

Report to:	RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Diane Booth, Director of Childrens Services
Date of Meeting:	7 September 2017

CHILDREN'S SERVICES UPDATE REPORT

1.1 To inform the Scrutiny Committee of the work undertaken by Children's Services on a day to day basis and to update on the progress and implementation of developments within the areas.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1
- To note the contents of the report and to ensure that current work continues to meet statutory obligations and that work to prepare for external inspections continues.
 - To continue to meet statutory monitoring, challenge and support obligations.
 - To identify any further information and actions required.
 - To highlight areas of concern and proposed remedial action.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 For Members of the Scrutiny Committee to be fully informed as to the day to day work of the Children's Services Directorate and have assurance that Blackpool is continuing to meet its statutory obligations for future inspection requirements. The Local Authority remains and retains a statutory responsibility to monitor all schools in order to support improvement and raise the attainment and progress for all children in the Local Authority Area.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options considered:

Services are subject to national and statutory frameworks.

4.0 Council Priority:

- 4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Blackpool Young People's Service

- 5.1.1 The new Blackpool Young People's Service went live on 3 July 2017, with an all-new set of assessment, planning, intervention and review processes and case management system in place as planned. Working together by drawing on existing skills in new ways is proving challenging and enjoyable for staff working together from our main base at Market Street, which is generating lots of learning and further questions to be answered along the way to strengthen and embed the structure as designed by the Change Team, which is operating as it was envisaged and designed to do.

5.2 Review of high needs provision

- 5.2.1 The Council has appointed a consultant company to carry out a review of high needs provision in the town, they are called 'Premier Advisory Service'. They are being tasked with reviewing the current Special Educational Needs and Disability provision in the local area and to make recommendations for improvements and cost effectiveness. The Council is using the £57,000 we were given by the Department for Education to do this task (this is a national thing and all Local Authorities are doing this). The Council anticipates the consultant review costing £25,000 and we will use the remainder of the £57,000 to support implementing any changes required.

5.3 Social, Emotional and Mental Health Free School

- 5.3.1 The Council is advertising for proposer to express an interest in running the school. This is being supported by the Department for Education and Free Schools Network and the advert will run until 24 November 2017. The Department for Education will cover the costs of the building but have now said we will have to project manage the build. It is anticipated we will look for the Local Education Partnerships to support this project and we are still in discussion with the Department for Education to show the building development will work.

5.4 Edge of Exclusion Project

- 5.4.1 The Virtual School and Head Start have come together to develop the Edge of Exclusion Project. Our Children from 10-16 who are in danger of being excluded from mainstream education can have access to a resilience coach. Referrals are made by schools and social workers and are considered at a Panel. The panel has met twice and six young people have been assigned resilience coaches.

5.5 Ofsted Inspection Gradings

- 5.5.1 Attached at Appendices 5a and 5b are the Ofsted inspection gradings and change identified to drive improvement in our nursery and child minder settings and primary and secondary schools.

5.6 Unvalidated School Results

- 5.6.1 All data outcomes are unvalidated and a more detailed breakdown will be provided in September 2017.

Early Years:

This is measured on Good Level of Development (GLD).

In 2017, 66.9% of Blackpool children reached Good Level of Development, compared to 64% in 2016

In 2017, 70.7% of children nationally reached Good Level of Development, compared to 69% in 2016.

This means that Blackpool has improved at a better rate than national.

Year 1 Phonics:

In 2017, 81.3% of Blackpool children reached the required level in phonics compared to 80% in 2016.

In 2017, 81.3% of children nationally reached the expected level in phonics, compared to 81% in 2016.

This means that Blackpool pupils have now overtaken the national percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in Year 1 Phonics.

Year 2 Outcomes:

In 2017, 75.2% of pupils reached the expected standard in reading compared to 74% in 2016 and 75.6% nationally.

In 2017, 22.2% of pupils reached the **Greater** Depth Level in reading compared to 22% in 2016 and 25.2% nationally

This means that there is an improvement in reading at the expected level and Blackpool is roughly in line with national. At the higher level Blackpool pupils are below national.

In 2017, 67.5% of pupils reached the expected standard in writing compared to 66% in 2016 and 68.3% nationally.

In 2017, 11.3% of pupils reached the Greater Depth Level in writing compared to 12% in 2016 and 15.6% nationally.

This means that at the higher levels in writing Blackpool has dropped since 2016 and is below national.

In 2017, 75.7% of pupils reached the expected standard in maths compared to 74% in 2016 and 75.2% nationally.

In 2017, 18.8% pupils reached the Greater Depth Level compared to 18% in 2016 and 20.5% nationally.

This means that although Blackpool pupils attain higher than national pupils at the expected levels they are below national in the higher levels. Blackpool pupils have also made less improvement since 2016 than national pupils.

Key Stage 2 Outcomes:

In 2017, 61.5% of pupils reached the expected standard in Reading, writing and maths combined compared to 47.5% in 2016 and 61.1% nationally.

This means that Blackpool has increased significantly in this measure and has moved from 5.8% below average in 2016 to 0.4% above average in 2017. This increase is largely due to the increase in reading, as below:

In 2017, 71.2% of pupils reached the expected standard in reading compared to 59.8% in 2016 and 71.5% nationally.

In 2017, 76.3% of pupils reached the expected standard in writing compared to 76.1% in 2016 and 76.4% nationally.

In 2017, 77.4% of pupils reached the expected standard in maths compared to 68.5% in 2016 and 74.9% nationally.

In 2017, 7.3% of pupils reached the higher levels of combined reading, writing and maths compared to 3% in 2016 and 8.7% nationally. Increases in reading, writing and maths at the higher levels have been made since 2016 and at a greater rate than national apart from writing.

This means that Blackpool pupils are above national pupils for the expected level in maths and have increased at a greater rate.

Progress in reading at the expected standard reached 56.8% compared to 51.1% in 2016 and 51.1% nationally.

Progress in writing at the expected standard reached in 61.2% compared to 69.1% in 2016 and 51.9% nationally.

Progress in maths reached 62.2% compared to 57.8% in 2016 and 50.3% nationally.

This means that although the percentage in progress in maths at expected has decreased in maths, Blackpool has increased.

Overall, some schools have declined in terms of progress, whilst other schools, e.g. Stanley (reading), Our Lady's (Maths), Revoe (reading) have improved.

5.7 School Admission Appeals

- 5.7.1 Following the allocation of places for primary and secondary schools, parents have the right to appeal the decision. Independent admission appeal panels make legally binding decisions in relation to appeals and individual admission authorities do not participate in this decision-making process. The Council's Democratic Governance team administers the independent appeals process on behalf of the Academy, Community and Voluntary Aided (Faith schools) sectors.
- 5.7.2 For the September 2017 intake, the Panels heard a total of 61 appeals in respect of schools in Blackpool. All of these appeals were in respect of Academy schools. Details and the outcome are as follows:
- Primary (Reception Year): 23 appeals over nine schools, 0 not allowed
 - Secondary (Year 7): 38 appeals over 3 schools, 19 allowed and 19 not allowed
 - Total: 19 out of 61 appeals allowed – 31.1%.
- 5.7.3 The Appeals Panel must first consider if the Admission Arrangements for the school are lawful and have been applied correctly and then balance the school's needs with that of the appellant. In all cases the Panel agreed that the Admission Arrangements for the school were lawful and applied. There is the possibility of further appeal to the Education Funding Agency for appellants who remain dissatisfied with the process to date none have been received.

Demand Management/Early Help Thresholds

- 5.8 From 1 September 2017 a revised agreed multi-agency continuum of need and guidance will come into effect. Partners are expected to complete early help assessments early in the emergence of identification of additional needs to prevent escalation and the need for statutory intervention. Over 500 managers and practitioners have been briefed. Audit activity will take place in the late autumn period to measure success.
- 5.8.1
- See attached at appendix 5c the Priority 2 Board plan. The plan shows a range of ongoing work aimed at managing thresholds, driving demand at the right level and reducing cost. Partners are engaged in a full review of the journey of the child and focus will be on early help, early in the emergence of a problem and at a neighbourhood level. All of which will be supported by Opportunity Area activity.
- 5.8.2
- Much of the work is focusing on skill development, change of behaviours, building resilience and the right child and young people being supported by statutory services only when necessary.
- 5.8.3

5.9 Improvement Plan

- 5.9.1 The twelve week plan focuses on back to basics and readiness for inspection and is closely linked to the work of the demand plan. An improvement board has been established.

5.10 Opportunity Area

- 5.10.1 **National announcements:** Under the umbrella of the Careers and Enterprise Company, leading UK businesses and business groups have backed a commitment to help the social mobility of young people in the 12 Opportunity Areas including Blackpool. Sir Kevan Collins, Chief Executive of the Education Endowment Foundation, will become the evidence champion for the Opportunity Areas. St Mary's Catholic Academy has been named as one of 11 new Research Schools by the Secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening.
- 5.10.2 **Local update:** Membership of the Partnership Board has been extended to now include Merle Davies, Director of the Centre for Early Child Development (Better Start). A process is underway to also identify school and voluntary sector representation. The governance has also been closely aligned with the Blackpool School Improvement Board to ensure a coherent approach in the work with schools.
- 5.10.3 A further wider partnership meeting was held on 19 July 2017 to share the latest version of the draft delivery plan following initial consultation with the wider partnership group in March 2017. Additional feedback was received on the key priorities, performance measures and youth consultation. The Draft Delivery Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Education in September 2017 for sign off.

5.11 Neglect

- 5.11.1 Attached at appendix 5d is the Blackpool Safeguarding Children's Board report highlighting our multi-agency response to neglect.

5.12 Compliments

- 5.12.1 The lessons relating to latest feedback reports for children services are closely linked with the ongoing demand and improvement plan being related to lack of skill, impact of workload and turnover of staff. All workers have been briefed re the importance of reliable communication and the need to inform our service users of any changes as soon as possible. Positively in recent weeks, I have heard and been sent lovely compliments about some of the work of the teams.

6.0 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

Appendix 5(a): Ofsted Inspection Gradings – Nursery Settings and Child Minders

Appendix 5(b): Ofsted Inspection Gradings – Primary and Secondary Schools

Appendix 5(c): Demand Plan (Priority 2 Board)

Appendix 5(d): Neglect Report.

8.0 Legal considerations:

8.1 None

9.0 Human Resources considerations:

9.1 None

10.0 Equalities considerations:

10.1 None

11.0 Financial considerations:

11.1 None

12.0 Risk management considerations:

12.1 None

13.0 Ethical considerations:

13.1 None

14.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

14.1 None

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 None