiative.
- Members thought that foster carers helping and getting involved in the recruitment process was very positive.

RESOLVED 2014/009

That the information on the activity and performance of the fostering service from April 2013 to March 2014 be noted.

IMPROVING HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CARE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY

Sharon Thompson, Designated Nurse for Children in Care and Adoption, informed the Sub-Committee about the role and purpose of the Children in Care and Adoption Health Team.

During her presentation the following points were made:-

- The Children in Care and Adoption Team is made up of Clinical Care Specialists, Community Paediatricians and designated professionals, based in three locations across the County.
- There is clear evidence indicating that children and young people who enter into the care system often have worse levels of health than their peers, which can in turn have long term impacts on their future outcomes. This can be though parent behaviours, drug and alcohol use or neglect.
- The service is performance monitored against a number of key performance indicators as follows:
 1. Initial health assessments completed within statutory timescales.
 2. Review health assessments completed
 3. Registration with a dentist
 4. Registration with a GP
 5. Immunisation data
 6. The voice of the child is recognised
- The team is actively involved in the Looked After Children Strategy meetings and the development of improving health targets. They are currently working on raising the profile of the health needs of children in care with all health partners.
- An information sharing agreement, information on placement notifications such as admissions/discharges is now in place between health and social care. This ensures that the key information is shared with health partners about key placement information pertaining to children in care
- The team receives notifications regarding children and young people who go missing from care; this notification is shared with the children in care nurses and with health visitors/school nurses.
- A nurse within the team attends the Children in Care Council meetings to discuss with the children and young people any leaflets the team are developing and any other health issues as appropriate. Also the team are closely linked to the safeguarding colleagues in health and they also attend all relevant forums.
- The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) in partnership with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and LAC helps inform the health assessments and identifies to CAMHS LAC children who have emotional health issues of concern.

Following questions from Members, the following points were made:-

The electronic systems used by Health are not compatible to the Local Authority systems, but the health team have got mobile working which they can log on to other health systems which can be helpful.

Members were extremely encouraged by the report and how satisfying it is to hear that healthcare professionals are working closely together with others to help improve the service.

The Sub-Committee agreed to have a further update in six months' time.

RESOLVED 2014/010

That the role and purpose of the Children in Care and Adoption Health Team be noted.

COUNTY CAMHS LOOKED AFTER AND ADOPTION TEAM – SERVICE PROVISION AND DEVELOPMENTS 2013/14

This report provided an update to the Sub-Committee on the work and service developments of the County CAMHS Looked After and Adoption Team

The following points were made during the presentation:-

- The number of referrals to the team during the past six months was 188 from September 2013 – March 2014 but there are currently 261 cases open to the team.
- Residential consultations are more focused and are working a lot better.
- Nottinghamshire County Council has three mainstream children's residential homes within the County (Lyndene, Westview and Oakhurst). They have recently reviewed the monthly consultation sessions at each home to match the CAMHS service offered to the Fostering and Adoption Service.
- The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire has been incorporated by the CAMHS Children Looked After and Adoption Team into their referral process.
- The team has developed a six week training course for residential staff from the three mainstream residential homes.
- In partnership with colleagues in the Children in Care Health Team, the Looked After team have been successful in initiating a Community of Interest for Children in Care. They have hosted two events, one in September 2013 and one in March 2014, at which the Foster Carers Liaison Advice Group (FLAG) and the Virtual School both gave presentations. Both events were well received.

Following questions from Members, the following points were made:-

Most new referrals are of school age and stay in contact with the school regarding any noticeable change in behaviour etc.

Foster carers are supported to manage the emotional difficulties of children in care and the demands that living with a child whose behaviour is not age appropriate can make on family life.

Members wanted reassurance that paragraph 24 of the report regarding a course being made available much earlier in their fostering career was taken on board. This was confirmed: internal training is provided, three family workers who work with foster carers help with the training and a package regarding physical aggression with a child is given to carers.

RESOLVED 2014/011

That the update on the work and service developments of the County CAMHS Looked After and Adoption Team be noted.

WORK PROGRAMME

The updated work programme was considered by Members.

RESOLVED 2014/012

That the Committee's work programme be noted.

FOSTER CARERS ITEMS

In response to concerns/issues raised by Foster Carers, the following points were clarified:-

- blood borne virus checks of adopters were only carried out when indicated as medically necessary during assessment;
- carers were advised to provide multi-vitamins for under 5s but these did not need to be prescribed by a GP;
- the issue of Foster Carers being sent breast milk in containers would be explored further and the outcomes before the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.50pm

CHAIRMAN

9 June 2014