

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 6 November 2018

Present:

Councillor Stone – in the Chair
Councillors Hewitson, T Judge, Lovecy and McHale

Co-opted Voting Members:

Mr A Arogundade, Parent Governor Representative
Mrs B Kellner, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester
Mrs J Miles, Representative of the Diocese of Salford
Dr W Omara, Parent Governor Representative
Ms Z Stepan, Parent Governor Representative

Co-opted Non Voting Members:

Mr L Duffy, Secondary sector teacher representative

Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure
Professor Yaron Matras, University of Manchester

Apologies:

Councillors Alijah and Sadler
Mr R Lammas, Primary sector teacher representative

CYP/18/54 Minutes

The Chair noted that, as requested at the Ofsted Subgroup meeting on 2 October 2018, Ofsted's letter on their recent focus visit had been circulated to Members of the Committee. He welcomed the progress made so far.

Decisions

1. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2018.
2. To receive the minutes of the Ofsted Subgroup meeting held on 2 October 2018.

CYP/18/55 Promoting Inclusion and Preventing Exclusion

The Committee received a presentation of the Director of Education which provided information on work to reduce the number of school exclusions, including the National Review.

The main points and themes within the presentation included:

- The National Review of Exclusions;
- Information gathered from multi-agency consultations;
- The four strands of the draft strategy (universal, early intervention, alternative

provision or specialist support and ensuring best practice in the use of exclusion; and

- Next steps.

Some of the key points and themes that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- Whether a breakdown of the types of schools which were excluding children was available;
- The allocation of financial resources and how much was being allocated to support children attending Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and children at risk of permanent exclusion;
- Concern about the level of exclusion and the percentage of those being excluded who had Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND);
- The importance of identifying and supporting children with challenging behaviour at primary level, even if their behaviour was more manageable at that age;
- Whether it was difficult for pupils attending a PRU to return to mainstream education and how many secondary school children who were permanently excluded returned to mainstream schools and how many were in long-term alternative provision; and
- The new Ofsted Framework due to be introduced in September 2019.

The Director of Education reported that a breakdown of data on school exclusions could risk identifying individual children and, therefore, could not be shared widely; however, she advised that this information had been provided to the Chair previously and could be provided again. She advised Members that it was difficult to draw conclusions on the types of school which were more likely to exclude pupils as most exclusions took place at the secondary school level and most secondary schools in Manchester were academies. She informed Members that the Executive had approved plans to allocate £20 million of basic needs funding to invest in SEND provision and alternative provision. She reported that the Council had also invested significantly in the Primary PRU, which had now moved to its new purpose-built premises at Plymouth Grove, and she suggested that the Committee might want to visit this. She also outlined other possible sources of funding, including an application for additional funding from central government, discussions with schools which had a significant under-spend and consultation with schools on whether 0.5% of the schools budget could be allocated to the high needs budget.

The Virtual School Head Teacher advised the Committee that it was important to ensure schools had the knowledge and skills to recognise what pupils' behaviour might be communicating about their unmet needs and what adjustments schools could make. She outlined how the Virtual School had worked with a number of schools to prevent Our Children (Looked After Children) from being excluded, including identifying underlying Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, making reasonable adjustments and putting in place additional resources, where necessary. She advised Members that schools wanted more training on the impact of adverse childhood experiences, trauma and attachment and informed Members of a current pilot scheme taking place to train schools in this. She confirmed that high schools, primary schools, special schools and PRUs were involved in this pilot.

The Director of Education confirmed that children did return to mainstream schools after attending a PRU. She reported that, where the PRU was confident that the child was able to return to mainstream education, a school was identified for the child via the In-Year Fair Access Protocol. She informed Members that the PRU would continue to support the child, with the child often being dual rolled at the school and the PRU for a period of time until they were confident that the placement was working out. She reported that the situation for primary school children was more challenging, advising that permanent exclusions at primary school age were unusual and the excluded children often had very complex needs and ended up attending specialist provision.

Decisions

1. To request that a visit be arranged to the Primary PRU at its new premises.
2. To request that the Director of Education share school-level data on exclusions with the Chair.
3. To request that information on the final destination of pupils who attended the Secondary PRU following permanent exclusion be circulated to Members of the Committee.
4. To note that the Committee has previously requested a training session on the Ofsted Framework and that, as a new Framework is due to be introduced, this training will be held once details of the new Framework are known.

[Councillor Stone declared a personal interest as a member of the governing body of the Secondary Pupil Referral Unit.]

CYP/18/56 Supplementary Schools

The Committee received a report of Children and Education Services which provided an update on the work in the city to engage with and support Supplementary Schools.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- Legislation and statutory guidance;
- Successes of Manchester's supplementary schools;
- Safeguarding;
- Ongoing challenges;
- New initiatives and developments; and
- Planned actions.

The Chair invited Professor Yaron Matras from the University of Manchester to address the Committee. Professor Matras informed Members that he led a unit at the University called Multilingual Manchester, which he advised, was a teaching and research unit which was also involved in public engagement and outreach with a range of stakeholders including the Council and supplementary schools. He informed Members about some of the work his unit did with supplementary schools,

particularly those teaching heritage languages. Some of the key work he highlighted included:

- Publishing a report on supplementary schools in Manchester in 2015;
- A two-year consultation with staff and parents at supplementary schools to identify priorities and needs;
- Launching a Supplementary Schools Support Platform;
- Facilitating teacher training sessions;
- Advising on curriculum design;
- Providing curriculum enrichment sessions; and
- Showcasing the work of supplementary schools.

Professor Matras also outlined some of the future activities the unit had planned and some of the challenges facing supplementary schools including staff training, access to learning resources, curriculum design, premises, motivating parents and children to take part in language classes and counteracting negative images about supplementary schools.

Some of the key points and themes that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- What monitoring was in place for supplementary schools;
- Recognising the excellent work that some supplementary schools were doing; and
- Recognising the work of the Council and the university in this area, noting that most Councils did not have this level of partnership working with supplementary schools.

The Head of School Quality Assurance and Strategic SEND acknowledged that this was a challenging area as supplementary schools did not fall under any inspection regime unless they provided over 15 hours of education, which few did. She reported that the only approach which could be taken was positive engagement. She advised Members that the Council had developed good relationships with supplementary schools which had enabled officers to have challenging conversations, where necessary, and also to provide support, for example, with Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and first aid and safeguarding training.

The Director of Education informed Members that, due to the Council's previous work in this area, the Department for Education (DfE) had invited the Council to participate in its Out of Schools (OOS) Pilot. She reported that the Council had received funding from the DfE to further develop and build on this work.

Decisions

1. To thank Professor Matras for his contribution.
2. To request that the information Professor Matras provided to the Chair be circulated to all Members of the Committee.
3. To receive a further report on supplementary schools at an appropriate time.

CYP/18/57 Overview Report

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained key decisions within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

Decision

To note the report and agree the work programme.