

**MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING -  
THURSDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2022**

**Present:**

Councillor Stansfield (in the Chair)

Councillors

Burdess	Hunter	M Mitchell
Critchley	B Mitchell	R Scott

Ms Gemma Clayton, Parent Governor Co-opted Member

**In Attendance:**

Councillor Jim Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Schools  
Councillor Maxine Callow, Chair Scrutiny Leadership Board

Paul Tuner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)  
Jeremy Mannino Head of School Safeguarding and Exclusion  
Kate Aldridge, Head of Delivery, Performance and Commissioning  
Annette Algie, NSPCC Better Start Project  
Kirsty Fisher, Our Children Engagement Officer, Safeguarding, Quality and Review  
Tom and Leanne, Young Inspectors  
Pauline Wigglesworth, Programme Lead (HeadStart), Strategy  
Rochelle Morris, Evaluation and Research Practitioner (HeadStart), Strategy  
Danielle Aoslin, Peer Sessional Worker

Sharon Wadsworth, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser

**1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

**2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2022**

Councillor M Mitchell put forward an amendment to be added to the second paragraph on Item 11, The Impact of the Pandemic on Early Language Acquisition, *"However, the Committee noted from 6.3 of the report that more referrals had been made to the "red" category, the category containing children with most speech and language needs, and that referrals to this category had increased both in absolute and percentage terms."*

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the last meeting held on 22 September 2022 be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record as amended to include the addition the above wording as proposed by Councillor Mitchell.

**3 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

The Committee noted that there were no applications to speak by members of the public on this occasion.

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#### **4 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan Dec 2022 to March 2023 and noted the list of upcoming decisions.

#### **5 BETTER START UPDATE**

Ms Annette Algie, NSPCC Better Start Project, presented the annual update of the Better Start project. Reference was made to the five recommendations, identified following the review of the Better Start Partnership in April 2021, and the progress that had been made in each of the areas.

Ms Algie reported that they would be working with the Better Start partnership on sustainability of the approach and through consideration of which projects had had a positive impact and to identify which projects could be mainstreamed. Funding avenues would be looked at for any areas that required a staffing need. It was reported that some of the community schemes were now self sufficient and being run independently.

It was noted that the governance structure was being reviewed and details on the new structure and proposed Sustainability Board would be forward to Members when available.

**The Committee agreed:**

1. That the annual report be noted.

#### **6 YOUNG INSPECTORS**

Ms Kirsty Fisher, Our Children Engagement Officer, provided Members with an overview of the work that the Young Inspectors had carried out and the challenges that they had faced. The programme had been well received and best practice between homes was being shared. The work being done by the Young Inspectors was helping in preparation and confidence in readiness for the Ofsted inspections commencing next year for semi and unregulated homes.

Members welcomed the scheme and the engagement with young people, ensuring that their voices were heard. The wide range of transferable skills being developed was a positive outcome for the inspectors.

It was raised that one of the challenges was capacity with the team for training and managing the programme.

**The Committee agreed:**

1. To include an item on the work programme to look at the resource capacity of the Young Inspectors Team.

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## **7 LITERACY STRATEGY UPDATE**

Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years), presented a report on the progress of the literacy strategy since it had been launched. Mr Turner highlighted that historically Blackpool secondary schools underperformed in literacy. This was in part due to the transient nature of the area and that most secondary schools saw on average a 20% turnover of children. A majority of the transient pupils had not been through the primary school system within the Blackpool area.

In response to queries from the Committee Mr Turner assured that the strategy also included adults learners and a programme for suggested reading to engage young people. Training was also available for teachers to assist in teaching phonics at secondary schools.

Members highlight the importance of the role of libraries with the strategy and requested that more information on what libraries were providing be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.

### **The Committee agreed:**

1. To invite the Head of Library Service to a future meeting to provide a report on the services provided within the community in respect of the Literacy Strategy.

## **8 SCHOOL RESPONSE TO PANDEMIC UPDATE**

Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years) provided an update to the Committee on progress against the recommendations made by the School's Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Scrutiny Review Panel and confirmed that in his opinion that all the recommendations from the review had been addressed.

### **The Committee agreed:**

1. That the progress made on the recommendations be noted; and
2. That all the recommendations be signed off as complete.

## **9 PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS**

Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years) presented the report that detailed the Personal, Social and Health Education (PHSE) programme that was being delivered in Blackpool schools. It was noted that the response from schools had been very positive with the importance of developing the life skills for safeguarding young people highlighted.

## **10 RESILIENCE REVOLUTION FINAL REPORT**

The Committee agreed for this item to be heard following Item 4, Forward Plan.

Ms Pauline Wigglesworth, Programme Lead (HeadStart) and Ms Rochelle Morris, Evaluation and Research Practitioner (HeadStart), presented the HeadStart Resilience Revolution final report to the Committee. The programme had received National Lottery

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funding for the last six years to research and develop new ways to support young people's mental health. Blackpool had taken an approach to build resilience for the whole community in order to move towards the better prevention of mental health problems.

Key projects were highlighted including support for children through the transition period from primary school to secondary school, anti-bullying campaigns, self harm support projects and the co-production opportunities.

Members asked how Blackpool compared to the other areas involved in the programme. Ms Wigglesworth confirmed that Blackpool was the only area out of the six nationally involved in the programme that undertook a whole town approach but that different approaches were being tested.

The Committee asked about the evaluation data for self harm and if there were any future plans to include independent school settings. It was noted that there were only four years of data on self harm available for evaluation but the project had received encouraging results in helping to reduce the number of revisits to accident and emergency as well as equipping young people with the life skills to manage their emotions. In relation to the Independent School settings it was acknowledged that the number of these settings had increased since the start of the project and that work in conjunction with these settings could be explored in the future.

Ms Danielle Aoslin, Peer Sessional Worker, spoke of her own life experience in becoming involved in the programme and how it enabled young people to have a voice, gain confidence and have a sense of belonging. Danielle was now employed by the Council to support other businesses in co-production.

The future of the HeadStart project was to engage with young people early and to question behaviour changes to identify the issues. The relationships built up through co-production were vital.

Members thanked Danielle for sharing her journey with the Committee.

### **11 INDEPENDENT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE REVIEW**

Ms Kate Aldridge, Head of Delivery, Performance and Commissioning, presented the detailed report on the outcomes from the Department for Education's (DfE) independent review of Children's Social Care and a summary from the Competition and Market Authority (CMA) and the 2022 Josh MacAlister Children's Review.

The reports highlighted some of the impacts that might be seen should one or more of the recommendations, in their current format, be implemented by the government

#### **The Committee agreed:**

1. That the report be noted

### **12 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN**

The Committee considered its work programme for 2022/2023 and noted the additional items added during the meeting.

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In relation to Item 11 on the work programme the Committee requested an update on the Child of the North report.

**The Committee agreed:**

1. That the report be noted; and
2. A status update on the Item 11 be provided at the next meeting; and
3. The outcome of the Young People Classed As Not In Employment, Education Or Training (NEET) Scrutiny Review Panel report be deferred to the next meeting and the Chair of the panel meeting to be present.

**13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting of the Committee was noted as Thursday 2 February 2023 commencing at 6pm.

**Chairman**

(The meeting ended at 7.50 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:  
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