

CHILDREN’S SCRUTINY PANEL – WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

MEMBERS: Cllr Itrat Ali, Cllr Richard Smith, Cllr Jane Rylah, Cllr Ashleigh Robinson, Cllr Hannah McKerchar, Cllr Tanisha Bramwell

SUPPORT: Helen Kilroy (Assistant Democracy Manager), Claire Gardiner (Democracy Officer)

Agenda item/area of focus	Lead Officer	Areas of Scrutiny carried forward from 24-25	Comments
<p><u>Standard items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-decision scrutiny (decisions by Cabinet) • Performance Information (Children’s Service) – Informal meeting • Feedback from Panel Members on issues considered by Kirklees Parenting Board • Ambition Board Minutes 	<p>Cabinet Members/Senior Officers (Children’s Service)</p> <p>Presented by Service Directors (produced by Lucy Tiffany)</p> <p>Panel Members who attend Kirklees Parenting Board</p> <p>Senior Officers and Cabinet Members</p>	<p>Panel will check at each meeting with Cabinet Members and Senior Officers from Children’s Service if there are any potential areas of pre-decision scrutiny they need to consider at future meetings.</p> <p>The Panel will continue to monitor the performance of the Learning Early Support Service and Child Protection & Family Support (written report in informal session and verbal update on key issues in public meeting). Panel will be asked for questions prior to the Panel meeting so that these can be shared with Senior Officers and Cabinet Members in advance of the Informal meeting.</p> <p>Members of the Panel who attend the Kirklees Parenting Board will feedback on key issues to the Scrutiny Panel as appropriate.</p> <p>The Panel will receive for information the minutes from the Ambition Board meetings which are held quarterly.</p>	<p>Every meeting</p> <p>Every meeting</p> <p>Every meeting</p> <p>Quarterly</p>
<p>Review of the Improvement Journey – Ofsted Inspection</p>	<p>Tom Brailsford/Vicky Metherringham</p>	<p>The Panel will continue to review the Improvement Journey of Children’s Services and receive regular updates following Ofsted Inspections.</p>	<p>Immediate and ongoing</p>

		<p>The Panel will visit Children’s Social Care Teams, Children with Disabilities Team and the Front Door during the 2024/25 municipal year.</p> <p>Training on Corporate Parenting The Panel received a training presentation on Corporate Parenting on the 30th August 2024 and will consider regular updates on issues considered by the Kirklees Parenting Board at each Panel meeting.</p> <p>Visit to No 11 and No 12 hubs The Panel will visit No 11 and No 12 hubs and observe the services on offer and being accessed by young people – to be arranged.</p> <p>Care Leavers Month – October 2024 The Panel were invited to events that took place during Care Leavers Month (October 2024) and details were shared with Members of the Panel.</p> <p>Visit to Care Leavers Achievement Awards on 30.10.24 Members of the Panel attended the Care Leavers Achievement Awards Event at Huddersfield Town Hall, it was a celebratory event held for Care Leavers. The evening was inspirational, with speeches from the Mayor, Councillor Viv Kendrick (Cabinet Member for Children) and very bravely from some of the young people. The atmosphere in the room was supportive throughout, particularly as the students came on stage to receive their awards. The awards ceremony was followed by a buffet, a magician and an unplanned performance of Kurdish dancing.</p> <p>Visit to the Takeover Event – Care Leavers Forum 24.10.24 The Chair of the Panel attended the Takeover event on the 24th October 2024 which was facilitated by the Care Leavers Forum, supported by the Our Voice Team and Children’s Rights Team. There was attendance across the board from all different providers of children’s services and representatives from the Integrated Care System (ICS) healthcare, housing</p>	<p>30.10.24</p> <p>24.10.2024</p>
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		<p>as well as Cabinet Members. The meeting was very interactive and following the introductions there was an ice breaker, the presentations and group exercises facilitated by the care leavers. A great amount of work had gone into preparing the event. Three videos of the care leavers were shared outlining their journey, the challenges they faced and the support they received.</p> <p>The agenda included young people and Kirklees Parenting Board member discussion on the topics of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things to do • Homes for children • Health and wellbeing • Voice, influence and participation • Learning <p>The session ended with a quiz, and a recital of a poem written by one of the care leavers.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 11th October 2024</p> <p>The Panel considered the outcome and recommendations of the Children’s Services Ofsted Inspection report, which was published on the 27th August 2024 and highlighted the key areas of improvement for the Service. The Ofsted Inspection covered all areas of the Children’s Service but focussed on children in need, children in care and care leavers. The Panel agreed that the Ofsted report was very positive and that it was encouraging to see the significant improvements that had been made since the last Ofsted report in 2019. The Panel asked that their thanks and congratulations be passed onto the Teams within Children’s Services for their hard work and commitment to improving the delivery of services and support to children and young people in Kirklees.</p>	<p>11.10.24</p>
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		<p>Visit to Children in care Team on 12th December 2024</p> <p>Members of the Panel met with the Children in Care and Care Leavers Team on the 12th December 2024 and the following key points were discussed –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teams were dealing with children with very complex needs. • Managers were supportive and approachable, provided the right level of support and were available to talk to when difficult decisions had to be made regarding children. • Partnership working was key to helping to manage the risk to vulnerable children and the team worked closely with the virtual school, health colleagues, housing and the police. • The voice of the child was a basic rule of thumb in everything that they did and that they were in tune with the children in their care, seeking the voice of the child was always the starting point. • Sufficiency of placements within Kirklees was an issue. Looked after children had links within the area and Social Workers did not want to move them away from what they know and their networks which could cause significant disruption to child’s schooling, family time and mental health and wellbeing. • Some young people were ready to leave care at the age of 18 but some still needed support. The criteria once an adult did not provide a specific pathway for the young person’s ongoing support, but conversations were taking place to rectify this. • The team agreed to invite the Panel to future events and gave an open invitation for Panel Members to do work shadowing alongside Social Workers. 	<p>12.12.24</p>
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<p>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Transformation Plan and Sufficiency of SEND and mainstream capacity</p>	<p>Jo-Anne Sanders Michelle Lister/Paul Calendine</p>	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the SEND Transformation Plan and will focus on the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety Valve - Oversight of the Government Safety Valve Agreement and the current profile of spend across the High Needs Blocks • Quality and Compliance - Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) Overview of volume processes – quality and compliance (including Annual Reviews) • Graduated Approach – Mainstream Schools organised in Clusters - New initiative of schools working in clusters • Specialist places (Sufficiency) - Special Schools – overview of provision and two new school rebuilds <p>To support this scrutiny, the Panel will do the following –</p> <p>Visit to SEND Transformation and Commissioning Group on 3rd October 2024</p> <p>The Panel attended and observed the SEND Transformation and Commissioning Group on the 3rd October 2024 to gain a better understanding of the SEND transformation work. A presentation was carried out sharing reflections, impacts and progress on the programme and clusters and explained the “why, approach and roles”. Break out groups were asked to discuss challenges to SEND, areas of strength, hopes and worries for cluster model.</p> <p>Visit to an Education and Learning Partnership Board (ELPB) meeting – date to be arranged</p>	<p>3.10.24</p> <p>To be arranged</p>
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		<p>Panel meeting on 22nd November 2024 The Panel considered a report providing an insight into the Council’s ‘Safety Valve’ agreement with the Department for Education in relation to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The Panel gave their support for the report and asked that officers consider and take on board any questions and comments raised by the Panel in future reports.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 4th February 2025 The Panel will consider a consider a report on the Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) giving an overview of volume process, quality and compliance, including Annual Reviews.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 14th March 2025 The Panel will consider a report on the new initiatives in schools that are working in clusters.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 28th April 2025 The Panel will consider a report on Special Schools giving an overview of provision and 2 new school rebuilds – Joseph Norton and Woodley.</p> <p>The Panel will consider sufficiency across Learning places and focus on the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decline of the cohort of children in primary schools in Kirklees - Needs and capacity around the teacher workforce - Opportunities for extensions to entitlements for wrap around care and childcare <p>To support this work, the Panel will take advantage of opportunities throughout the 24/25 municipal year to observe partnership meetings when these issues were discussed including –</p>	<p>22.11.24</p> <p>17.1.25</p> <p>14.3.25</p> <p>28.4.25</p>
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		<p>A Visit to the Places Access and Inclusion Committee of the Education and Learning Partnership Board (ELPB) The Panel will visit the Places, Access and Inclusion Meeting of the ELPB to observe the discussions around needs and capacity relating to the teacher workforce – date to be arranged.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 28th April 2025 The Panel will consider a report on the decline of the cohort of children in primary schools in Kirklees.</p>	<p>28.4.25</p>
<p>Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA)</p>	<p>Pam Allen/Vicky Metheringham/Jo-Anne Sanders/Ian Mottershaw and Sara Miles</p> <p>Patrick Boosey (NHS)</p>	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the multi-agency partnership arrangements as part of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) and consider the changes which have been implemented.</p> <p>Visit to Kirklees Safeguarding Partnership Board (KSPB) on 10th February 2025 The Panel will visit the Kirklees Safeguarding Partnership Board meeting as part of their scrutiny on the working together action plan and achieving outcomes for the children across Kirklees.</p> <p>Panel Meeting on 14th March 2025 The Panel will consider the changes implemented in the Working Together Action Plan and the multi-agency partnership arrangements. Julie Sykes, the Independent Scrutineer of the Kirklees Safeguarding Children’s Partnerships (KSCP) had been invited to attend the Panel meeting in March for this discussion.</p> <p>Visit to Starting Well Board on 9th May 2025 The Panel will visit the Starting Well Board on the 9th May 2025 as part of their scrutiny on achieving outcomes for children across Kirklees.</p>	<p>10.2.25</p> <p>14.3.25</p> <p>9.5.25</p>

<p>Quality Assurance – impact of auditing the Children’s Service</p>	<p>Vicky Metherringham/Robert Fordyce</p>	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the Quality Assurance impact of auditing the Children’s Service and what difference it was making to children’s lives.</p> <p>The Panel will be invited to observe appropriate forums on Quality Assurance, including the Practice Learning days and Quality Learning Events taking place within the Children’s Service.</p> <p>Panel Meeting on 11th October 2024 The Panel considered the Annual Report on Quality Assurance. The report provided an overview of audit and learning processes for the last 12 months for consideration and discussion. It was noted that Members of the Panel would attend some of the forthcoming Practice Learning Days with Teams across the Children’s Service and report back with updates to future Panel Meetings.</p> <p>Visits to Practice Learning Day (PLD) for Care Leavers on 29.11.24 Members of the Panel attended the Practice Learning Day for Care Leavers on the 29th November 2024. During the day, a presentation was given by Lauren James, the specialist from the Adult Pathway Team. An overview of “My Housing Plan” was provided and the Panel Members present had the opportunity to observe the valuable peer review process. Discussion took place around the themes of preparing for adulthood, front door entry and access to health and adult social care. The Panel felt that the Care Leavers input into their own planning pathways was positive. Issues regarding the complexity of the recruitment processes for Personal Assistants in Kirklees were raised.</p> <p>Key issues discussed at the meeting included the challenges faced by Personal Assistants and were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and engagement at visits, and with adult social care teams (the joint working process) 	<p>11.10.24</p> <p>29.11.24</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear defining of the role of the Personal Assistant for children with additional needs • Shared lives/young people starting out and the adult social care review to include this group and communication with this group • Drug users and related services • Parents understanding the child’s needs and capacity • Making the young person's voice heard (not just the carer’s) • Having the time to build relationships when caseload was high • The amount of people involved in care and their differing roles, making sure everyone keeps up with new information eg Mental Health Act • Access to Care First - adult social workers appeared to be unsure of the role of the Personal Assistant • Care plans in adult services were too big and need to be comprehensive • Autism, more training was needed around mental health or disability <p>Overall, it was a great opportunity to engage with the group and deepen the understanding of the service they provided.</p> <p>Visit to Practice Learning Day (PLD) for Youth Engagement Team on 10.01.25</p> <p>The Chair of the Panel attended this meeting with the Youth Engagement Team, which consisted of 15 youth engagement officers, 3 team leaders and a coordination manager. There was introduction about the service, the work they undertake and some of the challenges they faced. Key information from the meeting was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance updates were held weekly by the team, and data and outcomes were captured. Quality assurance meetings were held every 2 weeks. 	<p>10.01.25</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team worked with multi-agency teams including police, schools, health, and council officers as well as youth clubs, volunteer groups and child vulnerability teams. The team also worked with charities, in particular post-18 charitable organisations, and housing. <p>The team faced challenges in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of resources and services available for young people locally, especially sports and recreation. • Assisting young people with specialist needs and the health services to address those needs. • Resources for those children who struggled with education and the need for specialist skills-based learning for them. • The gap for children once they reached 18 and the service could no longer support them, there was a need for something to bridge the gap so the support could continue. Charities were often relied upon to take on the work. • The voice of the young person was a focus, to ensure it was heard, especially in the language used with young people and their families. 	
<p>Educational Outcomes</p>	<p>Jo-Anne Sanders/Emma Brayford (key lead)</p>	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the educational outcomes of children and young people in Kirklees.</p> <p>Informal Panel Meeting on 11th October 2024</p> <p>The Panel considered an overview of the statutory outcomes achieved (attainment and progress) by learners who took assessments in Kirklees during the academic year 2023-2024. The report covered outcomes at the end of the Foundation Stage, Phonics (Year 1), Key Stage 2 (Year 6), Key Stage 4 (GCSE) and Key Stage 5 (Post-16). The results and national comparisons provided in this report were subject to validation and the report aimed to offer preliminary insights into the educational outcomes in</p>	<p>11.10.24</p>

		<p>Kirklees, pending the release of the comprehensive Kirklees Annual Educational Outcomes report.</p> <p>Elective Home Education The Panel received data provided by Jo-Anne Sanders in September 2024 on Elective Home Education (EHE), which had been shared with Ofsted during the inspection.</p> <p>The Panel will also meet with Strategic Leads early in 2025 when narrative was available for further consideration and scrutiny by the Panel.</p>	<p>Jan/Feb 25 – to be arranged</p>
<p>Partnership Arrangements</p>	<p>Vicky Metheringham/Jo-Anne Sanders/Pam Allen</p>	<p>The Panel will continue to scrutinise partnerships and boards during the 2024/25 municipal year, for example, Kirklees Parenting Board and Health and Wellbeing Board, visits to internal teams and partners and the Panel can look at how data was collected and used to improve outcomes. The Panel can be represented at meetings, events and visits to internal teams and external providers and agree to focus on the following areas:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection • Partnership working • Is the voice of the young person being heard? (as below) • Good practice • Delivery of quality service <p>The Panel have been invited to attend the Home-Start Kirklees Annual General Meeting and 25th Anniversary celebration on the 26th September 2024 where there will be a showcase of work from families, volunteers and staff.</p>	

Voice of the Young Person	Tom Brailsford/Service Directors (Children's Service)	The Panel will keep a watching brief on all areas of scrutiny by the Panel and explore whether the voice of the child was being heard, whether they are empowered to speak up and ensure that lessons have and are being learned.	
Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)	Jo-Anne Sanders/Mark Janes (Chair of SACRE)	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the work of the Kirklees Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) which includes partnership working with other regional local authorities.</p> <p>Panel meeting 4th February 2025 The Panel will consider the Annual Report from the Kirklees Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).</p>	4 th February 2025
Health Provision for Children and Young People	Jane McDonnell (Head of Health Protection in Public Health)	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the health provision for Children and Young People in Kirklees with a particular focus on dental care, babies and immunisations.</p> <p>Joint Informal meeting of the Children's Scrutiny Panel and the Health and Adult Social Care Panel - 16th January 2025) – Children's Immunisations</p> <p>The Panel attended a Joint Informal meeting of the Children's Scrutiny Panel and the Health and Adult Social Care Panel on the 16th January 2025 and received an update giving the latest children's and young people's and adults vaccinations uptake data for Kirklees and an overview of the collaborative working with partners to maximise uptake of all vaccinations; including communications and engagement work. A number of areas were focussed on by the Panel Members and questions were asked in connection with the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics of the number of healthy children admitted to hospital with Influenza before the vaccine programme was introduced and the number of pregnant women admitted with Pneumonia before the vaccine programme was introduced. 	16 th January 2025

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Locala funded for the school vaccination programme • Payment made to Locala for vaccines • Partnerships between Kirklees and the community hub co-ordinators • Could any child advocate for themselves as to whether they have a vaccine or not or if below 18 does the parent have the final say • Resources available to Members on vaccinations to share within communities and help to spread the message <p>Joint discussion at Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel on 9.4.25 - Dentistry The Panel has been invited to attend the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel on the 22nd January 2025 for a joint discussion on Dentistry. Representatives from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) will give a report on access to dentistry for Adults and Children.</p> <p>Joint discussion at Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel on 26th February 2025 – Healthy Child Programme The Panel has been invited to attend the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel on the 26th February 2025 for a joint discussion on the Healthy Child Programme as part of pre-decision scrutiny before the report is considered by Cabinet.</p> <p>Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccination Programme The Panel will have a Joint meeting with the Health and Adult Social Care Panel in 2025/26 to discuss the Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccination programme, aimed at adults over 75 and babies/pregnant women when data will be available for consideration.</p>	<p>9th April 2025</p> <p>26th February 2025</p> <p>2025/26 municipal year</p>
<p>Emotional Wellbeing Provision for children in Kirklees and Mental Health in Schools</p>	<p>Jo-Anne Sanders/Pam Allen Stewart Horn</p>	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the experience verses the provision of service and seek feedback from service users on their perception on using the service. The Panel will also consider the fluctuation in the waiting times and trends for children’s emotional health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>To be confirmed- March/April 25</p>

<p>- Keep in mind</p>		<p>Emotional Wellbeing Provision in Kirklees – “Keep in Mind” The Panel will consider an update on the implementation of the new “Keep in Mind” Service, which was launched in April 2024. The Panel will particularly focus on how the service is working in practice and this may include a visit to the service or attendance at appropriate meetings to understand how it is being implemented.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 22nd November 2024 – Performance updates Panel Members discussed the teaching of mental health strategies for young people in schools and agreed to consider a future update on the range of strategies currently being implemented and resources available within schools to provide mental health support to young people.</p> <p>Panel Members agreed that they could contribute their ideas on supporting the mental health of young people in schools to the National Curriculum and Assessment Review that was taking place nationally.</p>	
<p>Review of the Provision of Short Breaks and Respite Care for Parents and Carers</p>	<p>Jo-Anne Sanders/Pam Allen/Vicky Metheringham/Stewart Horn</p>	<p>The Panel will consider the review of the provision of short breaks and respite care for parents and carers in Kirklees.</p>	<p>To be confirmed - March/April 25</p>
<p>Review of Children’s Residential Homes and Foster Care Placements</p>	<p>Vicky Metheringham/Pam Allen/Anna Gledhill/Joel Hanna</p>	<p>The Panel will consider an update on the Review of Children’s Residential Homes and Foster Care Placements in Kirklees to ensure that children were living in the right home and environment.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 4th February 2025 The Panel will consider an update on the Review of Children’s Residential Homes and foster care placements in Kirklees.</p>	<p>4th February 2025</p>

		<p>Visit to Kirklees Fostering Network 26th September 2024 Members of the Panel attended a visit to meet with carers at the Kirklees Fostering Network meeting on the 26th September 2024 and key issues discussed at the meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Collection – performance data available at the Kirklees Parenting board did not correspond with the paper. • Shortage of Foster Carers – numbers had halved, they cited the economic climate and families being put into poverty. • Older children needing foster care, and asylum-seeking children using the service. • Partnership working • Challenges of attending PPS meetings when children cannot attend with them. • Voice of the Young Person and how it was acted on. • Cllr Kendrick held in high esteem as a source of support. • Discrepancies between what the Personal Assistants do and the support that needs to start at 15 rather than 16. • The rewarding nature of Foster Care and the support between the Foster Carers and their families. <p>Visit to Mocking Bird and Special Guardianship Orders carers and representatives The Panel will meet with appropriate representatives from the Mocking Bird Support Meeting (date to be arranged). Members of the Panel attended the Special Guardianship Order Support Group meeting and Christmas party on the 18th December 2024.</p> <p>Visit to drop-in session to celebrate National Kinship Week on 9th October 2024 The Panel were also invited to attend an informal drop-in session on Wednesday 9th October to celebrate National Kinship Week. The Connected Persons Support Team hosted the session, staff from the</p>	<p>9th October 2024</p>
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		<p>Connected Persons assessment team attended along with some of our carers from the constitution. The drop in session had been organised to improve knowledge of the Connected Persons Team (CSP). Special Guardianship Order (SGO) carers were invited, along with colleagues from other services. Feedback from the carers about the team was positive. SGO carers supported the move towards using different language, reporting how it was dehumanising to be referred to in meetings and on paper as “the Carer”. There was also a recurring theme of the discrepancy between financial support given to SGOs and Foster Carers. It was recognised by the Panel that the financial discrepancy was less than in other local authorities, but the Panel asked whether other ways of supporting these families could be looked at.</p> <p>Visit to Home-Start AGM on 26.9.24</p> <p>Members of the Panel attended the Home-Start AGM on the 26th September 2024. Home-Start were celebrating 25 years, and the meeting showcased the value of the service Home-Start provide to its service users. Background was provided into the service and the families they helped, and long service awards were presented to volunteers. A volunteer presented on the work that they do and an update on the social media platform was also given. Three service users explained how Home-Start had helped them and their children. Testimonials from service users stated that they regarded Home-Start as their second family and would not be where they were without them. Some said that Home-Start provided a lifeline for their family. The staff and volunteers were working hard to ensure the service would continue to provide and improve its offer in the future.</p>	<p>26.9.4</p>
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Updated 27.1.25

Lead Member Briefings

(Bi-monthly LM Briefings with Cabinet Members for Learning and Children's; and Strategic Director/Service Directors in Children's Services during 24/25) –
Actions from these meetings will be included within the Panel's Work Programme where appropriate

**Manchester Road – Asylum
Seekers**

The Lead Member will review any impact on Children's Service of the
housing of asylum seekers on Manchester Road.