

## **Young People and Children Scrutiny Committee – Ofsted Subgroup**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2015**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Stone– in the Chair

Councillor Cox and Reid

Mrs E Holt, Co-opted Member, Parent Governor Representative

Ms C Wibier, Co-opted Member, Parent Governor Representative

Councillor S Newman, Executive Member for Children’s Services

#### **Apologies:**

Councillor Midgeley

Mrs B Kelner, Co-opted Member, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester

Mrs M Gadian, Co-opted Member, Teacher Representative

#### **YPC/OSG/15/10**

#### **Minutes**

#### **Decision**

To agree the minutes of the Ofsted Subgroup meeting held on 24 February 2015 as a correct record.

#### **YPC/OSG/15/11**

#### **OfSTED Reports for Schools, Children’s Centres and Daycare Providers**

The Ofsted Subgroup considered a selection of Ofsted Inspection Reports. The group noted that there were no schools within Manchester awarded an ‘outstanding’ or ‘inadequate’ rating by Ofsted since the group last met in January 2015. The group noted that no daycare providers based within Children’s Centres had been inspected since the group last met in January 2015. The group considered three schools which had received a ‘good’ or ‘requires improvement’ rating. They also considered the inspection reports of two Children’s Centres. The Head of Schools Quality Assurance and Early Years introduced the reports across their main themes. The group also welcomed the Virtual Head Teacher for Looked After Children who had been invited to the meeting to contribute to discussions.

The Head of Schools Quality Assurance and Early Years gave members further detail and explanation regarding the inspection carried out at St Anthony’s Catholic Primary School. She said it had been inspected before it became an academy and had been awarded a ‘good’ rating. It had maintained this rating at its most recent inspection and had achieved a ‘good’ rating across all areas. Overall it was a very positive inspection. She said that a new head teacher was appointed in 2011 and outlined some of the changes since then. Members agreed to write to St Anthony’s Catholic Primary School congratulating them on their recent inspection result.

Members discussed the contribution of head teachers in achieving a positive Ofsted inspection result. Members asked whether there were any barriers to the recruitment in Manchester. The Head of Schools Quality Assurance and Early Years said that approximately 15 head teachers would be retiring over the next term and that lots of

recruitment was being carried out. She assured members that some very capable head teachers were being recruited and that schools had clear succession plans in place. She said the Council was working closely with the Manchester Schools Alliance to help strengthen middle leadership within schools and build their capacity for future progression. The Director of Education and Skills said the degree of turnover this year was no different to other years. The Executive Member for Children's Services said that 10% was an expected and acceptable level of turnover.

The Head of Schools Quality Assurance and Early Years gave members further detail and explanation regarding the inspection carried out at Our Lady's Roman Catholic High School. She said this was the second time the school had been inspected and graded as 'requires improvement'. She said a key area for improvement was students attainment and progress in mathematics. She said a brokered support package was being provided in response to this and the school needed to focus on closing the gap between disadvantaged students and students overall. She said improvements had been made by the senior leadership team since the previous inspection and she expected the school to aim for a 'good' rating at its next inspection. The Virtual Head Teacher advised that this school was involved with the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and that her experience of the school was very positive and they provided good quality Personal Education Plans (PEPs).

Members discussed the lack of maths and science teachers generally and agreed the government should do something to tackle this. The Executive Member for Children's Services said that she had recently attended a North-West regional event of Lead Members and Ofsted where this issue had been discussed. She said that it was a nationally recognised problem and incentives were being explored. However, it may be necessary to provide local solutions and schools may need to consider reviewing their pay awards in a competitive marketplace.

The Head of Schools Quality Assurance and Early Years gave members further detail and explanation regarding the inspection carried out at Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School. She said that the school had achieved a 'good' rating and had on its previous inspection. She said it was a successful school which was expanding and had strong senior leadership in place. Members noted positive aspects within the report and were surprised it had not achieved 'outstanding'. The Head of Schools Quality Assurance and Early Years said that this could be achievable if improvements were made, for example strengthening middle management. Members agreed to write to the school congratulating them on their recent inspection result and to reference the strength of the governing body as noted by Ofsted. Members discussed the reference to handwriting as an area for improvement and queried the importance of this in the modern world. The Executive Member for Children's Services agreed and noted that Ofsted had started to emphasise phonics and handwriting more over recent years.

The Head of Schools Quality Assurance and Early Years gave members further detail and explanation regarding the inspection carried out at Chorlton Nell Lane Children's Centre. She said that it had not previously been inspected and had achieved a 'requires improvement' rating. She said it only became a Children's Centre this year, replacing the one based at Chorlton Library. She said it was under

new leadership and the reach and registration of its service users had improved. She said new tracking processes had been introduced which needed to be embedded within existing systems and processes. She said more emphasis was needed to encourage those adults not in employment or training; and its partnerships with health and social care needed to be strengthened. Members noted that whilst the report stated Nell Lane was a fairly affluent area, it still served two of the most deprived wards in the country. Members questioned whether the rating was correct. The Executive Member for Children's Services said it was a contradictory report, and that since the location had moved further analysis was needed of which families were accessing its services. The Head of Schools Quality Assurance and Early Years said that an internal quality assurance process had awarded the centre the same rating and assured members that the Council would continue to monitor the centre and ensure the required improvements were implemented. Members agreed that they would also continue to monitor this Children's Centre.

The Head of Schools Quality Assurance and Early Years gave members further detail and explanation regarding the inspection carried out at Didsbury Park Children's Centre. She said that this was its first inspection and it had achieved a 'requires improvement' rating. She advised that both Didsbury Park and the Children's Centre previously based at Chorlton Library were set up as Phase 3 Sure Start Centres which were established in less deprived areas primarily to signpost residents. She said that an internal quality assurance check a year ago revealed an inadequate rating, and improvements had been made since that time. She said the areas for improvement were similar to Nell Lane and included a need to encourage adult learning, training and employment; and make improvement to the tracking of clients using its services. She said that most children from this centre did access good quality education and childcare places. Also, the centre did have positive partnerships with health visitors but there was a need to make this more systematic across all Children's Centres. The Executive Member for Children's Services noted that the centre had been inspected only two weeks after new management had been put in place.

A member queried whether there were any gaps in governance across Children's Centres generally. Officers advised that governance arrangements at Children's Centres differed from schools and included representatives from multiple agencies as well as parent governors. In response to members concerns regarding the tracking of clients the Head of Quality Assurance of Schools and Early Years advised that the Council was looking at best practice from other local authorities. She said the process required co-operation between the local authority, private providers, school, childminders and partner agencies. She said successful systems were also reliant on good ICT infrastructure being in place. Members agreed that they would continue to monitor this Children's Centre.

**Decision:**

1. To write to St Anthony's Catholic Primary School congratulating them on their recent 'good' inspection result
2. To note the report of Our Lady's Roman Catholic High School, which received a 'requires improvement' rating

3. To write to Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School congratulating them on their recent 'good' inspection result; and to reference the strength of the governing body as noted by Ofsted.
4. To note the report of Chorlton Nell Lane Children's Centre, which received a 'requires improvement rating'. To note that the Council will be working to address the issues identified in the report and that the Subgroup will continue to monitor the situation
5. To note the report of Didsbury Park Children's Centre, which received a 'requires improvement' rating. To note that the Council will be working to address the issues identified in the report and that the Subgroup will continue to monitor the situation

### **YPC/OSG/15/12**

### **Post Ofsted Improvement Plan Update**

The group received the current version of the Post Ofsted Improvement Plan. The group welcomed the Virtual Head Teacher for Looked After Children (LAC) who had been invited to answer members' queries.

The Virtual Head Teacher explained that she had been appointed prior to the recent Ofsted inspection in recognition of the need to improve provision for LAC within Manchester. She said that she headed a small team of three staff but that the 'Virtual School Team' was wider than this as it included all schools and teachers used by LAC. She drew members' attention to the area for improvement B4 detailed in the Post OfSTED Improvement Plan which related to LAC and Personal Education Plans (PEPs). She stressed the importance of providing support to LAC to enable them to maintain stability in their education. She explained that a PEP was a vehicle for capturing what services and support children were accessing, what their projected targets were, and what progress was being made. She said it was a legal requirement that all LAC had one; and it was important that they were updated correctly and were of a high quality. She said at the point of the Ofsted Inspection 80% of LAC in Manchester had a PEP in place. She said that a recent change to legislation meant that PEPs now had to be carried out each term.

The Virtual Head said that her team quality assured every PEP they received and gave feedback to the schools, which schools appreciated. She said that they monitored submitted PEPs by using a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating system. She said that of Manchester LAC 472 attended Manchester Schools and 411 attended schools in other local authorities. She stressed the importance of social workers building relationships with schools in other local authorities and ensuring PEP compliance. She said that from 1 February 2015 Manchester had introduced electronic PEPs (E-PEPs). This was making it easier to ensure compliance and monitor LAC progress. She said that E-PEPs saved time and provided a holistic view of the young person including their progress, attainment and attendance, and any exclusions. The Virtual Head said that at the end of the Autumn term: 92.2% of LAC educated in Manchester had PEPs in place, 62% of LAC educated out of authority had PEPs in place, and overall 71.8% of LAC had PEPs in place. In response to a member's query she advised that other local authorities had their own arrangements

for PEPs and many were still paper based. However, they were required to complete E-PEPs for any Manchester children educated within their local authority.

The Executive Member for Children's Services welcomed that over 90% of LAC educated in Manchester had a PEP in place. She queried whether any barriers were in place to submitting PEPs and said she was aware of a social worker refusing to sign off a PEP as the quality was not good enough. The Virtual Head Teacher advised that schools could submit their section of the PEP without requiring the social workers agreement. The Strategic Director of Children's Services said she was pleased that social workers were challenging the content, but assured members that the Virtual Head Teacher would clarify the process with schools and social workers. The Virtual Head Teacher said she had carried out lots of briefings with schools; including those based in other local authorities.

A member queried whether all Manchester LAC in residential care received at least 25 hours of education. The Virtual Head said this was reviewed by the PEP. The PEP asked whether the child received 25 hours of education, if not why not, and whether any related interventions were in place. The Virtual Head said she worked closely with the head teachers of Pupil Referral Units (PRU's) in Manchester to address any issues. She stressed the importance of supporting, challenging and encouraging LAC.

Members noted that schools received funding called the Pupil Premium for those children subject to a PEP, and discussed whether this funding could be withheld where schools had not submitted PEPs. The Virtual Head Teacher confirmed that she would challenge schools to demonstrate they were using the Pupil Premium to benefit the young person that it related to, and demonstrate the intended outcomes. She said that most young people had a PEP in place, but it may be that her team had not yet had sight of it. She explained that schools needed to provide justification that they were spending the pupil premium correctly but that the Council wanted the money to go where it was needed and restricting its release would only result in it being returned to the Department for Education. She said it was important that schools did not rely on the funding to cover their basic staffing costs. Members discussed other ways it could be used such as ballet, football and vocational courses. A member stressed the importance of a person centred approach when completing the PEP rather than what the school curriculum provided. The Virtual Head Teacher agreed emphasising the importance of the child's voice. A member queried whether the group could receive a copy of a dummy E-PEP and be shown how these were completed at a future meeting to which the Virtual Head Teacher agreed.

The Strategic Director of Children's Services thanked the Virtual Head Teacher and her colleagues. She said Ofsted would assess the Council on how it narrowed the gap between young people generally and those that were LAC. She said they would look at data such as GCSE results, numbers in employment or vocational courses, numbers not in employment, education and training (NEET), and numbers accessing University. She said it was important the Council was certain it had done everything it could to narrow the gap.

The Strategic Director of Children's Services then told members of a LAC mentoring and befriending scheme which worked well in other local authorities. She said this

was of real value to LAC yet incurred minimal cost to the Council. Members held a detailed discussion regarding the merits of mentoring and befriending schemes, their own experience of schemes, the different models in place, and safeguarding concerns. The Strategic Director said professionals from the Council, Education and Health Sectors were ideal as they understood the public sector and could provide challenge for young people. She said they would likely be subject to vetting already although acknowledged they would need to be vetted again. She said that the Corporate Parenting Panel would be well placed to oversee such a scheme. The Executive Member for Children's Services welcomed the idea and suggested involving the business community and University Students. The Director of Education and Skills mentioned an organisation that could arrange access to mentors and agreed to investigate and report back to the group regarding this. The Virtual Head said that Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Manchester employed staff who were independent visitors to Children's Homes in Manchester and they may be interested. The Strategic Director and The Executive Member for Children's Services agreed to investigate this.

**Decision:**

1. To invite the Virtual Head Teacher for LAC to a future meeting and to receive a demonstration from her on completing an E-PEP
2. To request that the Director of Education and Skills investigate and provide further information on an organisation(s) that could provide access to mentors
3. To note that the Strategic director for Children's Services and the Executive Member for Children's Services will explore the possibility of introducing a mentoring scheme for LAC.

**YPC/OSG/15/13**

**Any Other Business**

The Strategic Director updated members on the progress made in senior management recruitment to Children's Services. She advised that the Troubled Families scheme was still struggling to reduce its caseloads. However, she said that if the 1 April 2015 deadline for the target was not met that she was confident that the target could be achieved within that month. She explained that demand for children's social care had not decreased: contacts had decreased but not the conversion rates to becoming social care cases. She said the numbers of LAC had decreased slightly to less than 1,300, which was the lowest it had been for a long time.

The Chair told members that he was meeting with the Chair of the Improvement Board this coming Friday and the Chair of Young People and Children Scrutiny committee would be meeting her at a future date. Members would receive an update at a future meeting.

The Committee Support Officer advised that if the Subgroup wished to continue meeting it would need to be re-established in the new municipal year. She said she would draft a report containing the Terms of Reference and Work Programme which would need to be submitted to the Young People and Children's Scrutiny Committee for approval. Members were not aware of any changes that needed to be made to

the Terms of Reference. In respect of the Work Programme members welcomed the themed focus of the Post Ofsted Improvement Plan Update and agreed to the Strategic Director's suggestion that the Subgroup consider a different aspect of the plan in turn at each meeting.

### **Decision**

1. To receive a future update from the Chair of the Subgroup and Chair of the Young People and Childrens Scrutiny Committee regarding their meetings with the Chair of the Improvement Board
2. To recommend that the Subgroup be re-established in the new municipal year and to let the Committee Support Officer know of any changes required to the membership, Terms of Reference or Work Programme.