

## **Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee**

**21 January 2019**

Present: Councillor M Thirlaway (Chair)  
Councillors S Brockbank, J Cassidy, C Davis,  
J Kirwin, P Oliver and S Phillips.

Rev. M Vine Church Representative  
Mrs M Ord, Parent Governor Representative.

### **CES27/01/19 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Bell, P Brooks, K Clark and M Madden.

### **CES28/01/19 Substitute Members**

There were no substitute members reported.

### **CES29/01/19 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.

### **CES30/01/19 Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 November 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **CES31/01/19 Education in North Tyneside**

The sub-committee received a report which provided information on a number of matters relating to the provision of Education in North Tyneside. The Senior School Improvement Officer attended the meeting to present the report and answer any questions.

Members were provided an update on education funding; academy conversions; the impact of the closure of the Discovery school in Newcastle on North Tyneside children; the School Improvement Service; exclusions; and home educated children.

The sub-committee was informed that the overall level of School Balances at the end of March 2018 was £3.356m compared to £5.470m as at March 2017, a reduction of £2.114m and significantly better than forecast at the start of the 2017/18 financial year. Deficit meetings with schools took place in April and June and involved officers from School Improvement, Human Resources and Finance so that a holistic conclusion could be reached with schools needing to demonstrate their medium term plan to address the pressures. Nine schools projected a deficit budget in 2018/19. The deficit position was significantly driven by

surplus capacity and a programme of work with schools had begun to consider further actions required to address the longer term approach to financial planning for schools in North Tyneside.

The Early Years and School Improvement Service was providing intensive support to 11 schools. The North Tyneside protocol for supporting schools causing concern was founded on a clear, specified, formal statement of interventions that were differentiated according to the degree of concern that the Authority had for a school. Further information was provided in the Early Years and School Improvement Service Strategy for Support and Challenge to Schools which was included as an appendix to the report. Education attainment was also a separate item on the agenda of the meeting.

The rate of fixed term exclusions in North Tyneside was far lower than the national rate in general and these figures included children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The rate of fixed term exclusions in the secondary phase had consistently remained in the top 20% (lowest rate) in the country and the rate of fixed term exclusions in the primary phase remained steady and much lower than the national and regional rates, which had been increasing since 2012-13.

North Tyneside's rate of permanent exclusion was generally increasing at a similar rate to the national increase, however rates of primary phase permanent exclusions were so low that any exclusion had the potential to drastically alter apparent performance position; each of the peaks in North Tyneside's performance represented 2 or 3 exclusions in that academic year. North Tyneside's rate of primary permanent exclusions was less than national and regional benchmarks.

In North Tyneside there were 67 children being home educated which was relatively low compared to other parts of the country; at the last comparison it was the fifth lowest in the country. The main reasons reported by parents for choosing home education were that they always planned to home educate; they could not get the school of their choice; or the child had experienced problems at school. Members were assured that there were very clear processes in place to assure the Authority that these children were receiving the correct standard of education and were safeguarded. Members were also reminded of their in-depth investigation into the issue in 2016/17.

Members sought clarification on what measures were taken by schools to reduce deficits and the impact these had on the children at the school. In responses to a question regarding the value of the reserves for each school in deficit the officer agreed to enquire as to whether that information could be shared and to provide it to the Members if it was.

Members also sought further information on the reason for the exclusions, how many of the permanently excluded children had already received a fixed term exclusion, which schools these children were attending and whether any of the excluded children (either fixed term or permanently) were looked after children. The officer did not have the details to hand and undertook to provide an answer in writing.

Members then suggested that a flowchart for exclusions, like the one included in the report for home educated children, would be useful for parents and schools. Members expressed concern regarding the impact on the child and the family if any child, but particularly one with an Education, Care and Health Plan, was excluded and considered that a flowchart would help the family understand the steps taken before and after exclusion to get the child back into education. The officer shared the sub-committee's concerns and agreed to take the

suggestion back to the appropriate department.

It was **agreed** (1) to note the information regarding the provision of Education in North Tyneside; and

(2) that the additional information requested above be obtained and sent to the Democratic Support Team and circulated to all Members of the sub-committee.

## **CES32/01/19      Education Attainment and Progress Report**

The Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee had requested at its 30 March 2015 meeting that the sub-committee monitor the effectiveness of the support and challenge programme undertaken by the School Improvement Service (SIS) to ensure pupils classified as disadvantaged made comparable progress to those not classified as disadvantaged (minute OV43/03/15). Disadvantaged pupils were defined as those who had been eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) in the last six years, or had been adopted or were looked after; they also formed the majority of those eligible for pupil premium funding.

The sub-committee received a report from the Assistant Director of Education, Learning and Skills on the educational attainment of all pupils, including those eligible for pupil premium funding, in North Tyneside. A Senior School Improvement Officer attended the meeting to answer any questions.

The sub-committee was informed that North Tyneside schools had once again performed well compared to national measures and there was an upward trend across the borough. However, it should be noted that the data was provisional as test remarking and checking exercise outcomes had not been completed.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage performance had continued to improve for the fifth year in a row; 72.8% reached a good level of development in North Tyneside against a national average of 71.5%. However, the performance of non-FSM pupils had improved more than that of FSM pupils resulting in a slightly increased gap, within borough, of 15%. This remained smaller than the gap nationally. The gap between all children and the bottom 20% had increased to 34.2% which was higher than the equivalent gap nationally.

At Key Stage One, 84% reached the phonics threshold, compared to 82% nationally and 73% of FSM pupils reached the threshold and 85% of other pupils, leaving an in-borough gap of 12%, against a national gap of 14%. 100% of the looked after children who had been in care for over 12 months reached the expected phonics threshold. In reading, writing and mathematics the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was higher in North Tyneside than national: Reading 78% against 75%; writing 73% against 70%; Maths 79% against 76%; and Science 85% over 83%. There were eight pupils who had been looked after for at least 12 months and were eligible for KS1 assessments in 2018. Pupils achieved in line with looked after children nationally, with reading and writing slightly below and maths and science slightly above. This cohort was small and 40% were educated out of borough.

At Key Stage Two, the percentage of pupils who reached the expected level in writing (82% compared to 79%) and maths (78% compared to 76%) was higher than the national figure; 11% reached the higher level in the combined reading, writing and maths measure. This was in line with national at 10%. In reading, writing and maths combined, 55% of disadvantaged pupils and 75% of non-disadvantaged pupils in North Tyneside reached the expected level. The local authority gap had reduced from 27% to 20%. Comparing the performance of

disadvantaged pupils in North Tyneside with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, the gap had reduced from 19% to 16% between 2017 and 2018. Positive progress was made by disadvantaged pupils in writing and maths, significantly better than their peers nationally, in reading progress was in line nationally.

There were 17 pupils who had been looked after for at least 12 months and were eligible for Key Stage Two assessments in 2018: 59% reached the expected level in reading; 59% reached the expected level in writing; 65% reached the expected level in maths; 47% reached the expected level in grammar, punctuation and spelling; and 53% reached the expected standard in the combined reading, writing and maths measure. Although the average progress scores were less than zero these figures were not significantly different from all pupils nationally.

At Key Stage Four (G.C.S.E) North Tyneside's performance for the percentage of pupils who achieved a 9-4 pass in English and maths in 2018 was 65%, this was in line with 2017 and the current national rate. This placed the Authority third in the region. Progress 8 in 2018 was -0.21 which, although significantly lower than the national average and last year, was in line with the regional average.

44% of disadvantaged pupils in North Tyneside achieved a 9-4 pass in English and maths in 2018. This was in line with the current national average (also 44%) and a significant improvement from last year. 72% of non-disadvantaged pupils in North Tyneside achieved a 9-4 pass in English and maths, in line with the current national average (71%) and a slight decrease from 2017. As a result of this improvement in disadvantaged pupils' attainment the attainment gap (for 9-4 English and maths) was now in line with national at -27% and improved from last year's gap of -34%. However the progress of disadvantaged pupils across the wider curriculum remained a concern and was significantly lower than the national disadvantaged Progress 8.

This year was the strongest performance for the looked after cohort at GCSE, which after the assessment changes was pleasing. 22% achieved Grade 5 in both English and maths against 10% national; 17% entered the EBacc against 12% nationally; and the Progress 8 attainment was -1.09 against -0.94 nationally.

The early years and school improvement service was working intensively with leaders in a number of schools where the progress data was a significant concern. This included leadership development, support for English, maths and science departments and support to improve the attendance of pupils.

Raising standards for pupils eligible for pupil premium was a key priority for all staff. Professional development, network meetings and intervention strategies contributed to ensuring schools were focussed on narrowing gaps in educational achievement for pupil premium pupils. Through the work of the seconded head teacher the profile of these students had increased and the impact of the work was becoming evident within outcomes data. Pupil premium drop in sessions had been established to support school leaders in reviewing their strategies and developing new initiatives; training had been provided to secondary head teachers and pupil premium leads; and all middle and high schools were committed to a pupil premium peer review.

In response to a question it was explained that the definition of a disadvantaged child was a national measure and they were unable to record and report the attainment data for Children In Need or those on a Child Protection Plan. Members queried what was meant by a

“coasting” school and the implications for the school if it was classified as such. The officer informed the sub-committee that a “coasting” school was one where attainment and progress over a rolling three year period had fallen below a certain threshold. Based on current data it was anticipated that one secondary school would be considered coasting with three schools to be considered below the floor target. The Regional Schools Commissioner had the power to issue a letter of concern to these schools; this was a change to its power which previously had been to intervene and potentially convert the school to an Academy.

Members sought information on how many children in each education stage had Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), what those cohorts’ attainment statistics were and whether the looked after children data could be disaggregated to included SEND children. The officer did not have the details to hand and undertook to provide an answer in writing.

It was **agreed** (1) to note the information provided on the attainment and progress of all pupils, particularly the results of the looked after children cohort; and (2) that the additional information requested above be obtained and sent to the Democratic Support team and circulated to all Members of the sub-committee.

### **CES33/01/19      Youth Offending**

The sub-committee received a report on the work of the North Tyneside Youth Offending Team (YOT).

The sub-committee was informed that North Tyneside Youth Offending Team (YOT) worked with all young people aged 10-17 involved in the Youth Justice System. The principal aim of the YOT was to “prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people”.

The report provided information on the management board; the inspection regime; funding; performance management; the services delivered by the YOT; the work undertaken to reduce re-offending; types of crimes committed; partnership working; and the challenges faced by the service. A case study and full details of the services delivered by the YOT were included as appendices to the report.

The sub-committee was informed that North Tyneside’s First Time Entrant performance was better than the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner area average but worse than the North East average and the national average; North Tyneside’s Re-offending performance average was better than all three; as was North Tyneside’s Use of Custody performance.

Details were given on how the team worked to reduce the risk of offending and re-offending. The case officer assessed the young person using the required Youth Justice Board assessment tool known as “AssetPlus” which identified key areas for intervention and the level of risk the young person posed in respect of re-offending; harm to others; and self-harm. The assessment informed the frequency of contact with the young person and the actions undertaken to reduce the identified risks. An offer was made to all young people to be health screened and have a brief assessment undertaken to identify unmet or previously unidentified needs.

The changing shape of how young people used technology had impacted on the increasing number of young people arrested for ‘cyber-enabled’ sexually harmful behaviour. This in the main was the taking of/sharing and distribution of indecent images. The possession of

bladed articles and knives in the Borough had not, to date, increased which was positive against the national picture of significant increases. In North Tyneside there was 135 young people in the cohort of re-offenders, of which there were 13 prolific offenders (committed 5 or more re-offences). These 13 had committed 72% of the total number of re-offences, 132 between them, and were the most risky and difficult to effect sustained change for.

The sub-committee was reminded that there was no typical young person that the YOT worked with but it was well documented that young people that had contact with the youth justice system were more likely to have experienced early childhood trauma which then impacted upon their health, education and subsequent behaviours including offending and anti-social behaviour. The team had adopted the “Trauma based model” to working with the most complex young people; this was a pyramid model that focused on meeting the needs within each tier before progressing to the next and required workers to understand and address early childhood trauma and loss.

The impact having a criminal record as a young person on that individual’s future was never underestimated and all partners, where it was judged safe to do so, endeavoured to keep a young person away from formal court proceedings. Steps to achieve this were making suggestions in pre-sentencing reports on alternative measures to reduce and mitigate further behaviours occurring; for example exclusion zones and electronically monitored tags.

In response to questions, reassurance was provided that work was being undertaken to understand County Lines and ensure that in any meeting the appropriate information was shared. The Police and the YOT were sighted on vulnerable young people and adults with regard to County Lines.

Members expressed concern that the case study referred to the young person having been “considerably bullied” at school and enquired as to what challenge had been made to the schools involved regarding their response to the bullying. Members also sought clarification on the support available for young people with mental health issues; and the transition process for young people to the probation or other services at aged 18.

It was **agreed** to note the information provided and to thank the Youth Offending Team for all they did to support the young people of North Tyneside.

## **CES34/01/19      Transition Sub Group Recommendations Update**

The sub-committee received a report which updated it on the progress made against the recommendations from the *Transition Process for Young People with SEND from Children to Adult Services in North Tyneside* report accepted by Cabinet on 25 June 2018.

The sub-committee was presented with a table setting out the actions Cabinet had agreed to take in response to the recommendations and details of the progress that had been made on their implementation.

Of the eleven recommendations only one had yet to be implemented which was recommendation 4:

Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding produces different assessment forms for young people transitioning to adult services to those used for adults entering adult services at an older age and creates different forms for different

additional needs; for example one form for young people with SEN, another for young people with disabilities and another for those with SEND and Disabilities.

The Action Plan agreed by Cabinet had anticipated a September 2018 date for completion of recommendation 4 however, the implementation had been delayed due to the introduction of the LAS/LCS electronic recording system in 2017 / 2018. This change had presented the team with a number of challenges related to electronic recording across the 0-25 year agenda and had required further work to agree and test out documentation and recording across the SEND service, a pilot was currently being undertaken and, if successful, a full roll-out would follow.

The sub-committee was informed that the SEND Strategic Board had undertaken the responsibility to monitor and sign off subsequent decisions associated with the action plan. Improving the transition from children's to adult services for young people and their parents and carers was a key focus of the SEND Improvement Plan and a Transitions Manager, working across children and adult services, had been appointed to assist in this goal.

The sub-committee was informed that strategic co-production had been a strength in delivering the action plan and Parent/Carer forums and their time and commitment could not be overstated. A 'contract of expectations' had been produced which illustrated what parents could expect from the service and what the service would need from the parents. Relationships with Housing had been strengthened and the service had a much better understanding of and being able to predict what facilities would be required when. Officers in Housing could now identify when a young person might be at risk of losing their tenancy and what changes could be introduced to prevent that from happening. The Assistant Director for Mental Health and Disability had also made a personal commitment to meet with parents/carers if they considered that something had fundamentally gone wrong with the transition for their young person to understand why and to consider whether the process could be adapted or changed to prevent it happening to another young person.

In response to questions it was confirmed that if it was perceived that things had not gone well, the approach was to encourage a listening culture and not to focus on fault finding so as to ensure that all concerns were reported back. In addition a senior officer always attended parent and carer forums and made themselves available afterwards to speak to parents/carers. It was acknowledged that officers may be hearing a minority voice as engaging all parents/carers was a significant challenge due to their caring and/or work commitments or situation. All parents/carers had been approached to participate in the forums.

The sub-committee was pleased to note the work undertaken on the recommendations and the wider work on learning from previous inspections and from the SEND Peer Review undertaken in January 2018.

It was **agreed** (1) to note the updated action plan and welcome the implementation of all but one of the sub-committee's *Transition Process for Young People with SEND from Children to Adult Services in North Tyneside* report's recommendations; and (2) to endorse the oversight and responsibility for the Transition Process for Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disability being undertaken by the SEND Strategic Board, including the delivery of the outstanding action on the action plan.