

Blackpool Council

16 March 2022

To: Councillors Burdess, D Coleman, Critchley, B Mitchell, M Mitchell, Owen, R Scott and Stansfield

Ms Jo Snape, Co-opted Member

The above Members are requested to attend the:

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday 24 March 2022 at 6.00pm
in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Blackpool

A G E N D A

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

(1) the type of interest concerned either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

and

(2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any Member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2022 (Pages 1 - 10)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 27 January 2022 as a true and correct record.

3 PUBLIC SPEAKING

To consider any applications from members of the public to speak at the meeting.

4 YOUNG ADDER (Pages 11 - 22)

To present a report on the work of Young Adder.

5 CHILDREN'S SERVICES MONITORING VISIT FEEDBACK (Pages 23 - 30)

To receive details of the feedback from the Children's Services Monitoring Visit.

6 PUPIL LITERACY AND READING PERFORMANCE DATA (Pages 31 - 44)

To consider the latest GL Assessment pupil performance data.

7 SEND STRATEGY UPDATE (Pages 45 - 56)

To consider an update on the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy.

8 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN (Pages 57 - 66)

To consider the contents of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee's Workplan for 2022/2023.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the provisional date and time of the next meeting as 30 June 2022 at 6pm, subject to confirmation at Annual Council.

Venue information:

First floor meeting room (lift available), accessible toilets (ground floor), no-smoking building. Face masks must be worn when moving throughout the building. Please also maintain social distancing.

Other information:

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Elaine Ireland, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser, Tel: (01253) 477255, e-mail: Elaine.ireland@blackpool.gov.uk

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Agenda Item 2

MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING - THURSDAY, 27 JANUARY 2022

Present:

Councillor Burdess (in the Chair)

Councillors

Critchley	M Mitchell	R Scott
B Mitchell	Mrs Scott	

Ms Jo Snape, Diocesan Co-opted member

In Attendance:

Councillor Maxine Callow, Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board

Councillor Gillian Campbell, Cabinet Member for Inclusion, Youth and Transience

Councillor Jim Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Schools

Ms Vicky Gent, Director of Children's Services

Ms Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Service

Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)

Ms Pauline Wigglesworth, HeadStart Programme Leader

Ms Hannah Eaglestone, Peer Sessional Worker for HeadStart

Mrs Elaine Ireland, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

2 MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2022

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the Special meeting held on 12 January 2022 be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2021

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the last ordinary meeting held on 9 December 2021 be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

4 PUBLIC SPEAKING

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

5 HEADSTART UPDATE

Ms Pauline Wigglesworth, HeadStart Programme Leader presented the Resilience Revolution's annual report, covering the period from September 2019 to August 2020. She informed the

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Committee that the report had been co-produced alongside young people, parents/carers, practitioners, leaders and academics.

The Committee was informed that the HeadStart programme had been funded by the National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) as part of its strategic programmes. Ms Wigglesworth reported that an investment of £13 million had been made over six years in order to test and learn new ways of supporting youth mental health. Blackpool had been selected as one of six sites nationally and had developed a community approach to building a resilient town for young people to grow up and thrive in, under the banner of the Resilience Revolution. She informed the Committee that TNLCF funding would cease on 31 July 2022 and assured Members that there had been rigorous attention to sustainability over the last 12 months, with funding for successful projects having been identified and sourced by the Council, schools and the NHS.

The Committee sought additional information around the sustainability of projects and the levels of further funding which had been achieved. Ms Wigglesworth explained that as part of the grant award from TNLCF, a phased funding approach had to be demonstrated over the final three years which identified how the projects would continue to be funded. During that period, a number of activities had been withdrawn, some had been embedded by teams to be incorporated into new ways of working and a number of projects had continued via the allocation of additional funding from other sources, such as the NHS.

In relation to workforce training, the Committee questioned which groups had been trained on the resilience model and whether any gaps in training had been identified. Ms Wigglesworth reported that Children's Services had engaged well with the training, as had voluntary sector staff. In terms of gaps, she advised that further engagement from Health would have been preferred but she acknowledged the difficulties faced by Health colleagues in taking time away from their places of work, particularly during the pandemic and noted that overall she had been pleased with the level of training completed.

Ms Wigglesworth summarised a number of highlights from the annual report, which included 'A Year of Parents of the Revolution', consideration of the in-depth analysis of the results of interviews held with a selection of young people who had been involved with Youth Engagement activities and details of actions being initiated by schools following audits undertaken to identify schools' assets and to identify areas for resilience building.

The Committee noted that the report referred to 2019/2020 and asked for examples of any further successes which had been achieved since that period. Ms Wigglesworth advised that HeadStart's final report was anticipated to be completed in April 2022 and offered to return to the Committee with the report once available. The Committee was informed that the report would be in both written and digital form, with the aim of including a choice of ways in which to access the information in order to make it as accessible as possible. In the meantime, she provided a selection of performance data from December 2020, which identified that 19,000 young people had benefited from HeadStart interventions overall and that a successful online speech, language and communication toolkit had been launched across Blackpool schools.

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Ms Hannah Eaglestone, Peer Sessional Worker for HeadStart and lead for the Blackpool Beating Bullying Project provided an overview of the anti-bullying campaign being implemented across Blackpool schools, explaining that Blackpool Beating Bullying was a campaign that was set up by young people, for young people with the aim of reducing the amount of bullying incidents taking place in Blackpool schools. She informed the Committee that the UK's first co-produced charter mark had been introduced, which aimed to equip all schools with the necessary tools and knowledge to tackle bullying. To date, 12 schools had achieved the bronze award and five schools had gone on to achieve silver. The Committee questioned if ways in which bullying could be stopped had been identified as part of the campaign. Ms Eaglestone advised that prevention was key and that schools had adopted a zero tolerance approach in the hope of preventing bullying from occurring and creating a culture where no levels of bullying were tolerated. Committee Members noted that bullies were often unaware that their behaviour was bullying and queried how this thinking could be tackled and changed. Ms Eaglestone reported on work being undertaken with primary schools which identified what bullying looked like and encouraged children to reflect on their actions and behaviour to consider the impact they might have on others.

The Committee noted that 28 schools in Blackpool had signed up to the project, but questioned what was being done to reach the remaining 18 schools which had not. Ms Eaglestone advised that she continued to make contact with these schools every six weeks to offer support and seek their engagement but acknowledged that schools had numerous competing priorities and were not always able to commit to another new project immediately. She highlighted that a number of Blackpool's special schools were also involved in the project, with Park Community Academy having achieved the bronze charter mark and that all learning material could be adapted by schools to ensure their pupils could access them.

The Committee requested an update on the reported Friend for Life initiative, whereby adult volunteers were matched with our children aged 10, 11 and 12 for fun and friendship. Ms Wigglesworth reported that the adults made a permanent commitment to be there for their young person and that our children chose their adult via video submissions. Further to the reported 18 friendships, Ms Wigglesworth informed Committee Members that this number had now reached 28 and that all original matches had continued throughout the restrictions of the pandemic.

The Committee extended its thanks to Ms Wigglesworth and Ms Eaglestone for attending and for the positive work being undertaken by HeadStart.

The Committee agreed: To receive the 2022 HeadStart final report once available.

6 YOUTH JUSTICE TEAM INSPECTION

Ms Sara McCartan, Head of the Adolescent Service presented a report outlining the feedback from a recent inspection of the Youth Justice Service. She reported that the service had been inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) during May and June 2021 and that the service had been rated 'Good' and in three aspects 'Outstanding'. The Inspectorate had worked jointly with partner inspectors from policing, health, social care and education to undertake the inspection.

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Ms McCartan summarised the six recommendations which had been made by HMIP following the inspection and which aimed to further improve the service:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions to ensure they are meeting children's needs and reducing re-offending.
- Provide thorough and effective initial assessment of children's health and educational needs, including communication skills and dyslexia.
- Reduce the unacceptably high NEET (not in education, training or employment) rates for the over-16 caseload by getting more children into further education provision and vocational training, including access to services where children can gain the personal, life and social skills they need to work towards employment.
- Ensure that in all children's records there is a plan to keep other people safe and contingency planning if issues in the child's life increase the likelihood of harmful behaviour.
- Where risk to the child's safety or wellbeing is identified, put in place clear contingency planning for circumstances where the risk may increase.
- Where risk to other people is identified, put in place clear contingency planning for circumstances where the risk may increase.

The Committee was informed that the HMIP recommendations had been incorporated into the revised Youth Justice improvement plan and that the plan would continue to be monitored by the service and bi-monthly via the Executive Board.

Ms McCartan reported that the Youth Justice Executive and Shadow Board had held a Development Day on 26 January 2022 with the aim being to further strengthen the service's partnership and problem solving in order to achieve consistently positive outcomes for all our children and to create a 2022 development plan to get the Youth Justice Service (YJS) to Outstanding. The event had originally been hoped to be held in person at the Winter Gardens but due to continuing Covid restrictions, the decision had been made to hold it virtually. The Committee extended its congratulation to the YJS for the progress made and supported its aims of striving towards Outstanding.

The Committee noted the disappointingly high number of our children presenting as Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) and sought assurance that this would remain an area of continued focus for improvement. Ms McCartan confirmed this to be the case and outlined a number of actions being implemented to help address the issue, which included:

- An Employment and Skills Board had been established with a wide range of partners;
- A strategy was to be co-produced with youth advisers to identify a joined up approach to reducing NEET figures;
- Close working with the Council's wholly owned companies was in place to identify employment and training opportunities for our young people;
- Confidence building and support to develop basic life skills were being provided to young people to further improve their abilities to succeed with training or employment;

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- Supportive employers were being contacted to seek out any available opportunities to work with them;
- Officers were seeking out examples of best practice from other local authorities, with the specific examples of Salford and Stockport being discussed. Ms McCartan was hopeful that physical visits to other authorities could soon be arranged;
- Increased liaison with Blackpool and the Fylde College was in place to offer better support around the transition from school to college.

The Committee requested that Members be kept informed of progress and that regular updates be provided going forward.

The Committee agreed: To receive a further update on the Youth Justice Service at a future meeting.

7 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT

Ms Sara McCartan, Head of the Adolescent Service provided the Committee with data around the support given to young people turning 18 and the number of vulnerable young people accessing services, as requested by the Committee at a previous meeting. She explained that the majority of 17 year olds currently open to the Adolescent Service were our young people and as such they would remain supported by their Leaving Care Personal Adviser until at least aged 21 and up to aged 25 if they chose to. The Committee gave consideration to the presented data, noting in particular that only 53 per cent of Blackpool's care experienced young people reported positive outcomes in education, employment and training.

Further clarification was sought around the reported 102 care leavers aged 21-25 years who were receiving support from an Adolescent Service Personal Adviser. Ms McCartan advised that the support offered to this group of young people could be for a range of concerns, both financial and emotional and that all our young people were entitled to continue to receive support until they reached 25.

The Committee requested that recognition be paid to the excellent work undertaken by foster carers and special guardians in helping to take care of our young people, which often continued well beyond them reaching 18 years of age. Committee Members also welcomed the extension of the Awaken project to include young people over 18 years old, with Ms McCartan acknowledging that these young people often remained at risk of exploitation after turning 18.

The Committee agreed: To receive periodic future update reports on the support offered to our young people post-18, at a frequency to be agreed with Ms McCartan.

8 LITERACY STRATEGY UPDATE

Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years) provided an update following the launch of the Council's Literacy Strategy in September 2021. Mr Turner advised that the Strategy was now being operationalised through the Literacy Strategy Steering Group, which consisted of members from across the town, at all levels of education from Early Years to Adult education. Furthermore, professional academic input was

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also being provided to ensure that the most current educational research was included in the planning.

The Committee was informed that significant project support was being provided through a contract with Right to Succeed and that part of their role would be to continue to source funding. Two leads had been identified from within the Blackpool education community to champion literacy and to engage with businesses who wished to support the Strategy. In addition, Officers had met with the Showtown museum staff to consider how the Literacy Strategy could support their work and be integrated into the work of the museum in engaging families. Mr Turner noted the gratefully received ward budget funding provided by a number of Councillors towards the purchase of books and other resources.

Further information was requested on the work underway to secure additional funding to support the implementation of the Strategy, with Mr Turner reporting that the two education leads were actively engaging with businesses to seek financial support and sponsorship for specific literacy initiatives.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding how volunteers were recruited to hear children read in school and whether there were sufficient numbers of volunteers, Mr Turner advised that recruitment was via the Council's social media platforms and he agreed to provide the necessary link to Committee Members in order that they could access the information.

The Committee requested a future update on Blackpool's Library Service, seeking to determine if Blackpool's libraries were well used. In addition, the Committee asked Mr Turner to provide quarterly updates on the progress of the Literacy Strategy.

The Committee agreed:

1. To receive a report on the work of the Library Service at a future meeting of the Committee;
2. To request quarterly updates on the progress of the Literacy Strategy.

9 SEND STRATEGY

The Committee considered an update on the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy, with Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years) reporting that work had begun in late spring 2021 to refresh the Strategy and that this would recommence now that the underpinning work on the Needs Assessment and self-evaluation was reaching a conclusion. He advised that the next stage in the development process would be to agree a set of key priorities for the Strategy, based on the outcome of the co-production sessions which had been held last year along with the findings from the self-evaluation exercise. Mr Turner stressed the importance of avoiding rushing the Strategy as buy-in from a number of partners would be vital to its success and as such it was necessary to ensure all parties were in agreement with its contents.

As per the reported expected timeline of progress, the Committee was informed that further development of the draft SEND Strategy would take place in February 2022, following which it

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would then be shared with Headteacher groups before consultation with wider stakeholders, including a Scrutiny working group. Mr Turner advised that all Committee Members should have received an invitation to take part in the working group but suggested that any Members still wishing to join should contact him following the meeting. The Committee was informed that the final version of the Strategy was anticipated for completion in late March 2022 and would be submitted for consideration by the Committee at its next available meeting following that date.

The Committee agreed: To consider the final SEND Strategy once completed and by no later than June 2022.

10 ORACLE BUILDING UPDATE

Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years), provided an update on the proposals for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision at the Oracle building.

Mr Turner reported that following a public consultation, planning continued for the transfer of Park Community Academy's post-16 students into the Oracle building on St Anne's Road. He advised that Sea View Trust was still awaiting the outcome of its application to the Education and Skills Funding Agency regarding the proposed change in the use of the facilities. Furthermore, discussions were continuing with the Trust regarding tenancy arrangements, which would include continued access for those community groups who currently used the Oracle.

The Committee sought assurance that children using the facility would be safeguarded whilst also ensuring that community groups were still able to access the building as appropriate. Mr Turner advised that use of the premises would be compartmentalised, with children using it during the day and other groups accessing it at other times and that children would be safeguarded throughout.

The Committee questioned whether approval might be denied and if so, what alternative plans were in place to ensure the Council met its obligations in the provision of appropriate SEND places. Mr Turner reported that refusal was always an option but that he felt confident that the plan would be approved. He reassured the Committee that pupils' families had not been advised of an anticipated completion date but that he was optimistic that the provision would be available from September 2022. In relation to an alternative plan in the event of the Oracle not being available, Mr Turner advised that a back-up plan had been formulated to ensure sufficient SEND places were offered.

In response to a question from the Committee asking how many community groups had previously been using the Oracle building, Mr Turner was unable to provide the specific number but informed Committee Members that all groups were currently still able to use the facilities.

The Committee noted that places at Blackpool's special schools continued to grow in popularity despite the aim of the Council to integrate more pupils into mainstream education settings. Mr

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Turner acknowledged that despite the Council's desire to place children within mainstream schools where possible, provisions for SEND within schools were not always suitable to meet all pupils' needs. He informed the Committee that pupils would continue to be supported to attend mainstream schools wherever possible, alongside the placement of children in special schools as necessary. He also advised that as parents and carers had the choice of where to send their child, further work was needed on improving families' confidence of the availability of sufficient support for their children within mainstream education.

The Committee agreed: To receive a further update report on the proposed SEND provision at the Oracle building at a future Committee meeting as appropriate.

11 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members considered the Committee's Workplan for 2021/2022 and requested that a report on the nutritional content and cost of school dinners in Blackpool schools be added. Mr Turner suggested that information on the work of the Chef's Academy also be included within the item. The Committee noted the previous request to add information on the Library Service to the Committee's workplan, acknowledging that both would need to be included on the 2022/2023 workplan as only one meeting remained within the current municipal year.

The Committee requested an update in relation to two items within the Recommendation Monitoring schedule:

- 'That the data relating to the proportion of Our Children who were looked after be reported to a future meeting of the Committee following the outcomes of the working party examining the issue.' Ms Sara McCartan, Head of the Adolescent Service agreed to review the original request and to circulate information to Committee Members following the meeting;
- 'To receive further data on Blackpool's mental health hospital admission rates once available.' The Committee was advised that Mr Stephen Ashley, Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) Independent Scrutineer would be attending the next meeting of the Committee in March 2022 to provide an update on the work of CSAP and would be asked to provide the requested information at that time if available.

The Committee agreed:

1. The Workplan for 2021/2022;
2. That a report on the nutritional content and cost of school dinners, including information on the work of the Chef's Academy, be added to the 2022/2023 workplan;
3. That a report on the Library Service be added to the 2022/2023 workplan.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Committee was noted as Thursday 24 March 2022, commencing at 6pm.

**MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING - THURSDAY,
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Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7.47pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Andy Walker, Young Adder Partnership Manager
Date of Meeting:	24 March 2022

YOUNG ADDER

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To present a report on the work of Young Adder.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 For the Scrutiny Committee to gain an understanding of the work of Young Adder.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure Scrutiny oversight and to provide the opportunity for further questions and continued Member involvement.

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

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

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

6.0 Background information

6.1 Adder (Addiction, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement and Recovery)

Funded by the Home Office and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), the Adder pilot will run for just over two years initially, starting Nov 2020 and ending March 2023.

Blackpool has been chosen as one of five pilot areas due to the high rate of drug related deaths and drug related crime. Blackpool is the only pilot with a Young Adder.

6.2 The overarching aims for Young Adder are:

- A reduction in the rate of drug deaths in each project location within three years.
- A reduction in the prevalence of drug use within each project location within three years.
- A reduction in the level of drug related offending in each project location within three years.

6.3 A multi-disciplinary team consisting of Streetlife, Blackpool Football Club Trust, NHS, Adolescent Service and Effective Pedagogy Solutions (EPS) has been created from these local agencies to provide a coordinated approach to work with young people with high levels of drug use and those involved with drug related offending.

6.4 The criteria to access Young Adder is based on:

- Aged 25 and under
- Drug use
- Offending behaviours
- Physical and Mental Health
- Homeless or at risk of homelessness/sofa surfing/temporary accommodation
- Recent non-fatal overdose
- Individuals who do not engage well with services

6.5 **How Young Adder works (the offer)**

Young Adder works on a 'Trauma informed model.' The wider multi-disciplinary team includes specialist substance misuse support, sexual health, lived experience team, meaningful activities, individual employment support, police and probation.

The aim is to take the service to the young person and put them at the centre so they can make informed decisions using the "AMBIT" approach. Young Adder will work intensively with young people without the need for lots of appointments and will work with them in what they consider to be a safe environment.

Young Adder's foundation is to build a relationship and trust, to ensure it is a consistent presence. If young people don't attend activities, or if they withdraw for a time, their case will not be closed. Once they have been enrolled onto Young Adder and have engaged appropriately, they are on for the life of the project, what may change is how the team works

with them as they develop.

6.6 **One of the aims is to work in a different way and to influence System Change.**

Young people are equal partners and they are highlighting any barriers they have in engaging with existing systems. Young Adder aims to identify blocks, with plans to remove them and interrupt cycles of behaviour.

A significant element of the project is aimed at meaningful activities, engaging young people in divisionary provision whilst working on informal education to progress and sustain their development.

Attached at Appendix 4(a) is a poem written by a staff member that gives a little insight into the work of the Young Adder team.

6.7 *Excerpts from a review undertaken in November 2021 from Young Adder partners including notes from a Strengths and Weakness exercise:*

Is Young Adder doing a good job for you?

Police – Yes it is. There is a marked reduction in crime across the ADDER cohort and trust and knowledge is increasing between the two teams.

Probation – Yes links are good and we know what support people are getting. All YP are allocated adders!

Sexual Health – Yes, significant uptake in YP contraception.

Mental Health Services – Yes referrals work well and the YP turn up.

DWP – 100% success rate with YA clients and helps YP access all the help they need. Also, YA team makes many enquiries which shows the care they take with YP.

Blackpool CF Community Trust – Access to education and training and a good use of the building.

Strategic – Clear evidence, not just from today, that this is a much better way of working and a much better use of funds and better outcomes for young people.

6.8 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats of Young Adder (SWOT)

Strengths

Team Work, including being a very supportive Young Adder team
Communication across the YA team
Small caseload meaning time can be spent with young people (YP)
Co-ordination
Mutual respect between YA worker and YP
Trust between YP and key worker
Trust with other services
Rapid response – referrals dealt with quickly and key work is responsive too
Equal partnership between YP and YA worker
Support around YP not YP having to find support from other services
Passionate – genuine enthusiasm to help
Flexibility (mentioned several times)
Plenty of options for YP and support from partner agencies
Responsible
Calm and feel supported
Time to do activities, a unique luxury in services where people are busy
Strengths based and so confidence building
Diverse team – multi-agency
Lack of targets to allow for innovation
Multi Agency support gives staff confidence in the support they can offer
Firm but fair
Rewarding – Staff feedback on evaluation
Non-Judgemental way of working
Faster routes into other services – partner agencies on speed dial!
Partner agency support and resources (even those not funded by Adder) – true collaboration
Good partner agency understanding
Helps break cycle
Good outcomes
YP see other side of services, that they are here to help.
Kindness
Away Days
Willingness to try new things
Shared Goals, led by YP
YP involvement
Multi Agency Meetings

6.9 **Weaknesses**

Timescale for project – very short – only 16 months left

What happens to YP when they leave Adder?

What happens to YP when Adder finishes?

Recording activity in different places

Vicarious trauma and staff compassion fatigue

Replacing staff – Housing and Mental Health turnover

YA workers struggle to say no

More funding needed for more activities

Sometimes YP can be demanding and this can be stressful for staff

Weekends and evenings – no service, so what can be done? (It was noted that weekend work had been tried but attendance was low and then was nil)

Staff don't turn phones off

No base that is Adder-specific. Streetlife premises are excellent but if a YP gets 'timed out' that means they cannot access them. Boys and Girls Club is ideal but there is a cost associated with that. (*This has been addressed*)

6.10 **Figures:**

Young people actively engaging currently - 21

Young people appropriately referred - 40

The difference is due to none or withdrawn consent, left the area and reduced support required.

6.11 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 **List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 4(a) – Member of staff poem.

8.0 **Financial considerations:**

8.1 Young Adder is funded by 22% of the whole Adder budget, with partners being funded individually to supply workers to contribute. Young Adder is in receipt of £30,000 for the Meaningful Activities budget.

9.0 **Legal considerations:**

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

A day in the life of a front line worker

Young adder it's your birthday,
You're turning one-year-old,
And here is just a snippet
Of the stories to be told!

We started off just eight of us
Council, Streetlife, EPS,
Not forgetting Blackpool football club,
And of course the NHS.

Referrals came in thick and fast,
And soon we had 1 each.
And when we got the go ahead,
To our clients we did reach.

We joined the other agencies,
And worked great as a team,
Some we had some issues with,
And some were just a dream!

So every morning, early doors,
We'd switch our mobiles on,
And wait for all our messages,
We didn't wait too long!

“I really need to see you,
I’ve been locked up in a cell
Can you come and get me,
And my story I will tell!”

“My head is full of evil thoughts,
The voices are so real,
They’re telling me to do things,
I don’t know how I feel”

They’re telling me to end my life,
I can’t go on much more,
They’re telling me to shut you out,
I really need to score!”

So then we’d check our diaries,
“When would be good to meet?”
It was time to move appointments round,
We’d be run right off our feet!

I’ve got to be at housing!
Someone really needs a bed,
We’ve just come back from Streetlife,
They were thankful to be fed!

Just one hour of warmth and food,
Has made life seem so much richer,
We’ve found the strength to carry on,
“Now do you get the picture?”

So Thursday is a special day,
It really is a treat,
It's time for Duke of Edinburgh
We never admit defeat!

We clamber in that mini bus,
With Rob sat at the wheel
We're looking forward to a picnic lunch
It's just a 3 quid Tesco deal!

We're joined here by the Adder Police,
Dave, Mark and all their crew,
We're waiting for the time to come
To capsize their canoe!

We're building their relationships,
They've been fraught within our time,
We're learning that they're on our side,
And to forget the life of crime!

We've helped them with their finances,
Money's gone in such a flash,
The DWP's on speed dial,
To Ash and his stash of cash!

They've supported them with bank accounts,
Provided them ID,
They've even given training schemes,
And attended MDT!

Well then it comes to sexual health,
The subject's quite taboo,
We screen them and we educate,
And provide condoms for them too!

We really need a bit more time,
And we need to push the LARC, we need to bring them up to date,
And get them out the dark!

"I won't get pregnant standing up,
My condoms are too small,
I cannot catch chlamydia
And pubic lice can't crawl!"

So as the hours go speeding by,
And our plans have gone astray,
We feel we haven't accomplished much,
At the end of a busy day!

When we take a look back,
To see how far we've come,
We've only taken baby steps,
And the journey's nowhere done!

It's been hard to find their hidden strength,
And give support and hope,
But sharing just a little time,
May encourage them to cope.

Every day's a constant fight,
With their chaos and their drama.
You can see the battles going on,
Underneath their strengthened armour.

There maybe only 8 of us,
That's just a tiny team,
We've helped young people realise,
That they don't have to dream.

We've walked a path, side by side,
And strengthened them within,
We've given some empowerment,
To show where to begin.

And one day we will all look back,
And think of our Young Adders
We'll see how much their lives have changed,
As they started climbing ladders.

Some may never reach the top
They'll stay close to the bottom,
But the strength they used to take a step,
Will never be forgotten!

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Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Vicky Gent, Director of Children's Services
Date of Meeting:	24 March 2022

CHILDREN'S SERVICES MONITORING VISIT FEEDBACK

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To receive details of the feedback from the Children's Services Monitoring Visit.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 For the Scrutiny Committee to have oversight in order to provide scrutiny, challenge and support.

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.

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

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

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 No other alternative options to be considered.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 A monitoring visit of Blackpool's Children's Services took place on 11 and 12 January 2022. This was the fourth monitoring visit since the local authority had been judged inadequate in January 2019. Inspectors also completed a focused assurance visit to Blackpool in February 2021.

6.2 Attached at Appendix 5(a) is the written feedback received from Ofsted following the visit.

6.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 5(a) – Monitoring Visit Feedback Letter.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 There are no legal implications to consider.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 There are no sustainability, climate change or environmental factors to consider.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None

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15 February 2022

Victoria Gent
Director of Blackpool Children's Services
1 Bickerstaffe Square
Blackpool
FY1 3AH

Dear Vicky

Monitoring visit to Blackpool children's services

This letter summarises the findings of the monitoring visit to Blackpool children's services on 11 and 12 January 2022. This was the fourth monitoring visit since the local authority was judged inadequate in January 2019. Inspectors also completed a focused assurance visit to Blackpool in February 2021. Her Majesty's inspectors for this visit were Lorna Schlechte and Kathryn Grindrod.

Areas covered by the visit

Inspectors reviewed the progress made at the 'front door' in the following areas of concern identified at the last inspection:

- Step-up from, and step-down to, early help.
- Contacts, referrals and re-referrals.
- Strategy discussions and section 47 enquiries.
- Emergency action out of hours.
- Child in need assessments.
- The impact of leaders and managers.

This visit was carried out in line with the inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS) framework. This visit was carried out fully on site. Inspectors used telephone and video calls for discussions with local authority staff, improvement partners and agencies.

Headline findings

Blackpool continues to make steady progress. There is an effective and well-coordinated multi-agency response to vulnerable families, despite continued high levels of demand. Risk of harm is recognised and responded to in a timely way in the 'request for support' hub, where there is a strong and collaborative partnership presence and robust management oversight. Early help is more visible at the front

door than at the time of inspection in 2018, but there is still more to do to develop an effective integrated early help response from partner agencies to ensure that children receive the right help at the right time. Senior leaders remain appropriately focused on workforce retention, and caseloads have reduced more recently in some parts of the service. There is an appropriate focus on 'getting the basics right' and developing a supportive culture for the significant number of less-experienced staff, but the quality of practice is still too inconsistent.

Findings and evaluation of progress

The impact of COVID-19 continues to be a challenge in Blackpool, where infection rates have been high throughout the pandemic. There has been a strong face-to-face presence at the front door throughout the various lockdowns, which has ensured that partnerships have been maintained effectively.

Children in need of help and protection are identified promptly in the hub, their needs are recognised and they receive appropriate support. Contacts are clearly RAG-rated and visible in live time on a large electronic screen, which helps social workers prioritise their work and understand the nature of concerns and children's vulnerabilities. Although there are various routes into the hub, including an advice and support line for professionals, these are regularly monitored by three hub team managers to ensure that concerns are identified and responded to quickly. Training to partners is valued and ensures that discussions about the quality of referrals, the role of parental consent and the impact on children are regularly considered.

Screening of referrals is detailed, timely and overseen by managers at each stage. There is appropriate consideration of historical concerns and this is clearly recorded. Conversations with parents are detailed and consent is appropriately considered. Thresholds to progress to a referral and social work assessment are appropriately applied and the impact on children is explored. However, inspectors saw examples where hub decision-making on re-referrals was not always accepted by the receiving social work team, or had closed prematurely, leading to a repeat referral. Senior leaders have acknowledged that this is an area requiring greater scrutiny, including the need to fully understand the reasons for an increase in the re-referral rate and the impact on children.

Early help practitioners contribute to decision-making in the hub about when to step up and down for an early help assessment. This ensures more appropriate signposting for early help support and there are some positive examples of early help assessments being completed with families. However, the recently launched early help strategy is not sufficiently embedded across the partnership and more work is required to ensure that partner agencies take on the lead professional role and coordinate early help support. Senior leaders recognise this as a priority. As such, an early help pilot in schools has been developed recently and three early help link workers based in the locality hubs now offer support and guidance to partners to progress this area of practice.

Multi-agency partnerships in the hub are effective, collaborative and supportive. Police, health and independent domestic violence advocates (IDVAs) are co-located with social workers and contribute effectively to information-gathering processes. Police are well represented, triage information effectively and have reduced backlogs of police notifications since the last inspection. Other agencies are not co-located, such as housing, but have clear lines of communication to respond to the needs of vulnerable young people who present as homeless in the town.

The response to domestic abuse at the front door is enhanced by the presence of two experienced IDVAs, who make contact quickly with vulnerable victims. They liaise appropriately with community health-based IDVAs in the hospital and put in place timely and effective safety planning prior to social work involvement. This ensures an early and targeted response to victims and helps prepare families for subsequent social work involvement.

Exploitation of vulnerable children is clearly recognised and there is an effective coordinated response through a daily exploitation meeting at the front door. This multi-agency forum shares intelligence from a range of agencies, including police, the community safety partnership and licensing authority, about missing children and potential grooming activity. The information shared informs disruption activity in known exploitation hotspots across the town. The multi-agency Awaken team works with social workers on targeted pieces of work, completes child exploitation risk assessments and return home interviews for missing children. It has recently increased its outreach operations following a recent pilot to provide diversionary activities for children at risk in known hotspots. This means there is an intelligence-led response to working with children who are being exploited, although senior leaders recognise there is more to do to develop a preventative approach with a range of stakeholders across Blackpool.

There is timely and proportionate action taken when children need a social work response out of office hours from the emergency duty team. The interface with daytime services is well established and effective, although the rationale for decision-making is not always clearly recorded. This means that the record of out-of-hours support does not always reflect the extent of work the team has completed to protect children.

When children need a social work assessment of their needs in the assessment and support teams, assessments are completed in detail, and review points are agreed with the relevant manager. However, the quality of assessments is inconsistent, and they are not always completed in the child's timescales, which senior leaders have recognised is an area for greater scrutiny. There is sometimes a lack of clear analysis and consideration of ethnicity and cultural factors in the assessment, which means that the assessment does not always fully consider children's individual needs. Although management oversight is evident in the assessment document, this does not always challenge the quality of assessment.

The quality of plans lacks specificity about next steps and timescales and there is not always clear management oversight of interventions to measure progress. This means that plans are sometimes too basic and focus on the presenting issue, rather than the underlying concerns which affect children's lives.

When risk of harm to children is significant, there is a swift transfer of responsibility from the hub to one of the four assessment and support teams. Strategy discussions are mostly timely, well attended by a range of relevant partners, ensure good information-sharing and provide a clear rationale for next steps. Appropriate decisions are made at strategy meetings to protect children.

Decision-making is clear about when it is appropriate to escalate to both single and joint agency section 47 enquiries. Child protection enquiries consider history appropriately and collate appropriate information from partner agencies to inform next steps. Direct work with children and families is often completed as part of section 47 investigations, which ensures that there is consideration of the child's voice in the process. Outcomes are mostly appropriate and children progress to an initial protection conference when they need to do so.

Since the last monitoring visit in September 2021, auditing activity has continued at pace, with the introduction of audit fortnights and a mix of thematic and full case audits completed by managers. Audits are often very thorough and provide reflection and detail about strengths and areas for improvement. They continue to tell senior leaders what they need to know about the quality of practice.

Management oversight at the front door is clearly visible on the case record, is often detailed and includes historical context, which provides clear case direction on next steps. Supervision records are completed jointly with the social worker, who provides a detailed overview of history and presenting concerns, with the manager contributing to a reflective analysis to inform next steps. This is sometimes completed well and explores the impact of neglectful experiences on children, although this is not always the case.

There is regular scrutiny of performance indicators and data trends, such as surges of demand during the pandemic and an increase in repeat child protection plans. Performance is regularly reported to the getting to good improvement board and is disseminated to all tiers of management. However, there is not a clear understanding of the reasons underlying an increase in re-referrals, the effectiveness of social work interventions or the response to chronic neglect. Some re-referrals occur after statutory social work involvement has ceased and evidence over-optimism about parental capacity to sustain change at the point of step down to early help or universal services.

Senior leaders are appropriately sighted on workforce priorities, including the need to build more experience and stability across the service. Staff churn has slowed in

recent months as a result of their focus on this issue. Significant progress has been made to recruit a team of permanent managers, and there is close oversight of exit interviews by the director of children's services to inform future retention strategies. Additional funding has been sourced to focus on workforce development capacity and build up skills for less-experienced managers through the development of a leadership academy. However, there are still a significant number of newly qualified social workers and agency staff across the service managing very complex cases of domestic abuse, poor mental health and chronic neglect.

In response to these workforce challenges, support has been strengthened for social workers in their assessed and supported year of employment (ASYE), to ensure that less-experienced staff receive regular supervision and buddy support, and are in touch with their manager on a regular basis when working from home. There is also a focus on 'back to basic' principles, to deliver a more consistent quality of social work in relation to assessments, plans, supervision and direct work. There is recognition of the importance of supporting and nurturing a significant cohort of ASYEs as they develop in their role, with plans for an additional workforce development manager post to provide more focused support to this cohort of staff.

Caseloads have recently reduced and staff report that there is a supportive organisational culture. They remain positive about the model of practice, Blackpool Families Rock, which offers a restorative and solution-focused approach to the complex challenges of social work in the town.

I am copying this letter to the Department for Education.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Schlechte
Her Majesty's Inspector

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Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Paul Turner, Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Early Years.
Date of Meeting:	24 March 2022

PUPIL LITERACY AND READING PERFORMANCE DATA

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the latest GL Assessment pupil performance data.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 For the Scrutiny Committee to have oversight of pupil attainment.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure Scrutiny oversight and to provide the opportunity for further questions and continued Member involvement.

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

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

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1

- Blackpool is a Department for Education Opportunity Area. This has been the case since 2017.

- 6.2
- Blackpool has a town-wide Literacy Strategy aiming to improve levels of literacy across the town.
 - Blackpool has been hit by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, especially since the end of the second lockdown.
 - There is a concern that levels of pupil attainment, progress and reading ability will have been affected by the pandemic.
 - Town-wide baseline tests provided by the organisation “GL Assessment” have been funded in Blackpool for three years. As part of this package there is a test that measures pupil reading levels/ability. There is also a test that measures pupils’ attitudes to schools and self (PASS).
- 6.3
- The data from the GL assessments shows that Blackpool children have a mean Standard Age Score (SAS) that is at the national average or very slightly (1 point) below.
 - This shows that the cohort is performing at national average and this is sustained from Year 6 into Year 7. There does not appear to be a drop-off from the end of Primary to the beginning of Secondary education.
 - This round of testing has shown, however, that the reading level in Year 5 is lower than in Year 6. This may be due to different cohorts, with one being at a lower average level than the other, or there may be other factors influencing the scores. It is not possible to tell this from the data. Further exploration of the data will be required to establish what factors are relevant.
 - Similar patterns are seen in the passage comprehension analysis and the sentence completion analysis. This may show that reading for meaning is slightly less developed within the cohort than their ability to read complete sentences.
 - At Year 7 level, the mean SAS is 99, with the south of the town showing a slightly lower mean SAS at 97. Once again, this may be attributed to many different factors, although the correlation may be relatively weak.
 - Pupils in Year 7 have a good attitude to school and self, as indicated by the PASS surveys. It is indicative of a high satisfaction level with school and self, which is good news for Blackpool schools.

6.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 6(a) - GL Assessment Overview.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 Pupil testing costs approximately £120,000 per annum and consideration may be given to whether funding of such testing should be continued.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 Blackpool Literacy Strategy.

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Blackpool Primary Years 5 and 6 Report

Emily Patrick

March 2022



Reading overview

NGRT assesses a pupil's ability to decode, comprehend and apply meaning. It also measures phonological ability in less able readers.

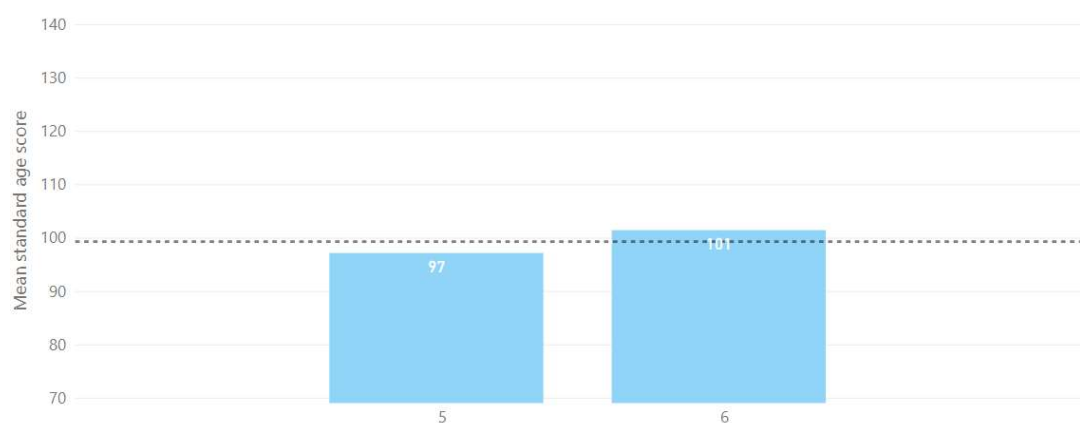


Reading - key observations

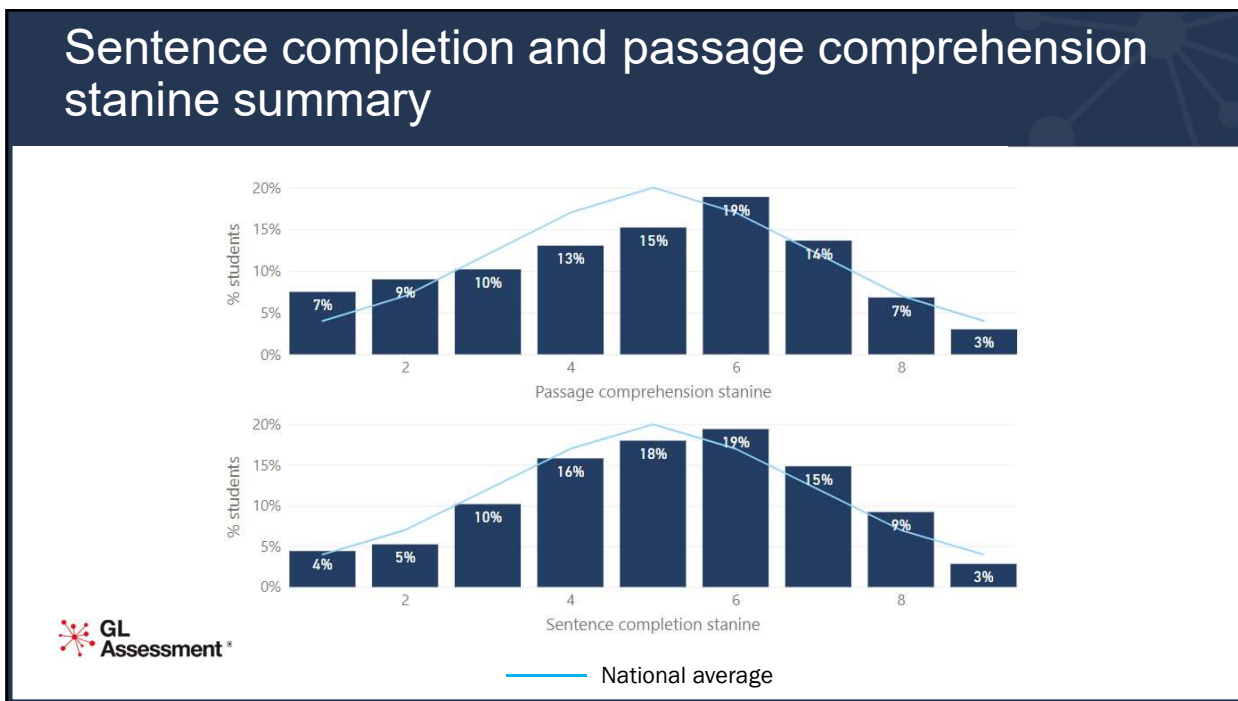
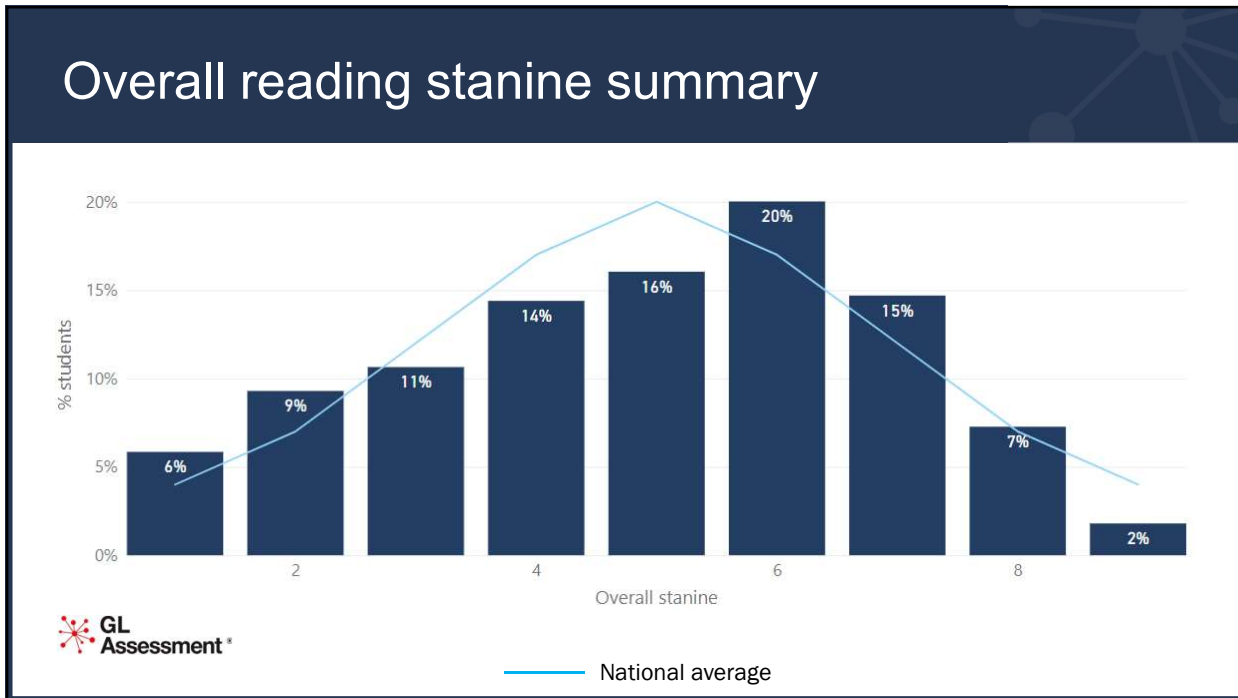
- At Project level, the mean SAS for reading is 99 compared to a national average of 100.
- The Year 5 reading attainment is weaker than the Year 6 attainment.
- Overall, 15% of students fall within the lowest two stanines for reading.



Reading SAS summary by year



..... Average across the Project (99). The national average is 100.



PASS: Interpreting percentile ranks

High satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 31 st – 100 th percentile
Moderate satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 21 st – 30 th percentile
Low moderate satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the 6 th – 20 th percentile
Low satisfaction with their school experience	Students/Cohorts in the lowest 5% of responses

Blackpool KS3 Literacy Project Year 7 Report

Emily Patrick

Key group gaps explained

- Gaps between the average attainment of different key groups can be descriptively categorised as follows:

Gap Size (SAS points)	Description
0	No gap
1-2	Negligible
3-4	Small
5-6	Medium
7+	Large

- These descriptions are subjective, but to put these into context a gap of 6 SAS points is equivalent to a difference of half a GCSE grade or three scaled score points.

Reading overview

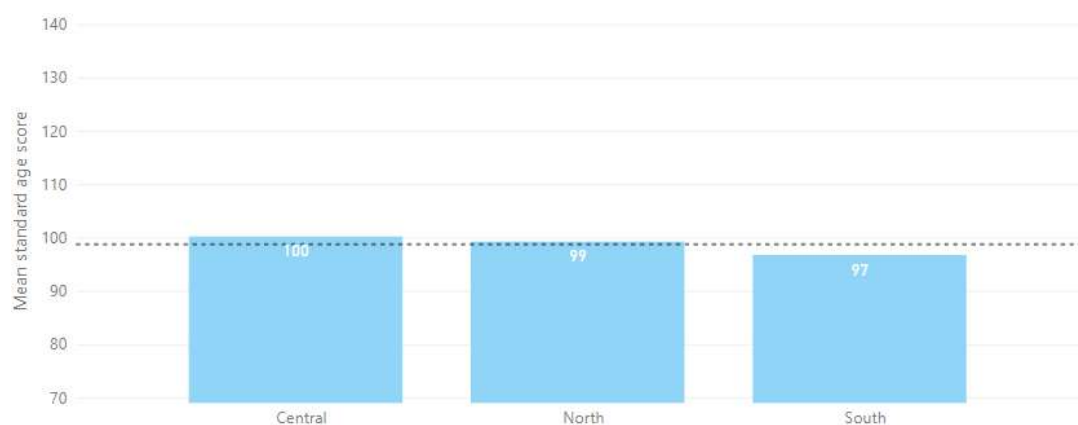
NGRT assesses a pupil's ability to decode, comprehend and apply meaning. It also measures phonological ability in less able readers.

Reading - key observations

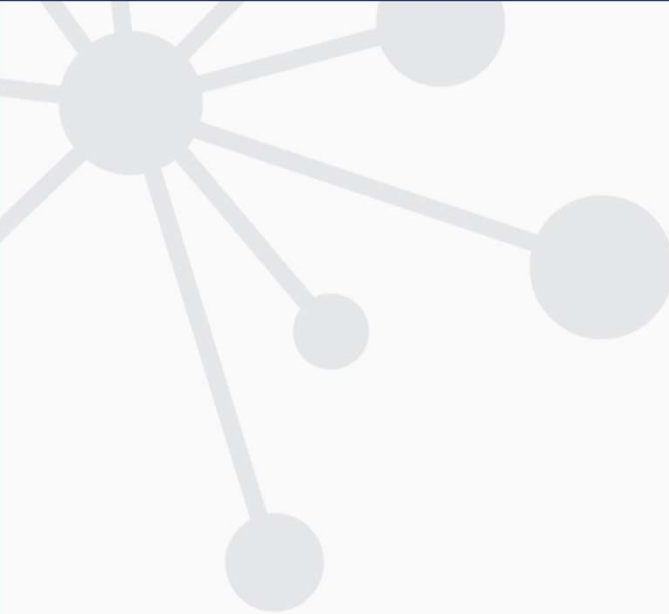
- At Project level, the mean SAS for reading is 99 compared to a national average of 100.
- The South region has a slightly slower average SAS of 97.
- Overall, 16% of students fall within the lowest two stanines for reading.
- There is a small gender gap and medium FSM gap at project level for reading.



Reading SAS summary by region



..... Average across the Project (99). The national average is 100.



Pupil Attitudes overview

PASS helps identify fragile learners and uncovers hidden barriers to learning.

Pupil attitudes – key observations

- On average, the student satisfaction levels for all factors are above the 31st percentile; this equates to high satisfaction with their school experience.
- The lowest factors are:
 - Perceived Learning Capability
 - Learner Self Regard
- The highest factors are:
 - Feelings About School
 - Preparedness for Learning
 - Attitudes to Teachers
 - Attitudes to Attendance

The PASS factors

1	Feelings about school	Explores whether a pupil feels they belong to or are alienated from their learning community. A low score in this measure can indicate feelings of social exclusion and potential bullying.
2	Perceived Learning Capability	Offers a snapshot of a pupil's unfolding impressions of self-efficacy and can reveal early warning signs of demoralisation and disaffection.
3	Self regard	Equivalent to self-worth, this measure is focused quite specifically on learning and shows a strong correlation with achievement.
4	Preparedness for learning	Highly correlated with pupils at risk of behavioural difficulties, this measure explores whether a pupil feels they have the tools in place to learn. It covers areas such as study skills, attentiveness and concentration.
5	Attitudes to teachers	Provides an invaluable insight into a pupil's perception of the relationship they have with school staff.
6	General work ethic	Highlighting pupils' aspirations and motivation to succeed in life, this is the first of two motivational measures. It focuses on purpose and direction, not just at school but beyond.
7	Confidence in learning	Identifies a pupil's ability to persevere when faced with a challenge.
8	Attitudes to attendance	Correlating very highly with actual attendance 12 months later, this measure enables teachers to intercede much earlier with strategies to reduce the likelihood of truancy in the future.
9	Response to curriculum demands	This second motivational measure focuses more narrowly on school-based motivation to undertake and complete curriculum based tasks.

Glossary of Terms

NGRT – New Group Reading Test

SAS – Standard Age Score

KS3 – Key Stage 3

FSM – Free School Meals

PASS – Pupil Attitude to School and Self

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Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Paul Turner, Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Early Years
Date of Meeting:	24 March 2022

SEND STRATEGY UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider an update on the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 For the Scrutiny Committee to have oversight and input into the Council's SEND Strategy.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure Scrutiny involvement in the SEND Strategy.

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

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

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 Significant work/audit has been completed in the SEND service since September 2021. A number of pieces of work that need to be completed have been identified:

- Systemic change to further enhance inclusion across providers, building on good partnership work already started for 'hard to place pupils'.

- Developing services which are genuinely co-produced with parents/carers.
- Increased joining up between key partners, so that the Council's needs analysis and self-assessment informs joint commissioning priorities.
- Publishing a clear partnership SEND Strategy with quantifiable targets for improvement.
- Continue to improve the local offer, building on the good work already done.
- Ensure the Council's impartial service for advice to parents (SENDIASS) is compliant with nationally agreed standards.
- Develop an outcome improvement plan for the SEND service.
- Embed the new models for quality assurance and decision-making processes.
- Improve the Council's use of data and intelligence to monitor and improve performance.
- Enhance mechanisms to capture the feedback from parents, carers and young people about Council services and what difference they have made.

6.2 Revised SEND strategy -

The revised SEND strategy as a draft document is now available and will be open to comment and consultation until the end of May 2022. The Strategy has been attached at Appendix 7(a) for the consideration of the Committee.

6.3 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 7(a) – Draft SEND Strategy.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 Ensuring that the SEND team and associated systems are within budget is essential.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 Blackpool Council has a statutory duty to provide enough SEND places and to ensure that the quality of SEND provision is of a good quality.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 There is significant risk if SEND provision is not of a good standard.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 SEND is a statutory responsibility and there is a significant impact upon individuals and families if services cannot be provided to a high enough standard.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 A SEND consultation was conducted earlier in this financial year.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 2020-2030 Education Strategy.
Inclusion Strategy.

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DRAFT Blackpool SEND Strategy 2022-2025



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DRAFT



Introduction

As local leaders, we are delighted to introduce the Blackpool Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Strategy for 2022-2025 on behalf of the Blackpool SEND Partnership.

Our refreshed plan has grown from the collective voices of our SEND partnership and SEND community. It provides direction and challenge to enable positive outcomes for children and young people so that they can live happy healthy lives in a community that is inclusive and supports them to achieve their ambitions. The SEND Strategy will be delivered through a number of key priorities and actions that will be reviewed annually alongside feedback we receive on the impact of changes and improvements and on our performance. As a result, we may change and adapt those actions.

Learning from neighbouring local authorities, as well as inspections of other services in Blackpool, we have delivered significant improvements despite the difficulties that our area faces, and we have improved our use of data and feedback to understand our SEND population and their lived experience. This enables us to improve existing services and to jointly commission the right services. We continue to improve the way that we work, the services we deliver, and the support we provide across our SEND community. Despite the changes we have made over the last few years, we recognise that there is more work to do so that we achieve our vision for children and young people with SEND.

Although working through the pandemic has seen unprecedented times, the SEND Partnership has been able to maintain services, and learned new things, whilst also strengthening the ways we work together.

The Blackpool SEND Strategy 2022-25 supports our continuing growth as a partnership, with children and young people and their families at the centre of all that we do. It sets out our vision, priorities, and ways of working, ensuring that the voices of children and young people and their families are heard as we reshape services to meet local needs.



Our partnership across education, health and care, and with Children and Young People and Blackpool Parent Carer Forum, is improving, and we continue to develop the ways we work together, recognising that we cannot achieve our vision in isolation.

Our Partnership Vision

In Blackpool, we want all children and young people with SEND to live happy healthy lives in a community that is inclusive and that supports them to achieve their ambitions. In delivering our vision, we recognise that SEND is everyone's business, and as such it is featured across a range of boards and services from across our partnership.

Our Partnership Priorities

Working in partnership we have identified four key priorities that help us achieve our vision, which are:

- An inclusive education in all our schools that encourages and enables them to achieve their very best.
- Early access to education, health and care services, and the best opportunities, that help children and young people live healthy lives.
- A range of leisure and social activities that develop their interests and broaden opportunities to socialise and develop friendships, incorporating respite placements
- Clear routes into further/higher education and training that will provide young people with the skills to secure employment, live independent, healthy lives and reach their potential.

The following pages describe the anticipated deliverables from these priorities.



An inclusive education in all our schools that encourages and enables them to achieve their very best

- Ensure schools are well supported to provide the correct provision at the right time, with appropriate funding attached.
- Increase parental confidence in mainstream schools
- Increase the % of children with an EHCP who are educated in a mainstream school.
- Improve quality of assessment / identification of need across our schools.
- Improve outcomes for children receiving SEN Support
- Provide high quality advice and guidance on SEND so that it is available to schools in a co-ordinated way at the time of need.
- Work with health colleagues to provide support to children and young people
- Deliver high quality workforce development for all staff across the partnership

Early access to education, health and care services, and the best opportunities, that help children and young people live healthy lives.

- Establish co-located services, providing integrated 'wrap around' services in places close to where people live
- Identify need early and provide support in the right place at the right time
- Jointly commissioned and outcomes-focused services
- Ensure that easily accessible support, which focuses on meeting need, is available, through the start and utilisation of the graduated response

A range of leisure and social activities that develop their interests and broaden opportunities to socialise and develop friendships, incorporating respite placements

- Ensure services are available before and after school when appropriate.

- Provide activities covering the majority of the school holiday periods, providing holiday activities that are aligned with the holiday activity programme
- Commission and monitor services to ensure they are cost-effective
- Create activities in accessible locations to avoid unnecessary travel
- Ensure there is a wide variety of options for respite, short breaks and leisure opportunities to meet a wide range of needs
- Empower communities to provide accessible opportunities and support

Clear routes into further/higher education and training that will provide young people with the skills to secure employment, live independent lives and reach their potential.

- Ensure there is effective, timely and good quality advice and guidance, tailored to meet the individual needs of children and young people with SEND
- Teach independent life skills (managing bills, transportation, interviews, making phone calls etc) throughout life to support preparation for adulthood
- Ensure our commissioning arrangements for FE places reflect the growing number and needs of young people with SEND, resulting in a range of options for further and higher education
- Use our data to inform and influence curriculum content
- Expand on enhanced opportunities to complete supported internships, through a wider range of providers
- Reduce the number of children/young people with EHCPs who are NEET
- Ensure a local, high-quality offer for post 16 learning and training to encourage young people with SEND to stay in Blackpool
- Strengthen links with social care and housing to predict future supported living and independent accommodation.



We will achieve our priorities through:

Continually developing our collaborative partnership approach.

Sustained strategic prioritisation of children and young people with SEND across the partnership of local agencies.

Improving the quality of new and existing EHCPs, through rigorous planning & review.

Effective engagement and co-production of services and improvements with local parents, children and young people, and our partnership.

Comprehensive, cross-agency reviews of local provision to ensure that children are helped as early and inclusively as possible, informed by children's needs rather than where they are educated.

Appropriate and equitable funding that follows the child, based on need, through their childhood and early adulthood.

Enhanced workforce training and development, targeted at key groups of professionals.

We currently have a particular focus on:

1. Improving the support provided to young people with SEND aged 14 to 25 years in their preparation for adulthood (PfA) through PfA and/or transitions conversations as part of the EHCP and annual review processes as early as possible and before year 9, and at health appointments from a young person's 14th birthday
2. Developing our workforce knowledge and expertise related to SEND, across our partnership
3. Ensuring mainstream services (eg youth hubs, information, advice and guidance) are accessible to young people with SEND
4. Improving the quality of co-ordinated cross-agency support for children with complex needs
5. Auditing EHCP plans to continually improve the quality of plans



6. Working collaboratively to implement service review recommendations and improvement plans for commissioned health provision, including speech & language services and school nursing
7. Implement the ICS Thrive (CAMHS) Redesign at Place

DRAFT

Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager.
Date of Meeting:	24 March 2022

COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the contents of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee's Workplan for 2022/2023.

2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To approve the Committee Workplan, taking into account any suggestions for amendment or addition.

2.2 To monitor the implementation of the Committee's recommendations/actions.

3.0 Reasons for recommendations:

3.1 To ensure the Workplan is up to date and is an accurate representation of the Committee's work.

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

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

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council Priority:

5.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background Information

6.1 Scrutiny Workplan

A Scrutiny Workplanning Workshop was held on Monday 7 June 2021 to consider items for inclusion on the Committee's workplan for the 2020/2021 municipal year. The workplan is a flexible document that sets out the work that will be undertaken by the Committee over the course of the year, both through scrutiny review and Committee meetings.

A further Workplanning Workshop will be scheduled to take place following Annual Council and will provide the opportunity to further consider the Committee's workload for the following municipal year and to prioritise areas for scrutiny review. Attached at Appendix 8(a) is a draft of the proposed Workplan for 2022/2023, which will be used as a starting point for further consideration at the Workplanning Workshop.

Committee Members are invited to suggest topics at any time that might be suitable for scrutiny review through completion of the Scrutiny Review Checklist. The checklist forms part of the mandatory scrutiny procedure for establishing review panels and must therefore be completed and submitted for consideration by the Committee, prior to a topic being approved for scrutiny.

6.3 Implementation of Recommendations/Actions

The table attached at Appendix 8(b) has been developed to assist the Committee in effectively ensuring that the recommendations made by the Committee are acted upon. The table will be regularly updated and submitted to each Committee meeting.

Members are requested to consider the updates provided in the table and ask follow-up questions as appropriate to ensure that all recommendations are implemented.

6.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 8(a) - Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee Draft 2022/2023 Workplan.

Appendix 8(b) - Implementation of Recommendations/Actions.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

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Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee - Work Plan 2022/2023	
June 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children's Social Care Improvement – To receive a report on the number of children and young people who are re-referred back into the social care system following discharge. 2. Education/SEND – To receive information on the impact of the pandemic on early language and speech development. 3. Young Inspectors – To receive an update on the work of the Young Inspectors. 4. CSAP Annual Report – To consider CSAP's annual report. 5. Oracle Building Update – To receive an update on SEND provisions at the Oracle building. 6. Literacy Strategy Update – To receive an update on the implementation of the Literacy Strategy. 7. SEND Strategy – To receive the final version of the SEND Strategy.
September 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children Born Into Care – To receive an update on the ongoing work looking at children born into care. 2. Early Help Strategy – To receive a report on partnership working with the Police, Health and Schools. 3. Youth Justice Update – To receive an update on the work of the Youth Justice Team. 4. Nutrition of School Meals and Chef's Academy – To receive a report on the nutritional value of school meals and information on Chef's Academy. 5. HeadStart Final Report – To receive HeadStart's final report. 6. Early Years Funding – To receive information on funding for Early Years.
November 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Better Start – To receive an annual update on the work of Better Start and the development of the Communication Strategy. 2. Literacy Strategy Update – To receive an update on the implementation of the Literacy Strategy. 3. Schools Response to the Pandemic Scrutiny Review – Recommendation monitoring and the impact of the pandemic on pupil attainment. 4. PSHE Programme – To consider details of the Personal, Social and Health Education programme offered in schools, with particular emphasis on raising awareness of coercive relationships. 5. Library Service – To receive a report on the Library Service.
January 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children's Social Care Update – To receive the findings of the Department for Education Care Review launched in January 2021. 2. Youth Justice Update – To receive an update on the work of the Youth Justice Team.
March 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Literacy Strategy Update – To receive an update on the implementation of the Literacy Strategy.

Scrutiny Review Work	
November 2021	<p>CAMHS Re-design</p> <p>Two information sessions have been provided jointly to Members of the Adult Social Care and Health and the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committees. Further updates were requested and will be provided in due course.</p>
January 2022	<p>Catch-Up/Recovery Premium Spend Review</p> <p>To review how Blackpool schools have spent their Catch-up/Recovery premium funding from the government to consider if the funding has been utilised to ensure that children are able to catch-up any lost learning caused by the pandemic.</p>

March 2022	<p>Mental Health Support for Young Men (aged 16-25) and Suicide Prevention Services</p> <p>A joint scrutiny review with the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee. To include further information on the Elliot's House project and the links between self-harm and suicide rates.</p>
Post-September 2022	<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools</p> <p>To review the provisions within schools to support the mental health and wellbeing of pupils. Potential link to SEND target of: <i>'Children and young people with SEND to enjoy good physical and mental health and wellbeing emotional health.'</i></p>
May 2022	<p>Young People classed as Not In Employment, Education or Training (NEET)</p> <p>To consider this cross-cutting issue which disproportionately affects vulnerable young people. To include the potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on training/employment opportunities for young people, as well as considering the breadth of the offer in Blackpool and whether young people are adequately directed to available opportunities.</p>
TBC	<p>SEND Funding and Capacity</p> <p>Cabinet Member referral.</p>
TBC	<p>The Experience of Looked After Children in Blackpool</p> <p>To gain an understanding of the journey of a cohort of Our Children including scrutiny of their experiences with various partners such as the Police, Health Services and schools. To potentially also include their experiences of Alternative Provision. Links to the following themes taken from the CSC Improvement Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Improve the systems and quality of Agency Decision Maker's processes for approval and matching of foster carers and adopters.</i> 2. <i>Ensure that our social workers are prepared for court proceedings.</i>

MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
1	09.01.20	To receive the findings of the National Association of Children's Services examining the costs of residential placements for children and the impact on Local Authorities.	June 2022	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services	This work was never completed by DfE due to Covid-19 and will now be built into a care review launched by DfE in January 2021, with an expected 12 month timescale. Outcomes of care review anticipated by June 2022.	Not yet due.
2	09.01.20	To receive the findings of the Department for Education impact study on out of area placements.	June 2022	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services	This work was never completed by DfE due to Covid-19 and will now be built into a care review launched by DfE in January 2021, with an expected 12 month timescale. Outcomes of care review anticipated by June 2022.	Not yet due.
3	28.01.21	That the data relating to the proportion of Our Children who were looked after be reported to a future meeting of the Committee following the outcomes of the working party examining the issue.	September 2022	Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Service	Ms McCartan to include within her next report to the Committee in September 2022.	Not yet due.
4	22.04.21	To receive further data on Blackpool's mental health hospital admission rates once available.	June 2022	Stephen Ashley, CSAP Independent Scrutineer	Requested for provision at the Committee meeting in June 2022.	Not yet due.
5	24.06.21	To receive regular updates on the work of the Young Inspectors with an update to be considered by the Committee at its meeting in June 2022.	June 2022	Kirsty Fisher, Engagement Officer	To be provided at the Committee meeting in June 2022.	

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
6	07.10.21	To receive pupil literacy and reading performance data, focusing specifically on the reduction in attainment levels as pupils move from KS2 to KS3.	March 2022	Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)	Requested for provision at the Committee meeting in March 2022.	
7	07.10.21	That further information regarding available funding for Early Years be provided to the Committee.	TBC	Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)		
8	07.10.21	To consider the youth provision draft report once completed.	March 2022	Lisa Arnold, Head of Parks, Leisure and Catering Services	Ms Arnold has advised the draft report should be available in March 2022 and will be shared with Committee Members via an informal information session.	
9	07.10.21	To consider autumn 2021 GL PASS survey data once available	TBC	Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)		
10	09.12.21	That Better Start's draft Communications Strategy be shared with the Committee once completed.	November 2022	Clare Law, Director of Centre for Early Child Development		Not yet due.
11	09.12.21	That a further update on the work of Better Start be provided in twelve months' time.	November 2022	Clare Law, Director of Centre for Early Child Development		Not yet due.
12	09.12.21	That further details of the Personal, Social and Health	TBC	Paul Turner, Assistant Director		

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
		Education programme offered in schools be provided at a future meeting, with particular emphasis on raising awareness of coercive relationships.		of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)		
13	09.12.21	That further consideration be given by the Committee to the findings of the 'Child of the North' report and the potential impact on Blackpool.	TBC			
14	09.12.21	That information on the pathways available for young people with SEND once they have left education be provided at a future meeting of the Committee and that this area be considered for inclusion within the SEND Strategy.	March 2022	Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education, SEND and Early Years)	Requested for provision at the Committee meeting in March 2022.	

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