

CORPORATE PARENTING SPECIALIST ADVISORY GROUP

Wednesday, 11 January 2023

PRESENT – Councillors, , .

OFFICERS -

RESOLUTIONS

1 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair Cllr Katrina Fielding, welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Declan Smith, Vicky Balmer and from the following Councillors: Jackie Floyd, Samim Desai, Matthew Jackson, James Smith, Sabahat Imtiaz, Tasleem Fazal and Jim Casey.

2 **Minutes of the meeting held on 5th October 2022**

RESOLVED – The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 5th October 2022 were approved as a correct record. A matter was raised regarding a grammatical error. With the amendment of this the minutes were agreed as correct record.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

RESOLVED – There were no Declarations of Interest received.

4 **YPS and Participation Update**

Roisa McCusker apologised to the group as they weren't able to provide a Total Respect Session at the meeting following the Christmas period and knowing the Vice-Chair wouldn't be available to support. The Total Respect Session would take place at the next meeting in March. Total Respect sessions aim to inform individuals around children's rights and in particular, those rights of care experienced young people, and how it feels to be a looked after child/care leaver.

The Group heard The Leaving Care Forum had been participating in consultation work regarding developing the care leaver's page on the council's website. All the information had been updated and set out, however, Leaving Care senior management were keen to seek views on how it could be better. Young People provided feedback, stating the new website was easier to navigate, but young people would like some more colour and some videos added to make the website more interactive.

Roisa informed the group that a Microsoft forms was sent to care leavers before Christmas in order to get the ball rolling on deciding on a re-name for the leaving care service.

Roisa confirmed since the last meeting, the YPS hosted activities for children in care and care leavers, linking these to celebrations such as Halloween and

Christmas. They joined up with the FCA to host a Halloween party for children in care, there was a great turnout and all the young people enjoyed pumpkin carving, bobbing for apples as well as dressing up in their outfits and having their face painted.

Leading up to Christmas, young people from both junior and senior voice groups, and the leaving care forum celebrated the holidays by going to the pantomime to see Jack and the Beanstalk. They had a Christmas meal at The Fernhurst, and YPS joined up with the FCA once again to put on a Christmas Fair. This was held on the day that Blackburn got the snow and so this affected the turnout but they still managed to raise some funds for the FCA. The Leaving Care team also held a Christmas Party for leaving care young people at Kaleidoscope. This ran in the evening and a leaving care young person showed off his talents in Dj'ing.

The Group heard on the 2nd November, Young People's Services supported the Youth forum and led the annual Takeover Challenge. This focused on Child Poverty along with workshops on relevant topics associated, such as mental health, food poverty and resilience (with a focus on ACEs and trauma). This brought over 80 school pupils together at King Georges Hall to discuss the difficulties young people are facing around this topic.

It was a successful event and highlighted the struggles families faced and some young people admitted that the only meal they had was their lunch at school. Others saw a decline in luxury items within the home and lower quality food included ready meals and supermarket branded items being more prevalent. Young People offered their ideas on solutions they feel would benefit them and their families, young people suggested that further investment in youth provisions, a stronger PSHE Curriculum focusing on mental health and wellbeing and resilience.

Finally, Roisa informed the group that they looked forward to restarting the junior and senior voice group, as well as the leaving care forum. They looked forward to supporting children's services at the recruitment day on Saturday 21st January and also had two care leavers who attended the children in care council in Salford on the 28th January.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

5 Foster Carers Association Update

The Chair welcomed Paula Quinn from the Foster Carers Association Committee to provide an update to the Group.

The Group heard that the FCA had been accepted as one of the nominated charities for the Co-op, until October 2023.

Paula informed the Group that the FCA and YPS hosted a Halloween Party and a Christmas Fair, which were both very successful. The FCA would be looking at planning and hosting Spring fundraisers and events over the Summer Holidays.

Paula confirmed the Committee had an initial meeting with Joanne Siddle in order to build and continue relationships between the Foster Carers Team and the Management Team. The FCA Meeting would commence again on 23rd January 2023.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

6 Safeguarding Children and Looked After Children Update

The meeting was presented with an update from Amelia Brummet on the latest information regarding Safeguarding Children and Looked After Children.

An action taken from the last specialist advisory group was to explore the quality assurance process of the health advice provided to inform EHCP's for Children in Care. There was not a specific quality assurance process specifically for Children in Care, however, there would be a QA process for all children with an EHCP.

The health information as part of EHCP's would be quality assured by the Designated Clinical Officers (DCO) and their administrators. This team co-ordinated the requests for EHCP health information and would send them out to teams for completion with strict return dates.

If the information would not meet the standards expected, it would be returned with guidance notes for completion. Returns for poor quality were low. The DCO in BWD also provided feedback via the SEND improvement meetings and reports back quality themes, areas of good practice and areas for further development.

The 0-19 teams would be in the process of delivering a number of 'what a good EHCP looks like' training to all health practitioners within BwD 0-19 that complete health advice. This was generally offered every couple of years and has been shown to ensure exceptions regarding poor quality are minimal.

Amelia informed the group that access to dental healthcare had been identified as a national challenge and this had been reflected locally via the Local Authority Chat Data.

The priority care pathway was for priority patients including Children in Care, alongside other priority patient groups e.g. care for cancer patients and cardiac care. Clarity was being sought as to whether the priority care criteria would include care leavers.

NHSE explored the logistics regarding the single point of access including the means in which this would be facilitated, by phone referral/by email etc.

The expectation would be that the dental practice provide care through this pathway following referral will retain registration of the child following initial treatment.

If a child/ young person was to move placement out of area, a re-referral would need to be completed. The pathway launched in January 2023, NHSE

identified dental practices willing to participate throughout Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Communications, included method of referral would be provided to share with Social Care, Foster Carers, PA's and wider health providers.

Amelia highlighted as part of the BwD Health Subgroup an action was identified around the Pre-Adoption processes and the completion of an overarching multiagency pathway for pre-adoption medicals that ensured timely and quality assured assessments to inform the child permanence plans. Adoption is complex and agencies often worked individually and were not aware of the intricacies each individual agency undertakes. Therefore, meetings had been held with relevant agencies to undertake this pathway. The pathway enabled clear time frames for each agency. Escalation and quality assurance are also key to the pathway.

Updates had been made to the pathway and V4 had been shared with the chairs of the BwD health subgroup. The pathway would be discussed at the next meeting and following that for members of the subgroup to comment and feedback. The draft pathway had been shared with the children's commissioners for their information and to share with the community paediatric network.

The Group heard that during Quarter 2, there were 22 IHA requests and 18(82%) were completed within timescales. In Quarter 1, there were slightly fewer requests, 18, of which, 10 (56%) were completed in time. The number of requests for IHAs this quarter had increased; however, the compliance rate had similarly increased. This may have be due to availability of the ELHT Paediatricians to complete IHAs, children being brought to appointments and the relevant documents being received more timely from BwD CSC which would lead to more IHAs being completed within the statutory in timescale.

In ELHT there was devised Quality Assurance tool that needed to be completed by the CNP Administrator, the Children in Care Nurse and the Doctor completing the IHA.

ELHT completed 3 monthly Quality Audits and 6 monthly deep dive quarterly audits in conjunction with the ICB, Quality of the IHA's is consistently very good.

In Quarter 2, there were 49 RHAs requested and 42(86%) completed within timescales. Similar numbers were requested in Quarter 1, there were 45 RHAs requested and 42 (93%) completed within timescales.

Finally the Group were informed the Enhanced CIC Nurses quality assured 100% of all RHAs completed by Blackburn with Darwen (BwD) Children and Families Teams and LSCFT Special Needs School Nurses Team. If RHA's did not meet the quality threshold as set out in statutory guidance, the RHA would be returned to the practitioner with guidance and support on areas to improve the quality or the health assessment.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

7 Improvement Board Update

The Chair welcomed Joanne Siddle, Deputy Director for Education and Schools, to the meeting to provide an update on the current position of the Improvement Board to the Group.

The group heard that following inspection, an Achieving Excellence Board and a Catching Improvement Board were both set up.

Joanne informed they had taken part in an Updated Peer Challenge, where a group of DCS came and challenged Childrens Services. Joanne then went and challenged others. They were very honest in the process which took place before Christmas and explained their journey from a Leadership and Management Point of View. It was a great opportunity for Self Evaluation.

The board asked the LGA to carry out a Peer Challenge on themselves for Care Leavers. This meant two weeks off site, looking at case reviews. This would also look in to –

- Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health
- Transitioning to Adult Services whilst looking back at Childrens Services
- Our current practice
- Diversity and Inclusion

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

8 Virtual School Exam Results Update

The Chair welcomed Charlotte Hesketh, LAC Virtual Health and Assessment Officer to provide an update on the Virtual School Exam Results.

The group heard the Government had stated the main purpose of the statutory assessments would be to help understand more clearly the impact of the pandemic on pupils and schools and how this varied between particular groups of pupils, schools and local authority areas. They recognised, however, the uneven impact on schools of the pandemic and the challenges with interpreting the 2021/22 data.

The Government had also clearly stated that 2021/22 data was not directly comparable with earlier years and anyone using this data should be aware of the caveats on the data due to the uneven impact of the pandemic on pupils and schools, and be sensitive in their use of it.

Charlotte highlighted Young Person E was placed under a Secure Order in October of Year 11. He has previously attended a special school and had an EHCP for his SEMH needs. He achieved 20 accredited units as well as Functional Skills Entry Level 2 Qualifications in Maths, English and ICT.

2 Young People achieved 8 and 9 GCSEs at Grade 4 and above including English and Maths at Grade 5.

2 Young People who attended special school with EHCPs and had global development delay achieved 9 qualifications each including English, Maths, Science and ICT at entry level.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic meant that Key Stage 2 tests and assessments did not take place in the 2019/20, or 2020/21 academic years. In the academic year 2021/22, Key Stage 2 tests and assessments returned for the first time since 2019, without any adaptations. A consistent approach to the format of the assessments was needed to help understand the impact of the pandemic on pupils and schools and how this varied between particular groups of pupils, schools and local authority areas. The results would not be published on the *Find school and college performance data service* for the academic year 2021/22.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

9 Any Other Business and Date of Next Meeting

The Chair confirmed the date for the next meeting as 28th March 2023, where Total Respect Training would take place.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

Signed:

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed