

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PARTNERSHIP
Wednesday, 19th March, 2014

Present:- Joyce Thacker (in the Chair); Councillor Roche, Steve Ashley, Karen Borthwick, Warren Carratt, Dr. David Clitheroe, Paul Dempsey, Karen Etheridge, Martin Kimber, Rachel Nicolls, Dr. David Polkinghorn, Dr. John Radford, Janet Wheatley, Sarah Whittle and Ian Wormsley.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lakin, Pickering, Sara Graham, Jason Harwin, Julie Mott, Clair Pyper and Dorothy Smith.

257. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th January, 2014, were considered and approved as a correct record.

It was noted that Jane Parfremment had been appointed to the post of Director of Safeguarding and Families. Jane would commence in post on 5th August, 2014.

Resolved:- That a report be submitted to the next meeting on Emergency Hormonal Contraception.

258. ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Looked After Council

- Was currently meeting for Voice and Influence training and development sessions weekly at MyPlace
- Up to 50 Looked After and Leaving Care young people had attended meetings at any 1 time
- Over the past 3 months they had worked on team building skills, self-awareness and self-esteem
- Attendance at the CICC Regional Conference in Nottingham on 17th February – they had delivered a presentation raising awareness around Rotherham LACC and engaged in action planning for the LAC Council's future
- Had engaged in the recruitment and selection process for the Director of Safeguarding post
- Visit by Corporate Parents
- Views sought on their involvement in the re-commissioning of Leaving Care Services
- Consultation on the C&YP Commissioning Strategy
- Engaged in activities specifically designed to raise their awareness around the geography and customs in view of their forthcoming visit to Portugal

Youth Cabinet

The following presentation was given of their work on the subject of self-harm:-

What is Self-Harm?

- "Hurting yourself to deal with difficult feelings. It can be through physical or emotional means, which may not be obvious to those around you."

Examples of Self-Harm

- Physical – cutting, burning yourself, overdosing, scratching
- Emotional – long periods of silence, bursts of anger, depression, stress

Self-Harm Awareness Day

- Self-Harm Awareness Day 1st March
- We are wearing orange ribbons to promote awareness of this campaign

Why Self-Harm?

- The Youth Cabinet feels strongly about this issue
- It is a growing issue within Rotherham
- To find out what is out there to help young people
- To try and reduce barriers for young people getting help and support

What have we done?

- Set up a Self-Harm Awareness Sub-Group which meets regularly
- Collected case studies on people who have self-harmed
- Taken part in a self-harm awareness training day
- Met on 16th January with health professionals, school and college staff, RMBC officers, Councillors etc.
- Met on 30th January to decide our key priorities
- Met on 12th February with Commissioners
- Taken part in Children's Commissioner's Takeover Day on 27th February

Recommendations

- Consistent, concise and simple messages for all organisations
- Clear, consistent referral routes for all organisations
- Involve young people in the development of user-friendly information online
- Ensure that young people are involved in Service design
- Ensure that advice to young people is available through drop-ins, one-to-one sessions as well as web-based material
- Improve and standardise the provision of information on self-harm to all schools
- Establish better links between schools and colleges and share best practice

- Examine ways in which access to School Nurses can be improved
- Availability of resources/training/support for schools, colleges, amongst parents, young people etc.

Next Steps

- Youth Cabinet Self-Harm Sub-Group will continue to meet to work on our priorities and recommendations
- Rotherham Youth Cabinet has been invited to speak at Suicide Prevention Conference on 3rd April to share our findings

Youth Cabinet members were also developing a presentation to deliver to the Suicide Prevention conference to be held on 3rd April at the New York Stadium

They had also submitted a question to the Health Select Commission with regard to School Nurses.

259. ADCS REPORT - "WHAT IS EDUCATION FOR"

Karen Borthwick, Head of School Effectiveness Services, submitted the Association of Directors of Children's Services Ltd.'s Educational Achievement Policy Committee Position Statement "What is Education For?"

The Statement articulated ADCS members' collective views on the current education system and their aspirations for the future. It considered the purpose of education and suggested the actions local authorities could take to ensure that their local education offer met the changing needs of their children and young people as well as the role of business, the community and the home in developing the local education offer.

Discussion ensued on what the Partnership thought education was for with the following comments made:-

- Good to see a move away from measuring but looking at fit for purpose and integrating young people into society
- A rounded individual that could reflect, think and be creative was far better than achieving outcomes
- Children were all different and would never meet the nationally agreed system/standard – it would be about getting a balance for every child
- For some a classroom setting did not work – prepare them for the next stage of their life
- Need to ensure equity of resources for all schools – no postcode lottery
- Essential that parents and young people were fully informed of the different options open to them
- Careers advice needed to reflect the sensitivity of areas in terms of economic regeneration needs

It was noted that the report would be discussed in various forums in order to get a view of the local position.

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

260. CSE UPDATE

Joyce Thacker, Strategic Director, Children's and Young Peoples Services, gave the following update:-

- The Rotherham Multi-Agency CSE Team had won the National Team Award for Unsung Heroes at the CSE National Working Group Awards under the criteria for the Longest Journey under Challenging Conditions. A presentation would be made at the next Council meeting
- A number of complex cases had come to light which brought their own set of challenging circumstances. An intensive piece of work would be undertaken
- The current year's performance was being reviewed together with the action plan, identifying priorities for next year and any emerging gaps

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

261. EARLY HELP OVERVIEW

Warren Carratt, Service Manager, Strategy, Standards & Early Help, gave the following powerpoint presentation:-

What is "Early Help"?

- 'Intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families or with a population most at risk of developing problems. Effective intervention may occur at any point in a child or young person's life'

Statutorily

- Working Together 2013 put requirement on Local Safeguarding Children Board to assure itself of the effectiveness of Early Help provision
- No duty on individual agencies (and taken away from schools) but expectation there and included in OfSTED framework

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

- Links to all priorities but specific strong links with Dependence to Independence, Aspirations and Expectations and Prevention and Early Intervention

Pathways to Whole Family Early Help

- Children's Centres working with 0-5 year olds
- Targeted Family Support working with primary aged children
- Integrated Youth Support Service working with teenagers/young adults
- Community Development Team Outreach working with SEN

Role of Early Help Assessment Team

- To provide co-ordination of step downed contacts from CART
- To be a central point of contact for families requiring Early Help
- To broker services where required
- Not to replace Localism but support where there is none in place

Early Help Challenges

- Predominantly unqualified workforce
- Many issues underpinned by adult mental health (mild to moderate)
- If it works, Social Care need never become involved
- Linked into broader societal context e.g. Welfare Reform
- Often about case management
- Not Social Care aftercare

Trends

- Schools disengaging from lead working but need is still there
- Interdependent with other provision e.g. CAMHS, EPS, CDC etc.
- Early Help is part of a wide ranging system where one or more areas of support are reduced the impact on the whole system needs to be assessed

Families for Change Provision

- Providing connectivity (not duplication) of existing provision or new provision where gaps are identified
- Evidence based
- Co-working where required with existing services
- Only for families with poor attendance and anti-social behaviour or worklessness
- Little overlap with Pupil Referral Units, Parenting etc.
- Subject to rigorous Payment by Results scrutiny and challenge from Audit and DCLG
- Family Recovery Programme focussed on most complex cases (Social Care)

Where's the Gap?

Causal Factors

- Reduction in Services and/or Service redesign
- Limitations of existing initiatives (e.g. Families for Change)
- History of chronic, long term neglect
- Insufficiency of planned, facilitated step down
- Where to go for challenge/support

Early Help Support Panel

A multi-agency forum where:-

- Services can be commissioned and where innovative, fast-track approaches can be tested
- The quality of multi-agency work can be assured and challenged where required
- Support for families can be brokered

What we value

- Localism and the capacity, trust and freedom of local services to provide effective early help within their own communities wherever this is possible

What we know

- We are not yet providing excellent integrated Early Help Services
- Some Services are commissioned and/or delivered by the “centre” and not community based
- We do not and will not unite Early Help provision under one management line or organisation umbrella (nor should we)
- The system is being pushed apart
- Practitioners want to succeed though they need help and better awareness of pathways to access this
- Social Care are a key partner and the way this interfaces with Early Help providers is in constant need of review and revision

Discussion ensued on the presentation with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- Attempts had been made to mitigate the impact of the proposed reduction of Children’s Centres as much as possible by focussing on staff and services and providing outreach work. There was to be an event on 2nd April to discuss the way forward
- The voluntary and community sector was a resource that needed to be tapped into. Analysis of the work of the sector had shown the variety of work it did with children and young people providing an alternative service to families and individuals around Early Help
- 1 of the best ways of determining how well agencies were doing with their work on Early Help was to look at how many children became a Child in Need or subject to a Care Plan and work from that point. All agencies needed to work together and ascertain why Early Help had not had an influence. The Local Safeguarding Children Board would concentrate on Early Help’s performance and look at why a child became the subject of a Care Plan
- Agencies had a tendency to work at crisis level rather than prevention and early intervention

- Essential that the voluntary and community sector were utilised more

Resolved:- That the presentation be noted.

262. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STRATEGY

Paul Dempsey, Service Manager, CYPS Provider Services, presented the above Strategy which was an ongoing initiative setting out the improved outcomes for all children and young people in the care of the Local Authority and what needed to be done by all those involved in the development and delivery of services to Looked After Children.

Whilst the Local Authority was the lead agency in developing and implementing the Strategy, it had and was being developed and implemented by a range of professionals working in the Local Authority and key partner agencies.

A Looked After Children Strategy Group had been established to develop and implement the Strategy. A smaller sub-project group took the lead on individual priority areas.

The work in developing and implementing the Strategy was essentially centred upon answering 4 key questions - as a Service where did we want to be, where were we now, how would we get from where we were now to where we wanted to be and how would we know we were there?

5 Priority objectives defined what key achievements and improvements the Service would be striving to make over the next 2 years in relation to Looked After Children's measures:-

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| Priority 1 | to improve the degree and timeliness of placement stability and permanence and ensure children were able to enjoy continuity of relationships |
| Priority 2 | to improve the emotional wellbeing and physical health of Looked After Children |
| Priority 3 | to improve educational progress and attainment and narrow the gap between attainment of Looked After Children and their non-Looked After peers |
| Priority 4 | to improve the support for and opportunities open to care leavers sufficiently to increase the number and proportion of them who are in employment, educations or training (EET) |
| Priority 5 | to listen to children and young people so as to ensure that their views influence their own plans as well as wider service delivery and development |

The report had been submitted to the Improving Lives Select commission on 12th March and the Corporate Parenting Group on 21st January.

Discussion ensued on the report with the following comments/issues raised:-

- Suggestion that a representative from CAMHS, Tier 3 specialists, be invited to the Strategy Group
- There were approximately 390 Looked After Children in Rotherham of which 92 were placed with independent foster providers outside of Rotherham, 20 placed with Local Authority foster carers that lived outside of the Borough and 30 children in residential provision outside of the Borough
- It was 1 of the Strategy Priorities to try and get as many as possible of the above children back into the Borough
- Commissioners were working with the CCG to develop the CAMHS Strategy which would address Looked After Children's needs
- Rotherham College had discussed with the Authority what they could do to work with Looked After Children and support the change

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

263. YEAR END - PLAN ON A PAGE

Sue Wilson, Performance and Quality Manager, presented a report highlighting progress up until December, 2013, drawing particular attention to:-

Priority 1 – We will ensure children have the best start in life

- 91 schools now had a 'Food in Schools Policy' which incorporated all food provision including packed lunches
- New joint 2 year Health and Education Review successfully piloted at Aughton Early Years Children Centre
- 81 established breastfeeding friendly public places and 65 active breast buddies in Rotherham
- Launch of Ante-natal Pathway on 16th September with parents now being offered pre-birth and new birth visits

Priority 2 – We will engage with parents and families

- Development of Performance Management Framework for Early Help
- Young Carer's Card launched September, 2013
- Updated Family CAF now included the requirement for CYPS to systematically screen for drug and alcohol use
- Early Help Support Panel to provide a point of escalation for "stuck" families

Priority 3 – We will reduce the harm to children and young people who are exposed to domestic abuse, alcohol/substance misuse and neglect

- Agreed Child’s Multi-Agency Assessment Protocol with proposed live date of April, 2014
- Recommissioning of Alcohol Services to deliver more preventative work and training/education opportunities
- Redevelopment of the transition plan for Know the Score into CAMHs

Priority 4 – We will work with parents to eradicate child sexual exploitation

- 3 independent reviews of Rotherham CSE Services now published
- Nurse practitioner had joined the CSE Team
- Completed review of Police intelligence and development and internal Police referral routes clarified
- Variety of intervention techniques successfully used to disrupt CSE activity as early as possible

Priority 5 – We will focus on all children and young people making good progress in their learning and development

- Take up of early education by 3/4 year olds for the 2013 Summer Term was 97% - increase of 6.5% on 2012/13
- 73% of schools judged to be good or outstanding for overall effectiveness compared to the national average of 78%
- KS2-KS4 progress by 3 levels in Mathematics had increased by 4.3% to 70.3% - English had increased by 3.3% to 75.3%

Priority 6 – We will target support to families in greatest need to help access learning/employment opportunities

- Pilot multi-agency EU Migrant/Roma ‘family induction day’ held on 17th September, 2013, at the Lifewise Centre
- EU Migrant Engagement Officer appointed in July, 2013
- Youth Support Workers were accompanying young people seeking work when they visited the Job Centre
- Partnership arrangements with Rotherham and Dearne Valley Colleges to provide targeted work for young people identified by the School Liaison officer and College Support Services as needing one-to-one support to overcome barriers to engagement

The Partnership felt this was an excellent piece of work and would like to see something similar for the priorities and challenges.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That an update be submitted twice a year.

264. LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

The minutes of the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board meeting held on 13th December, 2013, were noted.

265. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved: - That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial/business affairs of any person (including the Council)).

266. ROTHERHAM SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS SERVICE - SELF EVALUATION

Karen Borthwick, Head of School Effectiveness Service, reported that local authorities had statutory duties to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential in schools and other education and training providers in order that all children and young people benefitted from at least a good education. The Framework for the Inspection of Local Authority Arrangements for Supporting School Improvement had been published to assist local authorities in carrying out the statutory duties.

In preparation for the above, Rotherham was developing a self-assessment against the key areas for inspection (Appendix A of the report submitted refers). Rotherham was also working with authorities across Yorkshire and the Humber to develop effective self-assessment practice, peer assess the judgements made in the said assessments and share good practice in School Improvement delivery across the region.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That an update be submitted in 12 months.

267. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(1) Improvement Panel

It was reported that the Improvement Panel had now folded. The reports would now be submitted to the Partnership and the Safeguarding Board.

(2) Dr. David Polkinghorn

It was reported that it was David's last meeting. He had been a great champion in the health community for children particularly the safeguarding aspect. The Partnership had benefitted from his contributions and wished him well for the future.

268. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That a further meeting be held on Wednesday, 21st May, 2014, commencing at 2.00 p.m. in Rotherham Town Hall.