



Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

Time and Date

3.00 pm on Thursday, 20th April, 2023

Place

Diamond Rooms 1 and 2 - Council House

Public Business

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**
2. **Declarations of Interests**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 10)
 - a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2023
 - b) Matters Arising
4. **Community Managed Libraries in Coventry** (Pages 11 - 12)

Briefing Note of the Head of Service, Libraries and Migration
5. **Delivery of the Summer Reading Challenge in Coventry** (Pages 13 - 14)

Briefing Note of the Head of Service, Libraries and Migration
6. **Autism in Schools Task and Finish Group - Interim Report** (Pages 15 - 18)

Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Coordinator
7. **Work Programme** (Pages 19 - 24)

Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator
8. **Any Other Business**

Any other items of business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

Private Business

Nil

Julie Newman, Chief Legal Officer, Council House, Coventry

Wednesday, 12 April 2023

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Usha Patel Email: usha.patel@coventry.gov.uk

Membership: Councillors F Abbott, P Akhtar, J Blundell, S Hanson, J Innes (Chair), S Keough, A Masih, K Sandhu (By Invitation), R Thay, CE Thomas, A Tucker and Vohra (Co-opted Member)

By invitation Councillor K Sandhu (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

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Usha Patel

Email: usha.patel@coventry.gov.uk

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)
held at 3.00 pm on Thursday, 16 March 2023

Present:

Members: Councillor J Innes (Chair)
Councillor P Akhtar
Councillor J Blundell
Councillor S Keough
Councillor A Masih
Councillor P Seaman
Councillor R Thay
Councillor CE Thomas

Co-Opted Members: Mrs S Hanson and Mr G Vohra

Other Members: Councillor P Seaman (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)

By invitation: David Jackson (Observer)

Employees (by Directorate):

Children's Services J Gregg, A King, R Sugars

Law and Governance G Holmes, C Taylor

Apologies: Councillors F Abbott, B Gittins (Deputy Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), K Sandhu (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills) and A Tucker

Public Business

25. Declarations of Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

26. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Minute 21 (Coventry Education Performance 2022) – Budgets had been approved in January which would be passed on to schools from April 2023.

A response had not yet been received from the Secretary of State. This would be followed up.

27. Early Years Strategy

The Board considered a briefing note of the Director of Children's Services regarding the Early Years Strategy.

In England a child's progress was reviewed between the age of 2 and 3 and again at the end of the school year in which they turn 5. The teachers judgement was used to assess the child's attainment against 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG's) covering 7 areas of learning.

Achievement of some of the 17 goals at the 'expected level', lead to a child meeting an indicator called a 'Good Level of Development (GLD)'. This was a national indicator of whether a child was ready for school, even through the assessment took place at the end of the Reception year.

In 2021, the Early Learning goals changed however, they continued to be a measure of attainment, not progress. Local Authority moderation of the data, was no longer a statutory requirement and along with the impact of Covid-19, the data for 2022 was not comparable with previous datasets.

The changes included:

- Revisions to strengthen all areas of learning with new educational programmes that set out what children must experience and learn about.
- Revisions to all 17 ELG's across the 7 areas of learning to make these more precise.
- Revised text to make it easier to understand what was required for a child to be working at the expected level of development and to link more closely with Key Stage one curriculum.
- Removal of 'exceeding' assessment band.

The school readiness local position showed that:

- Overall achievement of a Good Level of Development in Coventry was 61.2% compared to the national average of 65.2%. The higher gap to national for the area of communication and language may suggest children in Coventry had been affected by the impact of Covid-19 to a greater extent than other children nationally. Compared to the West Midlands, Children in Coventry were not achieving as well as their peers, where achievement of GLD was 63.7%.
- Data for groups showed the positive impact of approaches to 'SEND support' in the early years with outcomes were significantly above national performance. Children supported by an education and health care plan also achieved slightly above national outcomes. Those with an identified SEND need related to communication and language need, achieved above average.
- The outcomes for children looked after by the Local Authority appeared to be of significant strength however, the cohort size was small.
- Programmes of support were in place to further support disadvantaged groups and White British Boys, where outcomes were lower than national.
- Outcomes for children for whom English was not their first language, were slightly below national average.

- Appendix 1 detailed examples of activity in response to data, links to Early Years Strategy and new opportunities to continue to improve School Readiness.

The Coventry Early Years Strategy: Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day, developed in November 2020 was built around the Marmot Review Priority Objectives for 2020. Extracts from the Leadsom Report 2021 were also incorporated into the Strategy which was then published in September 2021 alongside 4 Service Area plans. Revised mapping of available services and support for children and families from birth to 5 years was completed across the city. In March 2022 a review of progress was undertaken and over the last 9 months, delivery of actions had continued the next step being to monitor progress more closely and implement outcomes.

Coventry's Marmot Action Plan was being refreshed to address potentially widening health inequalities as part of Coventry's post Covid-19 recovery and work was taking place with partners to collate programmes of work and activities. On behalf of the Marmot Partnership, the Public Health Inequalities team were working in partnership with the Senior Adviser for Early Years and partners to capture the work to reduce health inequalities. By February 2023, a final draft of the Marmot action plan would be presented to the Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Over the past 5 years, the number of Early Years and Reception Year children with additional needs had increased significantly. This was partly due to the impact of Covid-19. The Saplings Programme complemented the existing SEND provision by enhancing the local offer to children who needed extra help during their Reception Year and these children spend part of their time learning in the Saplings Base at Little Heath Primary School.

In Autumn term 2022, 33 children were referred to the programme, 18 of which were identified as appropriate for the intervention. These children came from 15 different schools, between 1 and 6 miles from the Saplings Base.

The Members asked questions and received responses on a number of matters including:

- Work undertaken through the strategy on social interaction and language development to assist the increasing number of children with SEN.
- Rolling out the '50 things' app to ensure a robust universal offer including interactions with family hubs and outreach locations, upskilling practitioners and training a further 20 staff in Portage (pre SEN support).
- Impact of the Saplings Programme and regular evaluation of the programme.
- The impact of Covid leaving a legacy of children impacted by family trauma and adverse childhood experiences affecting emotional and social wellbeing.
- Training and workforce development. With the Early Years sector, staff turnover was high. There was a focus on quality and building sufficiency.
- Children being taught to use technology and internet safety within the Early Years curriculum.

- Early Years staff training was rolled out face to face, hybrid, online and via webinars. Designated Safeguarding Lead training had traditionally been face to face however, was currently online due to supply staff shortages.
- The issue of white British boys underachieving and programmes of support being in place.
- The Best Start in Life Programme.
- Internal data on children who had not been to school or had fallen behind was used to target resources effectively.

The Board recognised, commended and thanked officers for the work they continued to do in challenging circumstances to improve the education outcomes for the children of Coventry.

RESOLVED that the Board:

- 1. Note the 2022 dataset for pupils aged 5 in Coventry schools**
- 2. Note the progress of the Early Years Strategy, within the context of Covid-19 and be aware of new opportunities to address identified concerns related to school readiness.**
- 3. Note the progress in relation to the Marmot Review and initiation of the Saplings Programme.**
- 4. Requests a report to be brought back to SB2 in the 2023/24 Municipal Year regarding the Best Start in Life Programme and the Early years Saplings Programme be added to the Work Programme in 2023/24.**

28. Children's Services Development Plan (Ofsted actions)

The Board considered a briefing note of the Director of Children's Services regarding Children's Services Ofsted Areas for Development Action Plan Progress.

Children's Services were re-inspected by Ofsted from 13 June – 1 July 2022. The report was published on 12 August 2022 and the overall judgement for Children's Services in Coventry was 'Good'.

The Ofsted inspection report identified 4 areas for further development:

- The focus on children's views and carers capacity to meet children's needs in private fostering arrangements
- The response to children aged 16 and 17 who are homeless
- The mental and emotional wellbeing provision for care leavers
- The quality of team managers supervision provided to social workers

A Children's Services Areas for Development Action Plan had been developed in response to the Ofsted recommendations and areas for development and submitted to Ofsted on 18 November 2023.

Progress against the Children's Services Areas for Development Action Plan was as follows:

Recommendation 1 – the focus on children’s views and carers capacity to meet children’s needs in private fostering arrangements.

A Private Fostering Action Plan was developed and provided to Ofsted. Progress against actions was monitored monthly.

Two Lead IRO roles had been identified for children who were privately fostered to provide quality assurance around their care arrangements and ensure that their voices and wishes were heard and considered. As the Private Fostered children were allocated to an IRO, a system was in place to raise any significant concerns in advance.

Recommendation 2 – the response to children aged 16 and 17 who are homeless.

A quality assurance process was undertaken to review and improve the response and practice for 16/17 year olds presenting as homeless. The process had been incorporated into the Children’s Services Quality Assurance Framework to monitor on a regular basis.

A Youth Hub in the city for young homeless people had been developed to provide a welcoming safe accessible environment to access support, information and guidance. The project would go live in April 2023.

Recommendation 3 – the mental and emotional wellbeing provision for care leavers

An initial review of LAC CAMHS service had been undertaken to identify what worked and any gaps in service. The service had been redesigned and would be recommissioned by April 2023.

The funding pathway CAMHS service development for 18-25 years had been identified.

The Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Support service for up to 25 year old care leavers tender for Tier 2 had been awarded and went live in December 2022.

A pilot called ‘Ask Jan’ (a 24/7 telephone counselling and support service for care leavers) was undertaken, with a cohort of care leavers to assess impact and effectiveness which was progressing forward and would be evaluated.

Recommendation 4 – the quality of team managers supervision provided to social workers

Managers had completed a dip sampling exercise of supervision records. This information was being collated and analysed with findings to report tracking distance travelled and was completed in February 2023.

A range of leadership programmes had been offered to Managers including a bespoke Black Asian Leadership programme, planned for spring 2023.

The recording guidance relating to supervision and management oversight which enabled managers to capture reflective supervision in recording and drive progress in children's plans through supervision was being embedded within the service in line with Coventry Family Valued.

A range of focus groups were held in February to help managers see how they could support sustainability and embedding of the 'method and mindset model'.

The progress against the Areas for Development Action Plan would be monitored on a quarterly basis.

The Members asked questions and received responses on a number of matters including:

- An outstanding result could be achieved by delivering on the 4 areas outlined as recommendations in the Action Plan and also on the following:
 - Stabilise the workforce, recruit social workers and minimise end of use agency staff
 - Strengthen performance measures post Inspection
 - Delivery the family valued programme
 - Deliver the Ofsted Action Plan
 - Develop an extra mile offer
 - Continue to deliver an accurate self-assessment
 - Finalise the Strategic Plan, stretch targets and aspirations
 - Strengthen the impact of interventions
- Staffing recruitment and retention was challenging, particularly recruitment of experienced social workers.
- A Memorandum of Understanding was in place which did not allow social workers who moved to work for an agency, to then work for a Local Authority for at least a 6 month period.
- An increase in demand for staffing continued due to the increase in cases.
- Staff wellbeing weeks to increase motivation, mindset and welfare had been and would continue to be rolled out.
- The design of a multi-agency social worker team to provide a wrap-around service for families was not currently possible due to lack of funding
- The fostering team were proactive in matching children with families according to risk and need, including culture, ethnicity, community, religion and faith.
- The Social Worker Academy had made good progress to encourage social workers with ethnic and minority backgrounds. Universities had taken positive action to recruit from minority and ethnic groups and there had been significant interest from abroad.
- 87% of social workers were female.
- Private fostering was publicised each year by law. Communication material could be found in GP surgeries and schools.

In response to the questions, officers undertook to circulate the following information to the Board:

- The staff wellbeing programme.

- The breakdown of ethnic minority children known to Children's Services at the time of the Ofsted Inspection and the diversity and ethnicity of social workers.
- Communication materials regarding private fostering.

Officers agreed to provide help and assistance with the paperwork for ethnic minority fosterers on a case-by-case basis.

The Board thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their work on the Children's Services Development Plan.

RESOLVED that the Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2)

- 1. Notes the progress against the Ofsted recommendations highlighted in the Ofsted Areas for Development Action Plan.**
- 2. Includes Fostering and the Family Values Project (including the Reunification Project) on the Work Programme for 2023/24.**

29. Work Programme and Outstanding Issues

The Board noted the work programme and agreed the inclusion of the items below on the 2023/24 work programme.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board (2) notes the Work Programme and includes the following on the 2023/24 Work Programme:

- **Best Start in life Programme**
- **Early Years Saplings Programme**
- **Fostering**
- **Family Values Project (including Reunification Project)**

30. Any Other Business

The Board noted the Youth Justice System Ofsted result of Outstanding.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board (2) send a letter of congratulation to Councillor P Seaman and J Gregg and their team for the Youth Justice System Ofsted result of Outstanding.

(Meeting closed at 5.00 pm)

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Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

Date: 20th April, 2023.

Subject: Community Managed Libraries in Coventry

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 The purpose of this Briefing Note is to provide the Scrutiny Board with some brief background information on the development of community managed libraries in the city, and to introduce the item on the Board's agenda for this meeting.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board are recommended to note this report, and to provide any recommendations following the discussion with representatives attending the meeting to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 The City Council introduced the Connecting Communities programme in 2015/16 and this included a range of changes to Library Services along with changes to various other Council services based in localities. One of the key aspects of the libraries' elements of the Connecting Communities programme was the clear intention of the Council to try wherever possible to avoid libraries closing permanently to local communities. The creation of three community managed libraries was a key part of the successful delivery of this intention.
- 3.2 As the Council worked on the implementation of the Connecting Communities programme officers reviewed the pattern of approaches taken by other local authorities who had also attempted similar exercises in protecting much valued community assets whilst reducing budgets in response to wider financial challenges. It became clear to both officers and various interested parties, that the key issue in successfully delivering community managed libraries was the strength of the organisations and the maintenance of some support to these organisations post library transfer.
- 3.3 During the course of 2018/19 the Council successfully managed the transfer of management of the following three former Council libraries:
- Cheylesmore Library – transferred to Cheylesmore Community Centre
 - Earlsdon Library – transferred to Earlsdon Carnegie Community Library (ECCL)
 - Finham Library – transferred to Finham Library Action Group (FLAG)
- 3.4 The transfers were delivered in a managed way with considerable dialogue between the Council and the new community organisations. Many different Council services were involved and each library transfer followed a slightly different path, but in particular the Library Service maintained very close liaison with the new partners with strong relationships being maintained to the time of this note being prepared.
- 3.5 Whilst each of the different libraries are quite different the Council has worked in partnership to ensure that each library continues to offer:

- Free Internet / PC access to Coventry residents through open access PCs (and e-books / e-audiobooks) provided by the Council (and supported by CCC ICT), plus online resources.
- A limited range of both children and adults Library Service book stock to any local resident who is a member of the Library Service, and access the wider stock via reservations etc. Often this stock is supplemented by the different partners own stock.
- Provision for printing / scanning etc at reasonable cost to local residents.

3.6 Each of the three community managed libraries have developed in interesting and innovative ways. Representatives of each of the libraries will be present at the meeting and will share with members both the successes and challenges of their time providing these much valued community resources. Key things the Board should be aware of are:

- **Cheylesmore Library (<https://cheylesmorecentre.co.uk/>)**

Cheylesmore library is now fully integrated into the Cheylesmore Community Centre, with a distinct group of volunteers who work with the Centre to ensure that Cheylesmore residents continue to have access to library services. The Council provided a transition grant to support building work to facilitate better access to the library and create more flexibility in the use of bookable space in the Centre. The Centre building is held on a lease by the Community Association from the Council.

- **Earlsdon Library (<https://earlsdonlibrary.org.uk/>)**

The grant provided to support the transition of Earlsdon library has resulted in an impressive re-configuration of a large section of the space to create a multi-use area facilitating events and other related activities. The library has a large cohort of volunteers which has needed to be constantly refreshed and has good connections into the Earlsdon community. The library is currently held on a short term lease by ECCL from the Council.

- **Finham Library (<https://www.finhamlibrary.uk/>)**

The development of Finham Library has been positively supported by the local community in the Finham area with FLAG choosing to use the transition grant to create a Community Library and Café on the Green. The range of events and activities taking place at the venue are focused on the demographics of the Finham community. The library building is held by FLAG on a lease from the Council.

3.7 The Library Service continue to provide mainly remote support to the three partners. A Library Development Manager arranges to visit roughly quarterly and refresh the book stock and discuss any local issues. Each library has a 'buddy' library who are able to respond to calls and enquiries, particularly regarding the computer systems used to lend Council books. The recent change in Library Management System resulted in all volunteers having training cascaded though. The Council still provide support (particularly to Earlsdon and Finham Libraries) through Property Services, although the community organisations have taken on aspects of the running costs over the time since transfer.

Name – Peter Barnett

Job Title – Head of Service Libraries and Migration.

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Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

Date: 20th April, 2023.

Subject: Delivery of the Summer Reading Challenge in Coventry

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 The purpose of this Briefing Note is to introduce the Scrutiny Board to the Summer Reading Challenge, share some information regarding this year's activities and introduce the item on the Board's agenda for this meeting.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board are recommended to note this report, and to provide any recommendations following the discussion with Library Service officers to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 The Reading Agency is a national charity whose main purpose is to support the promotion of reading as an activity to promote good health and wellbeing, and support people to tackle life's big challenges. For many years the Reading Agency's flagship project for children has been the Summer Reading Challenge (SRC).
- 3.2 SRC is delivered in partnership with public libraries, with the very vast majority of library services taking part to some extent. The programme is intended to act as a bridge for reading and learning across the main school holidays. The idea is that for children who maintain active reading over the holiday, their minds will remain active, they will be updating or improving their reading skills and will arrive better prepared for the new school year in September.
- 3.3 Each year there is a distinctive theme to the SRC designed by the Reading Agency, and this year the theme is "Ready, Set, Read!". The Reading Agency has teamed up with the Youth Sport Trust to design a challenge which "aims to keep children's minds and bodies active over the summer break, empowering young people to forge new connections with others and unleash the power of play, sport and physical activity through learning."
- 3.4 Children will be encouraged to make regular visits to their local library, register for the SRC, read 6 books from the carefully selected booklist and perform a series of activities to earn rewards (stickers, activity cards etc) eventually becoming a 'completer' and being rewarded with a medal. The objective is to "keep imaginations moving across the school holidays" and by participating children will have the opportunity to try new and exciting books, develop some new skills and hopefully find new interests which they can continue after completion of the SRC.
- 3.5 The SRC theme for 2022 was "Gadgeteers" which had a set of resources and characters, brought to life by children's writer and illustrator Julian Beresford, which helped children use their curiosity and wonder to understand the science behind a whole range of interests from fashion and technology to cooking and music. To support the 2022 SRC the Reading Agency made small grants available to library services to improve access and widen participation.

- 3.6 In Coventry we were successful in receiving some additional resources from the Reading Agency to facilitate a pilot project with a small number of Coventry schools. The Library Service approached 7 local schools and an officer was assigned to each to build a relationship with the school, either focusing on year 3 or year 1. The children all were offered a 'pilot scheme pack' which the officer offered to distribute to them. The aim was that we would visit the children in class a few times during June/July and that they visit their local library in the run up to the SRC.
- 3.7 The schools were chosen on a targeted basis working with Schools Improvement and Literacy Co-ordinators. Library managers found that they had to adapt their plans to fit the needs and capacity of the school staff. Some schools were difficult to communicate with, but others were very supportive, and staff noted new children visiting and joining the library and participating in the SRC.
- 3.8 Overall, both in Coventry and elsewhere numbers of children completing the SRC has fallen in recent years. Whilst in the mid-2010s Coventry would have 3,000+ children take part with more than half 'completing' the challenge, recent numbers are smaller with around 1700 children taking some part and around 800 completers. Factors influencing this include:
- Move to community managed libraries with some choosing not to take part.
 - Children's tastes change and the appeal of stickers etc change, more resources are now digital, including registration but there is a disconnect.
 - In previous years we had Young People acting as volunteers which due to pressure on staff time has not been continued.
 - Covid continued to be a factor last year.
 - Lifestyle factors and changing patterns of geographical movement of families during the summer holidays.
- 3.9 Whilst every participating authority is required to utilise the 'core package' of stickers / bookmarks etc, additional incentives are optional. This year Coventry Libraries will include prizes of children's footballs, rugby balls, perforated balls (for indoor use), throwing rings, hula hoops etc to build on a theme of getting active and continuing to participate in sports and physical activity. We will be working on cross-marketing with CVLife to encourage participation and will also be encouraging participation in online activities.
- 3.10 Total spending on the SRC is anticipated to be around £ 3,250 for the core materials, plus c £1,200 for the additional prizes / encouragements.
- 3.11 Further information regarding this years SRC and associated content can be found at:
www.sumerreadingchallenge.org.uk

Name: Peter Barnett
Job Title: Head of Service Libraries and Migration
Contact Details



Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

Date: 20 April 2023

Subject: Autism in Schools Task and Finish Group – interim report

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) of the work progressed by the task and finish group established from members of the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) and the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) to consider issues around the support for children and young people and their families, who are waiting for an autism assessment, or have been diagnosed with autism in school settings.
- 1.2 Throughout this report, we will use the word **autism** and identity-first terminology ("**autistic people**" rather than "people with autism") when referring to autistic people - children, young people and adults.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:
 - 1) Note the progress made by the task and finish group
 - 2) Support the continuation of the task and finish group during the 2023/24 municipal year
 - 3) Thank Councillor Joe Clifford for his contribution to the work of the task and finish group

3 Background and Information

- 3.1 In the 2021-22 municipal year, the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) ran a task and finish group to look at support for children and young people, and their families, who had been referred for an autism assessment. One of the recommendations was that the Education and Children's Service Scrutiny Board undertake a task and finish group during the 2022-23 municipal year to look at the in-depth challenges facing schools in providing support to children, young people and their families who are on the autism assessment pathway.
- 3.2 There were a number of recommendations from the initial task and finish group. A progress report was received by the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board at their meeting on the 7th December 2022. Members of the task and finish group were also invited to attend.

4 Task and Finish Group Membership

- 4.1 The Task and Finish Group membership is Cllr Ali, Cllr Blundell, Cllr Brown, Cllr Clifford, Cllr Innes (Chair), Cllr Masih, and Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Co-optee, Sybil Hanson.
- 4.2 Officers from Coventry Council Education Services attended meetings to provide evidence including service overviews of the Complex Communications Team, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information Advice Service, and Educational Psychology.
- 4.3 Members of the task and finish group also visited three Coventry schools and the group would like to extend their thanks to the teachers and pupils who made this possible.
- 4.4 A summary of the work of the task and finish group during 2022-23 is outlined in sections 5 and 6.

5 Services Offering Support in Education Settings

- 5.1 Members were briefed in detail on the support to children, families and schools provided through the Council's Education Services.
- 5.2 The SEND Information and Advice Service provides impartial information, advice and support for parents and young people. They offer group sessions on Autism which are well attended. A large proportion of their contacts are in relation to Autism. The service is a statutory requirement and maintains an impartial relationship with service users and the Council.
- 5.3 The Education Psychology service provides both a statutory and traded service to the LA and education providers across the City. The service has the capacity to respond to current demand and therefore does not operate a central waiting list. Schools and services are able to identify children requiring assessment, support and intervention without a requirement for a health referral.
- 5.4 Demand for the service is high. This is set against a national recruitment and retention challenge. Whilst training placement are available, qualification follows a 3 year post graduate doctoral programme.
- 5.5 The Complex Communication Team (CCT) is also a traded service with over 90% of Coventry schools subscribing to the offer. The service provides advice, assessment and training targeted at children with or without a diagnosis of autism. The main aim of the service is to support children to access the curriculum and progress academically, by creating an appropriate environment and reducing anxiety and distraction through a trained workforce.

6 School Visits

- 6.1 Members of the T&F group visited three schools, to experience at first hand the support offered to children with additional needs. One of these was a special school, specifically for autistic children, one had a specialist unit within a mainstream primary school and the third was a mainstream primary school exemplifying best inclusive practice.
- 6.2 Members were able to talk to staff at the school, as well as talk to pupils and observe the settings in practice.
- 6.3 As a consequence of these visits, Members requested an extension of the task and finish group to allow them to engage with parents/carers, children, and young

people, as well as visit a wider range of school settings. To enable this to happen effectively and sensitively requires the work of the task and finish group to extend beyond this municipal year.

7 Emerging Themes and Areas for Further Exploration

7.1 There are several themes and areas for further exploration that have been identified through the work of the task and finish group:

- The need for clearer referral pathways for parents.
- Support for all schools to deliver best practice across the city
- Provision in Secondary schools and strong transition from Primary
- The views of parents and carers, and children and young people

7.2 These issues will be considered in more detail through work in 2023-24

8 Health Inequalities Impact

8.1 The following paragraph from the Coventry and Warwickshire All Age Autism Strategy outlines some of the health inequalities experienced by autistic people

8.2 *“The difficulties autistic people experience with communication, interaction, and social imagination lead to inequalities in health, education and social outcomes for autistic people compared to non-autistic groups for almost all conditions studied. This includes mortality, obesity, smoking, bullying, social isolation, education, criminal justice, employment, and homelessness. 80% of autistic adults and 70% of autistic children will experience mental health conditions including anxiety and depression, leading to higher rates of self-harm, suicide, and admissions to mental health hospital. In Coventry, the largest proportion of children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans have a primary need of Autism.”*

Gennie Holmes
Scrutiny Co-ordinator
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Agenda Item 7

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Work Programme 2022-23

Last updated 11/4/23

Please see page 2 onwards for background to items

21st July 2022
Overview of Education and Children's Services Work Programme 2022-23
22nd September 2022 (cancelled) 20th October 2022
Children's Service Ofsted outcome Co-option of Other Faiths Representative to the Board
8th December 2022
The House Project Cost of the School Day Project – include FSM
9th February 2023 (moved from 2nd)
Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Report School Performance Information Early Years Strategy - deferred
16th March 2023
Children's Services Development Plan (Ofsted actions) Early Years Strategy
20th April 2023
Community Library provision Summer Reading Scheme Interim Report - Task and Finish Group – Autism in Schools
Items for 2023-24
Family Valued Programme – including Reunification Project Family Health and Lifestyles Service – health inequalities Social Worker recruitment and retention Post-16 provision in the city Youth Provision in Coventry SEND, employment and post-16 opportunities Outdoor Education Attendance Behaviour and Exclusions Duties (September 2023) Coventry Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Report Ofsted Inspection Framework – including SEND Best Start in Life Programme Fostering Saplings Programme Cost of Children's Placements
Items taken for information
Adoption and Fostering Service Annual Reports Holiday Activity Fund

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Work Programme 2022-23

Page 20

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
21st July 2022	Overview of Education and Children's Services	An opportunity to consider and identify items for the work programme for the year	John Gregg/Kirston Nelson Cllr Sandhu and Seaman
	Work Programme 2022-23		
22nd September 2022 (cancelled)			
20th October 2022	Children's Service Ofsted outcome	To consider the outcome of the recent Ofsted inspection, the self-assessment framework and associated action plan	Cllr Seaman John Gregg
	Co-option of Other Faiths Representative to the Board	To appoint a representative of "other faiths" as laid out in section 2D paragraph 6.1(e) of the constitution	Gennie Holmes
8th December 2022	The House Project	To look in more detail at the House Project to look at how it is improving outcomes for looked after young people – wider discussion on support for care leavers.	Cllr Seaman John Gregg
	Cost of the School Day Project – include FSM	Research done by the Child Poverty Action group which Coventry has participated in. Recommendations in the report are aimed at central government but the Board could consider to what extent this is an issue in the city and whether there are any steps that could be taken locally to address the issues	Cllr Sandhu Kirston Nelson Rachael Sugars
9th February 2023 (moved from 2nd)	Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Report	To consider the Children's Safeguarding Board annual report, including progress on recommendations following serious case reviews and safeguarding practice reviews	
	School Performance Information	To consider the validated data on school performance	Kirston Nelson Cllr Sandhu

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Work Programme 2022-23

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	Early Years Strategy - deferred	A follow up item to the item from December 2021 – to include the potential increase in Reception numbers in September 2022 who aren't "school ready"	Rachael Sugars Cllr Sandhu
16th March 2023	Children's Services Development Plan (Ofsted actions)	To monitor progress on the actions to address the 4 areas of improvement highlighted in the Ofsted Report – Private fostering, LAC CAMHS, Care leavers at risk of homelessness and supervision of social workers.	John Gregg Cllr Seaman
	Early Years Strategy	A follow up item to the item from December 2021 – to include the potential increase in Reception numbers in September 2022 who aren't "school ready"	Rachael Sugars Cllr Sandhu
20th April 2023	Community Library provision	With particular reference to those now being delivered with/by volunteers e.g. Earlsdon	Peter Barnett Cllr Sandhu
	Summer Reading Scheme	To consider the impact of the summer reading scheme, particularly in areas of disadvantage	Peter Barnett Cllr Sandhu
	Interim Report - Task and Finish Group – Autism in Schools	Following a T&F group led by SB5, it was agreed that SB2 would undertake a T&F on the in-depth challenges facing schools in providing support to children, young people and their families who are on the autism assessment pathway.	Jeannette Essex Cllr Sandhu
Items for 2023-24	Family Valued Programme – including Reunification Project	To consider progress and impact on families of the programme, including the Reunification Project	John Gregg Cllr Seaman
	Family Health and Lifestyles Service – health inequalities	To looking in more detail at how the service is tackling health inequalities and targeting services at those in need on a localised basis.	Harbir Nagra Cllr Caan
	Social Worker recruitment and retention	To consider potential financial incentives as a T&F with SB1	John Gregg Cllr Seaman
	Post-16 provision in the city	An item referred from Scruco to consider the range and quality of FE provision across the city, including apprenticeships but to also include work-based learning in schools.	Kirston Nelson Cllr Sandhu

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	Youth Provision in Coventry	How and where we work with outside partners (and specifically the third sector) to deliver it	John Gregg Cllr Seaman
	SEND, employment and post-16 opportunities	To consider how children with SEND are supported to access employment and training opportunities post 16, including information about the supported internship programme	Kirston Nelson Cllr Sandhu
	Outdoor Education	To look at outdoor education provision in Coventry	Kirston Nelson Cllr Sandhu
	Attendance Behaviour and Exclusions Duties (September 2023)	To consider the implementation of the new duties around attendance, Behaviour and Exclusions	Kirston Nelson Cllr Sandhu
	Coventry Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Report	To include picking up the actions requested by the Board – widening work with faith groups, EDI strategy and work with children and young people	Rebekah Eaves Cllr Seaman John Gregg
	Ofsted Inspection Framework – including SEND		
	Best Start in Life Programme	Members requested a report on this programme as part of improving services	
	Fostering	Members requested a more in-depth report on Fostering, including recruiting and supporting foster carers from minority communities	
	Saplings Programme	Following a report on the Early Years Strategy, Members requested a further item including progress on and more detail on the Saplings Programme	
	Cost of Children's Placements	Referred from Scruco to consider the financial pressures caused by the high cost of children's placements	John Gregg Cllr Seaman
Items taken for information	Adoption and Fostering Service Annual Reports	Annual report – including information about the diversity of the adoption panel and adopters as well as support to birth mothers after their children have been adopted	Cllr Seaman
	Holiday Activity Fund	A delivery progress report	Adrian Coles

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Work Programme 2022-23

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
			Cllr Sandhu

Work Programme Decision Flow Chart

