

## CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES – COUNCILLOR TAYLOR

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### **Looked After Children**

The week beginning 27 October was care leavers week and we celebrated this with a number of activities both educational and social. We had activities ranging from attending university for the day, looking at the university experience and demystifying the process of application and show young people the benefits of a university education, to a celebration meal and the final day on 31 October a trip to the pleasure beach for Halloween.

One of the most successful events involved five care leavers attending an Apprenticeship shadowing event, where they were able to take part in various work placements within the Council, ranging from ICT to business admin roles. As a result of this workshop, three of this cohort have been taken on by Training 2000 for plumbing, IT and business admin apprenticeships.

The attendance at the events has been very high, with attendance averaging at around 25 young people per workshop/ event. Feedback from young people has been very good and all are looking forward to next year's care leaver's week.

We are now in National Adoption Fortnight and have a range of events and publications available, notably an open forum at the Hilton on the 6 November.

### **Safeguarding (Local Safeguarding Children's Board)**

We have now recruited David Sanders as Independent Safeguarding Board Chairman, as the existing Chairman stepped down from this position at the end of September 2014. The Chairman is beginning to familiarise himself with Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board and will start to chair meetings later this year. The Chairman has a vast amount of experience that he will be able to draw from as he has an important role to play in driving forward future developments and improvements and ensuing safeguarding arrangements are robust across the partnership. In July 2014 Ofsted undertook a review of the effectiveness of Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board and the progress made was acknowledged, Board partners are now working together to develop an improvement plan.

### **Children's Centres.**

The transition year has started for Children's Centres and we are currently working on a new outcomes focused monitoring tool with the Centres. Blackpool has teamed up with researchers at University College London for a Nuffield Foundation funded research project to compare the effectiveness of a parent-delivered language enrichment programme and a parent-delivered movement skills programme for preschool children. This project will work in partnership with Blackpool's Children's Centres to recruit, train and support parents to deliver intervention to their children. This will link with the Better Start work.

Children who live in socially disadvantaged areas are at risk of delays in development from an early age. Two primary areas of learning and development in the early years that play a significant role in later educational outcomes and are central targets in Early Years education settings are language and communication and physical development. Parents are well-placed to support their child's development, but may not always feel able to do so. This project will develop and evaluate two intervention programmes for parents to support their child's "school readiness". Parents will be trained and supported to deliver either an oral language skills programme targeting vocabulary and wider language skills, or a movement skills programme to support fine and gross motor development. This work started on 4 November.

### The Family Policy Division in the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

The Policy Division has been working on strategies to turn around the lives of the most deprived people in England and have created a strategy for this. A key element and measurement of this strategy is family breakdown and they have seen a correlation between family breakdown and poverty. They set out to find out why this was the case and have been looking at the evidence base and came up with a number of levers. They have decided to ask the Early Intervention Local Authorities if they would like to be involved and Blackpool has one of the highest incidents of family breakdown. They want to look at what is happening already in each Local Authority and map the services and provision in place. Support will then be offered to each Local Authority to develop a local strategy and strengthen and build on current practice. This work started in Blackpool in November.

### Baby Buddy

Blackpool is one of two pilot sites which have been working on a new free phone app for pregnant and new mums. Baby Buddy, developed by the Best Beginnings charity, provides a virtual friend and companion to share the journey to parenthood for young (or any age) mums  
<http://www.bestbeginnings.org.uk/babybuddy>.

The information has been quality assured by eminent health professionals and organisations and aims to impact positively on bonding and attachment, parenting and child and maternal mental health. It focuses on support for mothers and mothers-to be to help them:

- Improve their health choices and wellbeing
- Increase their confidence and knowledge
- Navigate the emotional transition to parenthood
- Have realistic expectations about life as a new mum
- Maintain strong couple relationships or cope with life as a single mum
- Tune in to the needs of their new baby
- Communicate with their baby from birth
- Breastfeed successfully or bottle feed safely
- Parent with warmth and love
- Understand the importance of accessing health services

It will provide an avatar (the buddy) which can be customised and who will offer the mum personalised daily tips, reminders and trackers. It includes lots of video clips and is very interactive so parents can include their own photos, diary, goals and thoughts and feelings. The app will allow the mum to give her unborn baby a name and to include her partner so their role is supported too. The app was launched in Blackpool on the 25 November.

Better Start Blackpool will be supporting the roll-out of the app with local health and Children's Centre staff, parents and people working with pregnant mums. If you want to have a look at the app it is available in the Google Play store and the App Store or the links below.

- Android phone <http://bit.ly/1sBrquz>
- iPhone <http://bit.ly/1nwkc4J>

### **Early Years.**

#### Blackpool Better Start

The aim is to give every new baby in Blackpool a better start in life, helping them enjoy the early care and nurture they need for healthy development and to be ready for school. To support and progress this work a learning exchange between Blackpool Better Start and Alberta Family Wellness Initiative (AFWI) has taken place. An on-site presentation on framing and early child development from leading experts from the FrameWorks Institute in Washington DC took place in November with them

undertaking research on the streets of Blackpool over the weekend of 7 to 9 November. This will also include an introduction to framing, a description of the work we have planned and examples / cases of what it will deliver and how it can be used.

#### Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

National data has now been published, 60% of children nationally who were in the Reception year (age 5) in July 2014 attained the good level of development measure. In Blackpool this figure was 54.3%, and in the North West 58%. Boys nationally performed less well than girls, with a percentage point gap of 16%. This gap between boys and girls was wider in Blackpool, at 21 percentage points, so boys are doing significantly less well than girls. There was an increase in the average total point score both nationally, from 32.8 to 33.8 and in Blackpool, from 32.1 to 32.4. This is out of a possible total score of 51, with a score of 34 being a child who has reached the expected level in all 17 Early Learning Goals.

#### Ofsted inspections

Early years settings – six group childcare and three child minder inspection reports have been published since my last report. Five of the Early Years setting received a judgement of Good, one of which had previously been judged Inadequate and four of these settings had been receiving a high level of support from the Early Years and Childcare Team. The sixth did not receive a grading as there were no children present at the time of the inspection, but they were found to be meeting EYFS Statutory Requirements. Of the three child minder reports published, two received a judgement of Good and one had no children present so was judged to be meeting requirements of the Early Years register. Based on published reports, the overall percentage of settings and child minders with Ofsted gradings of good or outstanding is 87%, with 88% of child minders and 85% of group childcare settings. This compares to national figures (as at 31 March 2014 which is the most recent data available) of 78% overall, 76% of child minders, and 82% of group settings.

#### Early Years Pupil Premium

An Early Years Pupil Premium is to be introduced nationally in April 2015, for eligible three and four year olds. The eligibility criteria for this will be the same as the Pupil Premium for schools, but it will be payable to any early years setting where an eligible child takes up their early education entitlement. The payment will be around £300 annually per eligible child. Blackpool has been invited by the DfE to become an Early Implementer from January 2015.

#### Family Information Service Award

Blackpool Family Information Service is one of a few to achieve a distinguished national award, highlighting the excellent quality of information and service provided to parents and carers of children aged 0 to 19. The National Association of Family Information Services (NAFIS) Quality Award; 'Families First', is an award to emphasis expertise in ensuring that all families are able to easily access information and advice, as well celebrating diversity and empowering families to make decisions themselves. Parents, carers and professionals use the service as a first port of call when they need information and support. The qualified team has proven that they can skilfully deal with and review each case in a planned and monitored way. The prestigious award will be presented to the Family Information Service on 4 December by the Mayor at the City Learning Centre.

#### **School Support and Advice.**

Ofsted are currently re-writing the Framework for Inspection of Local Authority Arrangements for Supporting School Improvement. It is anticipated this will be available later this month. Blackpool's arrangements were last inspected in late November 2013. We are anticipating re-inspection in the near future. Colleagues from Education London, our strategic partner for secondary school improvement, are continuing to work with our secondary head teachers and academy sponsors. A comprehensive data analysis, based on the 2014 provisional Key Stage 4 results, has been undertaken for each school and an accelerated action plan has been provided for each establishment. Primary School Improvement Partners are updating their schools on key changes. Continuing Professional

Development sessions are being made available on the new primary curriculum, new assessment arrangements, the updated inspection framework for schools and leadership development.

### **Governor Services**

As part of our commitment to improving the professionalism of Local Authority Clerks, Members of the Local Authority Clerking Team are taking part in the National Training Programme for Clerks to Governors. This programme is an important step towards improving the effectiveness of Governing Bodies by developing the skills needed for high quality clerking. Recent research has identified that having a highly effective clerk within the Governing Body is a key to contributing to the overall success and effectiveness of the Governing Body in driving school improvement.

The national programme has been designed for new and experienced clerks in all school settings and is unique in that it is seeking to professionalise the role of the clerk and is a certified programme from the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

The programme consists of:

- 360 degree self-evaluation tool
- Face to face essential units
- Online elective units on Clerking Governing Body Panels, Clerking Church Schools, academies and multi school settings.

Through networking with other Clerks across the region, Clerks will be able to deliver a more holistic and effective service to schools which will increase the confidence of schools subscribing to the Clerking SLA and may develop new business opportunities both within Blackpool and more widely.

### **School Organisation and Buildings**

The final phase of construction on the St Mary's campus was completed during the summer holidays with Christ the King RC Primary pupils commencing the new school year in the new facility. The Authority is due to take possession of Christ the King Primary School (Old School) imminently. This will allow The Oxford Centre PRU to move to Christ the King (Old School) following alteration work after the February half term break. This will enable the Speedwell Centre to move from Whitegate Manor to The Oxford Centre thereby releasing Whitegate Manor back to the Corporate Portfolio.

Work at the former Collegiate site, as part of the Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP), has commenced. The site will accommodate Aspire Academy and Highfurlong. Building works are due to be completed in autumn 2015, with external works due to be completed by January 2016. This scheme will be constructed under the Design and Build Procurement route

Hawes Side Academy and South Shore Academy are in the final design stages for their proposed new builds. The EFA selected Morgan Sindall as their preferred bidder for this phase of the Priority School Building Programme with programme delivery between 2015 and 2017. Both these schemes will be delivered under the Private Finance Initiative.

The kitchen works that have commenced at various schools over the summer holidays as part of the Universal Infant Free School Meals initiative are now complete.

Academy conversions due to take place on the 1<sup>st</sup> January

- Baines Endowed Church Of England School
- Marton Primary School

## Pupil Welfare and Attendance.

Pupil Absence figures autumn 2013 – spring 2014

These figures were published on Statistical First Release 15 October 2014.

	<b>National Overall absence</b>	<b>Blackpool Overall absence</b>	<b>National Persistent absence</b>	<b>Blackpool Persistent absence</b>
<b>Primary</b>	3.9	4.2	2.8	3.1
<b>Secondary</b>	5.1	6.3	5.8	8.1
<b>Primary and Secondary</b>	4.4	5.1	4.1	5.2

The above official data shows improvement for England and Blackpool. Blackpool's results show a significant closing of the gap between Blackpool and England in all areas when compared with the previous year. The national average rise leaves Blackpool below the national average. Continued hard work and investment in this area will be required to maintain the improvements. Blackpool schools have a strong commitment for this academic year to this area of work. The core offer through the Local Authority is robust and in place to support Blackpool schools and keep Blackpool young people safe and in school. The Department for Education has released School attendance departmental advice for in October 2014 it will be reviewed again in December 2014 this advice is non-statutory advice on pupil registers and attendance codes and the school day and year it summarises the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance.

## Inspection and Intervention of Schools

During the 2014 calendar year the following schools have been inspected:

<b>School</b>	<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Overall effectiveness</b>
Baines Endowed Primary School	30/09/14	3 (2)
Bispham Endowed Primary School	24/06/14	3 (2)
Marton Primary School	25/03/14	2 (4)
Roseacre Primary Academy	15/07/14	2 (2)
Stanley Primary School	22/01/14	2 (2)
St John Vianney RC Primary	25/03/14	2 (3)
St Kentigern RC Primary School	14/10/14	Not yet published
Thames Primary Academy	17/09/14	2 (2)
Waterloo Primary Academy	26/02/14	2 (2)
Highfield Humanities College	08/10/14	Not yet published

School	Inspection date	Overall effectiveness
Montgomery Academy	07/05/14	4 (2)
Highfurlong School	01/14/14	1 (1)

### **Continuing Professional Development, School Workforce and the City Learning Centre**

Schools and other Local Authority settings are continuing to take children and young people offsite, but the number of residential visits has fallen slightly over the last twelve months. Work is being done with primary schools to try and encourage greater use of the school's immediate environment to help deliver the new curriculum out of the classroom.

The Local Authority holds the licence to manage the delivery of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in the town. Participation has increased in recent times and there are now approximately 500 participants, 200 of whom have completed various awards within the past 18 months. Significantly, 30 young people have achieved the cherished Gold Award, much valued by employers and have or are about to, receive their awards at Buckingham Palace. The Duke of Edinburgh Manager is supporting schools and youth groups, up skilling the leaders and training the young people to undertake the necessary electronic recording of competencies etc. Two groups, Educational Diversity and Blackpool and the Fylde College, have very recently started to utilise the Local Authority's Duke of Edinburgh services.

#### City Learning Centre (CLC)

The City Learning Centre Media Academy is now starting to flourish as part of the traded services model with schools. It incorporates student sessions ranging from use of Software application to Minecraft activities to staff training. All linked with Blackpool LITES and the needs of schools to satisfy the schools new computing curriculum. Numbers for this programme are reported each quarter and to date this amounts to 1761 children for the first two quarters.

The CLC media team was also commissioned by Blackpool Schools Partnership to complete a powerful video that was shown at their recent conference. To view the video please link to the BSP web site <http://www.blackpoolschoolspartnership.co.uk/news/latest/2014-10-30-blackpool-schools-partnership-inspiring-film>

The CLC has also been successful with partners on securing substantial training contracts hosted at the CLC with National organisations to support schools. These include Teaching Leading, a significant middle leader programme, Oxford University press, a Numicon event for Maths development, Edge Hill University, the National SENCO qualification and the National Maths Partnership and a Maths subject leader programme.

Children's Services Adult Community and Family Learning are now accommodated and initial discussion have taken place to establish joint working plans associated with family working and ICT for adults in schools and the link to pre and post 16 aspirations.

The CLC role in the community has expanded to incorporate area forums, Grange park community partnership and Community activity programmes.

#### Continuing Professional Development and School Workforce

Developments plans this quarter have involved visits by some high class speakers. Sir John Dunford has shared a Pupil premium workshop and now a legacy group has been formed to take this forward.

Gervase Phinn and Mike Waters both National figures have delivered motivational speeches for our family of schools through the Blackpool Schools Partnership. The Partnership has submitted a proposal to Schools Forum for further development of their Continued Professional Development and

school improvement programme.

The Quality Assurance protocols have been developed further with a toolkit which is being trialled with preferred providers to ensure quality exist, is led well, is tracked, has impact and that there are legacy plans built in. Much of this development continues to support the present School Improvement Plan.

A new group has been formed that is looking at the wider school support workforce and a Teaching Assistant skills enhancement course is being trialled as part of our partnership with the Fylde Coast Teaching School Alliance.

### **Special Education Needs, Assessment and Support and Psychological.**

The DfE asked Blackpool to submit a case study of good practice about the engagement of children/ young people and parents in the significant SEN reforms. This has been submitted and will be published nationally. A powerful and positive quote from parent's forum, discussing the positive co-production work was included. The Council for Disabled Children has asked for a copy of the joint Local Authority/ CCG SEND commissioning strategy as a good example of practice, which has been forwarded.

### **Music Service**

Schools Music Education Plans have been improved having provided several Professional Development courses and numerous school-based one-to-one sessions. Set Department for Education targets remain realistic. Talented and gifted musicians can now apply for Bursary Awards funding from Blackpool Music School (BMS) in order to help young musicians pay for external graded examinations with various accredited examination boards. This new initiative will support those musicians who are limited by finance, but who have exceptional musical talent.

Sponsorship opportunities have now been enhanced by offering audiences the opportunity to become Patrons for £50. This new initiative will support the Bursary Awards, bands and large scale performances.

Our NW Youth Brass Band with Leyland Band and sponsored by the National Association of Brass Band Conductors and YAMAHA continues to flourish.

Demands for our music service are now apparent in parts of Lancashire. All options are being considered.

Extra-curricular and large scaled music events since the last report have included:

- Our African Muzik Festival has been delivered in eight primary schools. Almost 3,000 pupils have learned new South African songs, dances and djembe drumming patterns and performed them in public with a live band.
- Delivery partners Travelling by Tuba have started their tour and will be performing a full day of musical workshops at six Blackpool schools. More than 600 pupils will get direct support from this fabulous duo and each day will conclude with a live assembly.
- Six local choirs and the BMS choir have been rehearsing for the BBC's Children in Need at the Tower Ballroom. To our knowledge, we will be the only Music Service participating in this televised event.
- International pianist is now providing recitals and workshops in our schools. This programme is being privately sponsored.

We are performing at eight prestigious events over the Christmas period. Any member wishing to support the music service by attending either the Winter Gardens on Tuesday 9 or The Tower Ballroom on Monday 15 December 2014 should contact Music Adviser Andrew White by email.

### **Access and Inclusion**

The recent Ofsted report acknowledges the strength and rigour of the Blackpool Education Registers and Admission (BERA) Panel as a significant monitoring and audit tool to ensure that all children are in receipt of a suitable education at school or otherwise. Figures reflecting academic year 2013/ 2014 demonstrate that in spite of 15% increase in numbers of children arriving/ moving around the town with complex issues, the number of cases reaching high level three/ four in terms of being out of an education provision has been kept significantly low. There were less than 3% reaching that level which would involve a period of more than 29 days out of provision.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>
Total Referrals 2012/ 2013	67	129	190	209	260	293	347	404	468	547	629	712
Total Referrals 2013/ 2014	123	193	249	285	347	393	453	519	560	629	715	821