

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

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2024**

### **Present:**

Councillor Lovecy – in the Chair  
Councillors Collins and Fletcher

Councillor Reid, Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People

### **Apologies:**

Councillor Bell  
Mr G Cleworth, Co-opted Member (Parent Governor Representative)

## **CYP/OSG/24/09 Minutes**

### **Decision**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2024.

## **CYP/OSG/24/10 Changes to the Ofsted Inspection Framework**

The Senior School Quality Assurance Officer outlined changes to the Ofsted Inspection Framework. She informed Members that schools would no longer receive an overall effectiveness grade, although they would still receive grades for the individual areas (quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development, leadership and management and early years provision). She advised that this change had not been implemented for early years and post-16 provision as yet but applied to maintained schools and academies. She reported that this term Ofsted were trialling notifying schools of graded and ungraded inspections on Mondays and carrying out the inspections on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, advising that this would be reviewed at Christmas. She advised that deferred inspections and monitoring visits could still take place later in the week.

The Senior School Quality Assurance Officer informed the Subgroup that, where safeguarding concerns were identified at a school which was strong in other areas, the inspection would be paused, a letter would be sent to parents, and school leaders would be given the opportunity to rectify the issues identified, with inspectors returning within three months, advising that this was in response to the suicide of headteacher Ruth Perry.

The Senior School Quality Assurance Officer outlined changes to ungraded inspections, advising that these would be more similar to monitoring visits, with school leaders demonstrating what they were working to improve, and would include a focus on key areas identified through pre-inspection analysis and conversations with school leaders, with inspectors spending more time in lessons. She advised that the outcome of an ungraded inspection would be either that the school was taking effective action to maintain the standards from the previous inspection, that they might not be as strong as at the previous inspection, that they might have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection or that there was concern

that they might now be inadequate in one or more of the key areas. She advised that in the second or third cases, a graded inspection would be carried out in one to two years' time and, where the school might be inadequate in one or more of the key inspection areas, the inspection would be immediately converted into a full graded inspection.

In response to a Member's question, the Senior School Quality Assurance Officer advised that attendance was a key area and that Ofsted inspectors would look at whether the school was doing everything it reasonably could be expected to do to improve attendance and for any signs of improvement. In response to a question from the Chair, she reported that inspectors did look into off-rolling, including reviewing attendance data, looking at the reasons for any child who had been taken off the roll, whether it was appropriate and where they had gone, and identifying any patterns and trends.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People welcomed the changes, which it was hoped would reduce stress on teachers and headteachers, while commenting that the lack of an overall judgement would make it less straightforward for parents wanting to look at how a school was performing. She asked to be provided with a written briefing note on the changes, which she could share with all Councillors.

## **Decision**

To note the update.

## **CYP/OSG/24/11 Ofsted Inspections of Manchester Schools**

The Subgroup received a list of all Manchester schools which had been inspected since the last meeting and the judgements awarded.

The Senior School Quality Assurance Officer provided Members with an overview of the inspections which had taken place since the last meeting and of the previous school year as a whole. She reported that 88% of Manchester schools were judged to be good or better, which placed Manchester fourth out of the ten Greater Manchester authorities. She reported that 89.6% of primary schools and 80.6% of secondary schools in the city were judged to be good or better. She informed Members that the main themes arising from recent Ofsted inspections were reading for older pupils, implementation of the curriculum, attendance, particularly, reducing persistent absence, assessment, including identifying precise gaps in knowledge and addressing them, adaptation for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and the development of children's vocabulary. She reported that the first two webinars on implementation of the curriculum had now taken place, with a further six to follow. She informed Members that potentially 50 schools could be in line for an inspection this year and reported that her team undertook a risk assessment of all schools, which was reviewed regularly, and that there was a particular focus on those which were due to be inspected.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People asked to be provided with a written summary that she could share with Members. She advised

that things were moving in the right direction, particularly in the secondary sector.

In response to a question from the Executive Member, the Senior School Quality Assurance Officer reported that Manchester was ranked seventh in Greater Manchester for primary schools and third for secondary schools. In response to a Member's question about Holy Trinity C of E Primary School, she reported that the outcome of the Ofsted inspection was disappointing but not unexpected and stated that inspectors had noted that improvements had been made to the Early Years provision, which was one of the areas that the school in conjunction with the local authority had been working to address. She informed Members that her team was currently brokering additional support from a high-performing Manchester school, that the school would have at least three quality assurance visits during the year and half-termly review meetings and that a Support and Challenge meeting had taken place. In response to a further question, she advised that, under the current framework, the school would be re-inspected within 30 months; however, she advised that the Ofsted Framework was being revised for September 2025.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People reported that the Quality Assurance Team was not a statutory service, that not all local authorities had this and that it was not funded by the Government. She advised that Government funding should be provided for this work and that this, and school funding in general, needed to be raised with the Government.

In response to a question from the Chair about schools which had previously been judged as outstanding and which had not been inspected for a considerable number of years, the Senior School Quality Assurance Officer reported that Beaver Road Primary School had not been inspected since 2011 and was due to be inspected before Christmas this year. She informed Members that, other than this, the longest period since an inspection was approximately 2015 and that all these schools should be inspected during the current school year. She reported that the exemption from inspection for schools judged to be outstanding had been removed and that the longest a school should have been inspections was four years, unless this was changed when the framework was revised in 2025.

In response to a question from the Chair about Alternative Provision, the Senior School Quality Assurance Officer advised that this information was now being included in school inspection data summary reports (IDSR). The Chair welcomed increased transparency and information on Alternative Provision.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People informed Members about plans to overhaul Alternative Provision in the city and advised that she would speak to the Director of Education about data gathering. In response to comments from the Chair about one-form entry schools, she advised that she had discussed this with the Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust.

## **Decision**

That for future meetings, when overall judgements are no longer provided by Ofsted, the Subgroup will be provided with the grades relating to the individual areas.

## **CYP/OSG/24/12    Ofsted Inspections of Daycare Providers**

The Subgroup received a list of all Manchester daycare providers which had been inspected since the last meeting and the judgements awarded.

The Early Years Quality Assurance Lead provided Members with an overview of the inspections which had taken place since the last meeting, advising that 96% of settings in Manchester were judged to be good or better. She reported that six settings had closed over the summer but that this was a lower number than in the previous year and she outlined how her team supported families to find alternative childcare and staff to find new jobs in the sector. She informed Members about the main themes arising from recent Ofsted inspections. She reported that, following work that had been carried out through the Forums, there had been no recommendations made in relation to health in the most recent inspection reports. She reported that strengths that had been identified were emotional literacy and well-being, promoting independence and safeguarding. She reported that curriculum implementation had been identified as an area for improvement for settings that had been judged as 'requires improvement'.

The Early Years Quality Assurance Lead informed Members about work to secure improvements, including an Ofsted Roadshow, with Ofsted inspectors telling providers what they were looking for, especially in relation to the curriculum, and videos produced as part of the Kickstarter Project focusing on good practice in areas that settings struggled with. She reported that the videos were sent to providers to use for coaching and mentoring and that they had been well-received. She reported that the recruitment and retention of staff was an ongoing issue, commenting on the staffing requirements due to the high percentage of children in settings who had SEND and outlining work to recruit more people into the sector, including a new GMCA (Greater Manchester Combined Authority) recruitment campaign. She informed Members that her team had commissioned baby room training in preparation for the expansion of 0-2 provision. She provided an update on the Department for Education (DfE) Early Years Professional Development programme, advising that this programme was due to finish in March 2025 so they were waiting to hear from the Government about any further DfE professional development courses that would be offered. She outlined support her service provided to the sector and how support and visits to settings were prioritised.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People asked to be provided with a written summary of this information. She suggested that the Subgroup look at reports for childminders at a future meeting. She expressed concern about closures of settings and sufficiency in the sector. She highlighted issues affecting recruitment in the sector, particularly pay levels and qualification requirements. She reported that she had been discussing with the Director of Education using spaces in schools for daycare provision.

The Early Years Quality Assurance Lead provided an example of a school which was already providing space to a daycare provider. In response to a question from the Executive Member, she informed the Subgroup about online child development training provided by the DfE, which anyone could access online, and about Dingley's Promise training for early years staff supporting children with SEND. In response to

a question from the Chair, she reported that settings were expecting more families to take up the increased entitlement from January 2025, which had given the providers more time to prepare, and that many settings had waiting lists of children who they could accommodate if they had more staff, with the greatest challenge being in recruiting qualified Level 3 staff. She informed Members about a consultation on increasing the flexibility on the qualification requirements for Early Years and about proposals to change the rules on childminders working outside of their home. She informed Members about childminder drop-in sessions which, she advised, reduced isolation. The Chair commented that a lot of good work was taking place, despite the challenges facing the sector, and she emphasised the importance of supporting childminders.

## **Decision**

To note the reports.

## **CYP/OSG/24/13 Terms of Reference and Work Programme**

Members received the Terms of Reference and Work Programme for the Subgroup.

## **Decisions**

1. To note the Terms of Reference and Work Programme.
2. That visits be arranged to St Edmund's RC Primary School and Old Moat Primary School.
3. That the Subgroup visit an Early Years setting in Wythenshawe, with the Chair to confirm which one.
4. That a further meeting of the Subgroup be arranged for the New Year.