

Contact Officer: Jodie Harris

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Tuesday 24th October 2023

Present: Councillor Viv Kendrick (Chair)
Councillor Elizabeth Reynolds, Cabinet Member - Learning and Aspiration
Gill Addy, Designated Nurse for Looked after Children/Care Leavers
Stewart Horn, Head of Children's Integrated Commissioning
Louise Hallas, Virtual School Headteacher - Children & Young People
Ophelia Rix, Head of Service for Children in Care, Care Leavers & Looked after Children

Co-optees

In attendance:

Observers:

Apologies: Councillor Richard Smith, Conservative - Group Business Manager
Councillor John Lawson, Liberal Democrat - Group Leader
Councillor Karen Allison, Green Group - Group Business Manager
Kieran Lord, Interim Service Director: Resources, Improvements & Partnerships
Vicky Metherringham, Service Director - Child Protection & Family Support
Sara Miles, Head of Safeguarding & Quality Assurance
Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director - Learning & Early Support

1 Membership of the Board/Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Richard Smith
Councillor John Lawson
Councillor Karen Allison
Kieran Lord
Vicky Metherringham
Sara Miles
Jo-Anne Sanders, Councillor Karen Allison, Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director Learning and Early Support, Vicky Metherringham, Service Director, Child Protection and Family Support, Kieran Lord, Interim Service Director - Resources, Improvements and Partnerships, Ian Mottershaw, Head of Contextual Safeguarding Service and Y.E.S – Family Support and Child Protection and Sara Miles, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board considered the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th September 2023.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 12th September 2023 be approved as a correct record.

3 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the Public

All Items were held in public session.

5 Deputations/Petitions

There were no deputations or petitions received.

6 Public Question Time

There were no questions received from members of the public.

7 Children's Performance Highlight Report

The Board considered the latest Children's Performance Highlights Report in respect of the performance monitoring data for Children's Services.

Ophelia Rix, Head of Service for Children Looked After and Care Leavers highlighted the following points in relation to Looked After Children and Care leavers:

- The care planning and decision-making processes for children and young people continued to maintain Senior Manager oversight through the Legal Gateway, Permanence and Children Accessing Service Panel.
- The Panels provided assurance that management oversight and clear actions and timescales were in place to address practice of concern and highlight evidence of good practice.
- Weekly Performance meetings were being held and the feedback received showed that young people were satisfied and had a strong relationship with social workers.
- The work of the Panel helped to increase understanding of young people and their experiences.
- There had been an increase in number of unaccompanied young people which placed increased workload but there had been timely responses in terms of the allocation of social workers and educational provision.
- The ambition was to undertake more work in relation to understanding unaccompanied young people and their experiences to meet their current and future needs.
- In relation to Care Leavers, there had been an increase in relation to the number of Care Leavers who were in touch.
- The team continued to work innovatively to keep in touch with all young people and were confident that all post 18 young people were aware of the support offer.
- There had been an increase in the numbers of young people who had up-to-date pathway plans.

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- Work continued with Social Workers and Personal Advisors to ensure pathway plans were completed in a timely manner to meet targets with a focus going forward on the improvement of the quality of plans.
- In relation to the number of young people in suitable accommodation, there had been a significant impact on the increasing demands for tenancies.
- Work continued with housing colleagues who agreed to prioritise properties for young people, and this had helped to improve performance.
- This work was to continue to ensure that suitable accommodation was available, and strong links with private housing providers were being maintained.
- Performance in relation to Employment, Education and Training (EET) indicator was a focus for improvement supporting the priority to ensure that young people were afforded the best of opportunities in relation to EET.
- There was a C&K Careers Advisor in the Leaving Care Service, and there was a pro-active multi-agency group to improve opportunities in partnership working.
- There had been an increase in the number of young people accessing No11 and No12 and weekly drop-in sessions were held at these hubs.

The Board noted the update in respect of Children Looked After and Care leavers and welcomed the information in relation to Children Looked After Review meetings highlighting that they were well attended by a range of committed partner agencies. During the discussion to follow the Board raised a question in relation to suitable accommodation noting that the target support was positive, but funding was due to cease March 2024.

In response Ophelia Rix advised that the role was to be maintained within the service to ensure that young people were supported into suitable accommodation.

Gill Addy, the Designated Nurse for Looked After Children and Care Leavers and Stewart Horn, Head of Children's Integrated Commissioning updated the Board in relation to the health data, which provided both twelve- month rolling and monthly figures. It was advised that:

Initial Health Assessments (IHA's):

- A rolling 12-month data shows that 60.4% of IHA's were completed in the statutory timescale but the actual percentage had dropped to 0% in real terms in August.
- This was being replicated across regional neighbours and had been highlighted on the WY risk register.
- This was due to a number of factors including a continued increase of; numbers coming into care (including large sibling groups) unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), the number of children placed with connected carers not being brought requiring re-scheduling, complexities, requests from other local authorities to complete on their behalf.
- Work was being undertaken with Kirklees College who were supporting health promotion work with UASC.
- Locala monthly data for July showed that 31% were completed in the 20-day timescale.
- Meetings of a working group (made up of the Designated Nurse, Locala the CHFT, and the ICB) were taking place regularly to make improvements.

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- The Business Case to consider additional nurse/doctor resource/alternative CLA Health model, which would support the whole team remained under commissioner consideration, with a resubmission presented in September to the ICB.
- This had since been escalated to a West Yorkshire Director for Children services and NHS senior leaders meeting, where region wide issues were discussed.

Review health assessments (RHA):

- Kirklees rolling 12-month data shows that 82.5% & 90.5% of the 'Developmental' assessments (under 5yrs old) and 'Annual' assessments (over 5 yrs. old) respectively, were completed in statutory timescales.
- These positive results include months when the previous model of delivery by Thriving Kirklees (TK) was in place.
- Since April, TK had put a temporary process in place to complete most allocated RHA's on additional hours, or incorporate with their own statutory assessments, until the commissioning arrangements completed.
- Locala monthly data for August showed that 63% and 68% for under and over 5 years olds respectively, were completed in timescales under the temporary regime.
- Almost all assessments were completed in the month they were due, or soon after to fit around carer arrangements.

Dental Checks:

- Kirklees rolling 12-month data shows that 65.2% of children aged 1+, had attended the dentist.
- Several factors were negatively affecting the recording of data and a working group had been established to look at aligning the data with Locala.
- This included using SW practitioners to update when a child had attended as part of their statutory visits, avoiding reliance on recording at the RHA
- Locala monthly data for showed that 100% of children age 18months to under 5 yrs., and 94% 5 years+, had attended the dentist at the point of their RHA.

Registered at dentist:

- Locala data shows 100% of children aged 18m to 5 years and 86% 5 years+ at the point of their RHA, were registered with a dentist.
- The use of the 'Flexible Commissioning Project' has supported CLA and care leavers to register.

Substance misuse:

- 1 young person (0.24%) had admitted or are known to use substances that have a significant impact on their daily life when asked at their last RHA.
- If a young person declines their RHA, a check was made with the social worker to ascertain if substance use is an issue.
- The working group will also look at alternative methods of collection of this data as the RHA was not a reliable source.

Immunisations:

- 93% and 83% of under and over 5-year-olds respectively, were up to date with their immunisations.
- Reasons for a lower uptake in older children can be related to; the shortened schedule offered to Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children, some young

people may decline, and placement moves or moves to semi-independent living can negatively impact take up.

The Board noted the update and recognised that there were some unprecedented challenges in this area of work, but welcomed the work of Kirklees College in helping to support UASC and highlighted that this should be recognised, and that the college be thanked.

Gill Addy agreed and added how group interactions in classrooms with peers was a positive format for working with young children.

The Board noted challenges around adoption, and the average time between a child coming into adoption and being placed. Concerns regarding the delays had been raised with OAWY as the data was below statistical neighbourhoods.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the Children's Performance Highlight Report, and it was agreed that Kirklees college be thanked and congratulated for the support provided to UASC.

8 Virtual School Draft Headteacher Report

The Board considered the Virtual School Draft Headteacher Report (September 2023) presented by Louise Hallas, Virtual School Headteacher. The draft report outlined the virtual self-evaluation for 2022-23 and the outcome data (to be validated as of September 2024) for 2022-23 as well as the improvement priorities for 2024. It was highlighted that:

- Under self-evaluation, Kirklees Virtual School rated themselves as good overall with some outstanding features and some areas for development.
- A Personalised Approach was taken and every young person in care was allocated to a member of the experienced Virtual School Team.
- This ensured that their attendance, progress and attainment was reviewed to enable challenge and support in a timely manner and for relevant interventions can be put in place.
- The Virtual School completed 100% of Personalised Education Plans (PEP's) within the termly timescale.
- This ensured that every young person's had at least one PEP each term.
- In the previous year, 99% of initial PEP's were completed within timescales.
- The electronic PEP system enables the Virtual School to monitor the completion and quality assurance of PEPs.
- This process is used to challenge schools and providers to support pupils' individual needs and is quality assured by the team managers.
- Completed PEPs are recorded in Liquid Logic and uploaded to Wisdom.
- There were robust systems in place to ensure the Internal and External Scrutiny of Data and Systems,
- A monthly report is produced, analysed and reviewed as a leadership team and presented to Governing Body, Corporate Parenting Board, Scrutiny, Quality Assurance Panel and shared across service

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- This allows us to react quickly to developing patterns of need and work proactively as a team to embed creative solutions
- or example, we can see every suspension that takes place and ensure that we are working with professionals to prevent any further suspensions and highlight any patterns in the data.
- This has resulted in a decrease in the number of suspensions this year with the number of days lost reduced from 455.5 to 307, with pupils with more than 1 suspension down from 37 to 29 demonstrating the positive impact of data scrutiny.
- There is an established Governing Body that meets regularly, with a cross section of representation that holds the Virtual School to account through supportive and challenging meetings.
- In early years support, the majority of children in care aged 2 to 4-years-old access their entitlement to funded early education and care.
- Where they are not accessing their entitlement, the reason is known, and the validity checked by a lead social worker.
- The percentage of young people achieving a Good Level of Development has been consistently strong over the last three years
- The percentage of KS1 pupils reaching expected or higher standard for Reading, Writing and Maths and RWM combined is above the national average for children and young people in care 2022
- The progress for those that achieve at least expected at Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 achievement is good, positive that maintain trajectory of achievement
- Attainment and Progress at Key Stage 4 has been consistently strong and the latest validated results (2022) show Kirklees Children Looked After in quartile B for attainment, progress and 9-4 English and Maths and these were all above regional and national data.
- Participation and progression remain strong in Post 16 despite the remaining challenges following the pandemic, with 99% of young people participating in some form of learning 16-18.
- This was an area the Virtual School hoped to increase into the 19-25 cohort.
- Kirklees College have also been successful in being shortlisted for the Alex Timpson ARC Attachment Award for their strong commitment to attachment and trauma informed approaches across the organisation.
- Collaborative working was a particular strength of the virtual school,
- The Virtual School Leadership team work strategically across service with numerous partners including Heads of Service in Children Looked After, Assessment and Intervention, Children With Disabilities Service, Youth Engagement Service, Multisystemic Therapy (MST) team, Sufficiency, Careers, Health and One Adoption
- We collaborate well with other professionals including Social Workers (SW), Designated Teacher's, Carer's, Special Educational Needs Assessment and Commissioning Team (SENACT), Education Psychologists (EP) to provide the best for our young people.
- There has been no permanent exclusion of a child and young person in care since the Virtual School established
- This was trend that had continued since the virtual school had been established.

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- In relation to special educational needs, All staff have received SEND specific professional development opportunities to increase knowledge and understanding of how we better support our young people with SEND.
- We have established links nationally with LA SEND teams to reduce drift and delay regarding statutory assessments and EHCP linked processes.
- We have developed our structure to integrate the work for Children with a Social Worker into the work of the Virtual School.
- we are developing a joint action plan to enhance social work practice and ensure detailed education targets are in place and reviewed in all Child in Need and Child Protection Plans.
- Areas for improvement included; attendance (to increase static 88% going forwards) attainment (particular focus on Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4), EHCP / Access to Appropriate Provision, School Moves (minimising changes wherever possible).
- Development work included;
 - Developing partnership working with the care leavers team and SAPT, to work with all young people if remaining in education / training to 25 and ensure care planning is linked as young people approach 18.
 - Enhanced the provision to support UASC young people for the full year.
 - Further develop partnership working and support and training for Early Years providers to maximise potential and impact of earlier intervention.
 - Embedding the work for Children and young people with a social worker so that it becomes system led and system wide throughout the authority and education system.

The Board noted the update and expressed thanks to the Virtual School for their work. The Board particularly welcomed:

- The news that there were no permanent exclusions.
- The 100% PEP completion rate.
- static in performance in absence data (in comparison to a national decrease).
- Further work to close any gaps in attainment where possible.

In response to a question from the Ex-Officio in relation to Ofsted inspection, Louise Hallas advised that within the ILACS inspection there was a school's Ofsted inspector who reviewed the work of the virtual school. Previous feedback from inspections had always been very positive. Responding to a further question from the Ex-Officio in relation to the way in which virtual schools operate Louise Hallas advised that all virtual schools may work to the same performance indicators, but the delivery and operation of Virtual schools differed across Local authorities.

In response to a question from the Board in relation to unauthorised absence data, Louise Hallas confirmed that sickness absence was not recorded in this information. However, Louise further noted that lates had to be recorded as unauthorised which impacted the data. The Board noted the response and requested that a breakdown of recorded unauthorised absence be provided to help provide clarity around the data.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the Virtual School Draft Headteacher Report, and it was agreed that a report showing a breakdown of recorded unauthorised absences be provided to the Board.

9 Virtual School Governing Body Update

The Board were advised that a meeting of the Governing Body had not yet taken place and that an update would be given at the next meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED: The Board noted that an update would be deferred to next meeting of the Board

10 Children's Ambition Board Update

No updates from officers due to apologies and it was noted that an update be given at the next meeting of the Board.

11 Updates from Board Members on Interaction with Services

The Board considered verbal updates from Board Members in relation to progress and key issues following interaction with Services and partners to challenge the role of the Corporate Parent.

The Chair reported that she had:

- Attended an early years development day alongside Cllr Cooper (Ex-Officio).
- Attended a One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY) Meeting where a discussion was held around activity days for children awaiting adoption. It was suggested that the Board should attend an upcoming activity day.
- Chaired a meeting of the Yorkshire and Humber Lead members network.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the Updates from Board Members on Interaction with Services, and it was agreed that the Board give consideration to attending an OAWY activity day.

12 Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan

The Board considered the agenda plan for 2023/24.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the agenda plan for 2023/24.