

Meeting	CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE
Date	Monday 1 December 2014 (commencing at 2.00 pm)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with an 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Liz Plant (Chairman)

John Allin	A	Philip Owen
Alan Bell		Sue Saddington
Boyd Elliott		Andy Sissons
Kate Foale		Jacky Williams

Foster Carer

Dawn Clements
Aleks Jackowska

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Rachel Coombs	-	Group Manager, Children's Social Care
Sue Denholm	-	Co-ordinator of the Virtual School
David Ebbage	-	Assistant Democratic Services Officer, Policy, Planning & Corporate Services Department
Linda Foster	-	Team Manager, Education Improvement Service
Terri Johnson	-	Safeguarding Children Manager
Philippa Milbourne	-	Business Support Assistant, Children, Families & Cultural Services Department.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2014, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Philip Owen.

Councillor Alan Bell replaced Councillor Colleen Harwood for this meeting only.
Councillor Andy Sissons replaced Councillor Gail Turner for this meeting only.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MEMBERS VISITS TO INDEPENDENT CHILDREN'S HOMES

The Chairman introduced the report and asked the Sub-Committee to seek approval for arrangements to be put in place to enable Members to visit Looked After Children and Young People who are placed in externally provided children's homes and report back on these visits to the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee.

80 Nottinghamshire Looked After Children and young people are placed in externally provided children's homes. As corporate parents of these children, Members will have the opportunity to ensure that these children are being provided with the best possible care.

Members welcomed the recommendations to the report and expressed their previous experiences visiting children's homes and the relationships that have been built from these visits. Comments were raised regarding the form Members have to fill in and told the committee that it was inappropriate. It was agreed that this issue would get looked into by the department.

A number of members agreed to partake with the visits.

RESOLVED 2014/020

- 1) That arrangement for Members to visit externally provided children's homes from January 2015 be approved.
- 2) That reports on these visits be considered by Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee.

CHILDREN WHO RUN AWAY OR GO MISSING FROM CARE

Terri Johnson provided the Sub-Committee with information regarding children who run away or go missing from care. An annual report with regards to children going missing from both home and care was presented to the Children and Young People's Committee on 14 July 2014.

The following points were raised in the report:-

- The numbers of individual children going missing from care increased from 94 in 2012/13 to 124 in 2013/14. The total number of missing episodes recorded also increased from 281 to 372. This is in contrast to missing from home numbers, which decreased. This LAC increase maybe attributable to improvements in reporting and an ageing LAC population.
- 76% of LAC children received a return interview in Quarter 2 July to September 2014/15; reflecting continued improvement in this area. 81% of these were completed in 72 hours, which is positive.

- 83% of multi-agency meetings are recorded as being held which is also an improving picture.
- 2013/14 data indicated that children were more likely to go missing from independent fostering and residential placements or if placed outside Nottinghamshire. This may be a reflection of the challenges that these young people present with, rather than necessarily a reflection about the quality of the placement.
- The reasons why children go missing from care are varied including relationship difficulties, boundaries, school based or drug or alcohol related issues. Social workers can work to support and address the issues if they know what the problem is.
- The views of young people are being sought in relation to the return interview process. This is through a paper questionnaire, the web based Survey Monkey and face-to-face interviews. Looked after young people were consulted about the design of the questionnaire. As part of this, the viability of an ongoing method to gain young people's views were considered as well as whether or not information could be extracted on a regular basis by means of the social care case audit process.
- The 'hot spots' and multiple missing meetings will also continue to identify and respond to any looked after children that go missing repeatedly. This will include identifying any particular children's homes or foster carers where there are particularly high instances of children going missing as this may reflect standards of practice and care.

Following questions from Members the following points were made:-

In reference to the 76% of children receiving a return interview, members were concerned that it still left 24% without receiving one. The Local Authority are still not happy with that figure but compared to 4 years ago the rate of children receiving a return interview has increased dramatically. A proportion will refuse to engage with the process.

RESOLVED 2014/021

- 1) That the information on children who run away or go missing from care be noted.
- 2) That annual reports on children who run away or go missing from care be brought to the Sub-Committee.

AUTUMN TERM REPORT FOR THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

An update was provided to members on the virtual school for the autumn term 2014 and the following points were raised from the report:-

The number of statutory school aged young people at the time of writing was 526. Of these, 336 are Nottinghamshire LAC in Nottinghamshire schools; 20 are in

reception, 146 were primary age and 170 were secondary age. 65 were Nottinghamshire LAC placed in Nottinghamshire but educated in other local authority schools with 30 primary and 35 secondary. A further 78 are Nottinghamshire LAC placed out of county and educated in other local authority schools, 28 of primary age and 50 secondary. There were also 28 Nottinghamshire LAC placed out of county but attending Nottinghamshire schools; 11 were primary age and 17 were secondary. 19 were in residential placements with education.

In addition there are 140 LAC from other local authorities educated in Nottinghamshire schools, with 12 in reception, 64 primary and 64 secondary.

Further training opportunities for designated teachers for LAC are currently being explored. Training is also planned for designated teachers new to post, delivered by the virtual school co-ordinator and the team manager for the virtual school. Two events were planned for 2 December 2014 and 15 March 2015. The session covered the role of the designated teacher, information on the virtual school team and their role in support to LAC and schools.

Within the strategy performance paragraph of the report, GCSE levels of attainment were not included. This has risen to 30.8% from 12.5%. In 2013 12.5% was below the national standard of 16%. The up to date national data is not available until January.

Following questions from Members the following points were made:-

- Schools are made aware of LAC through the social worker informing them. A minimum of 10 days PEP has to be in place. The framework team also check whether the LAC requires additional educational or health needs.
- Regarding paragraph 23 of the report, members were informed that there had been a slight dip in ranking compared to other authorities. A detailed analysis of this took place and specific instructions were put in place to help improve the authorities ranking.

RESOLVED 2014/022

- 1) That the update on the virtual school for the autumn term 2014 be noted.
- 2) That the Pupil Premium Guidance document be noted.

WORK PROGRAMME

The updated work programme was considered by Members.

RESOLVED 2014/023

That the Committee's work programme be noted.

FOSTER CARERS ITEMS

A previous issue regarding breast feeding and vitamins had now been raised and following the queries Foster Carer's had at the time, an article had been included in a magazine which gave more information and background on the issue.

The meeting closed at 2.30pm

CHAIRMAN

1 Dec 2014