

Children, Young People & Skills Scrutiny Review Board
16 October 2023

Present: Councillor Lonsdale (Chair)
Councillors Trehwella (Vice Chair), Cllrs Amin, Fowke & Kozlowski

In Attendance: Tracey Churchill, Co-opted Member Catholic Diocesan Rep
Fiona Colton, Head of Service Early Help
Harman Kaur, Deputy Youth Mayor
Suanne Lim, Director Early Help and Children's Social Care
Gurmail Nizzer, Director of Commissioning and Delivery
Catherine O'Melia, Head of Children's Quality Assurance

15/23 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies from Cllrs Pattison, Wright, Muhammad Muntasir Youth Mayor, and Andy Smith Strategic Director of Peoples Services

16/23 Late items introduced by the Chair

There were none.

17/23 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

18/23 Minutes of the Meeting on 04.09.23

The minutes of the meeting on 04.09.23 were agreed.

19/23 Holiday Activities and Food Programme Update

The Board considered a report from the Director of Commissioning and Delivery which gave an update on the Department for Education's (DfE) Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme.

The Board heard that Local Authority HAF Programmes are grant funded nationally by the Department for Education (DfE). The HAF Programmes delivered school holiday activities and food for children and young people from Reception through to Year 11 who received free school meals.

Derby's HAF Programme was developed with Community Action Derby and started in March 2021. During the lockdown period, the Programme provided free holiday activities and food directly to 500 children and young people living in Derby, and online social support opportunities to thousands more.

The Programme was supported by several SEND providers including the St. James Centre, Umbrella and Inspiritive Arts, alongside other providers to ensure accessibility for children and young people with a wide range of SEND.

Data also showed that over 30 providers delivered free, high quality, face to face holiday activities and food to 2,200 children and young people across every city ward during the 2023 summer break. Priority was given to areas with the highest rates of children and young people in receipt of free school meals (FSM).

Current programme providers were listed in the report and included Alvaston Achievers, Derby County Community Trust, YMC Derbyshire and Schools.

Some of the activities delivered by the providers included traditional sporting activities like, basketball and football. Also provided were skills and culturally enhancing opportunities like music production, art, dance and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (stem) based opportunities. Specialist SEND support including sensory sessions. Trips taken included theatre visits, cinema visits and bowling.

Around 14,000 children and young people benefitted from Derby's HAF provision; they were offered a nutritious meal at every session, learnt new sports and skills, and engaged in activities and trips.

The officer highlighted provider engagement; strong links had been developed with providers in the city. Supporting local providers was a key focus of the Programme. Schools continued to engage and contribute to the continued development of the programme with key senior leadership representation as key HAF programme members at termly meetings. The programme had strong connections to organisations offering support during the cost-of-living crisis.

The DfE had funded 153 upper tier authorities to co-ordinate and provide free holiday provision. In 2022/23, Derby received £1,357,160 for delivery of the HAF Programme.

An additional £200,000 of funding was allocated recently to the HAF Programme from the Homes for Ukraine Education Grant and the Asylum Dispersal Grants (£100,000 from each). This was to support wider refugee integration, reduce social isolation and provide opportunities to enhance community links.

The officer was thanked for work, the Board offered councillors help to improve links with schools by bridging any gaps. The officer thanked the Board for their offer of help. The Board noted programme was being promoted as widely as it could be and included all primary and secondary schools.

A councillor asked what was being done to contact the "harder to reach" young people and children who were not engaging who would benefit. The officer explained that engagement with the Early Help Team and Education Welfare Team was needed. The councillor then asked if children who do not receive FSM could be supported by the programme. The officer highlighted that Local Authorities do have discretion in the Grant conditions to use up to 15% of funding for children who are not eligible for FSM.

The Board noted the report and recommendations.

20/23 Targeted Early Help and Family Hubs

The Board considered a report and presentation from the Director of Early Help & Children's Social Care. The report gave an overview of performance of Targeted Early Help, and an update on the Family Hub Initiative funded by the Department of Education and the Department for Health and Social Care.

The officer reported that The Early Help Service delivered statutory and non-statutory duties. The report highlighted service delivery and performance.

Recently the delivery of the council's Early Help service had become more targeted. There are several points that a child or young person and families can gain access to the service. The service supports emerging needs through to targeted support to help a family to stay together.

The Board learnt that Family Hubs offer a universal service to all parents to be, and new parents with children under 5 with an element of transformation that covers the whole age range 0-19 and 25 for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The service now delivers a combination of statutory requirements like Education Welfare where there are new statutory duties on attendance, delivery of the Missing Protocol, support for those not in education, training, or employment (NEET) young carers and support for families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF). In addition, it provides casework and evidence-based programme delivery for families who need help and support.

The service was both creative and flexible and over the past few years has re-organised its offer to meet the needs of families in Derby. A Staying Together Team was created to work with families at risk of family breakdown. The team offer a wraparound service to prevent children entering the care system. 80 children have stayed in their families care, this being the best option for them.

Recently the teams have been reset to create a team to work with young people at risk of exploitation and criminal exploitation (Child Related Exploitation – CRE) based on the same principles as Staying Together. It was anticipated that the service would support the reduction of identified cases who were at risk of CRE, and the high risks associated with child related exploitation within local communities.

Family Hubs, whilst universal, are a key part of the Targeted Early Help Service. The new initiative was funded by the DfE. Derby identified as one of 75 councils eligible for Family Hubs Start for Life funding £3.6 million 22-25. The delivery of Family Hubs and the Start for Life Offer brought funding into the Local Authority to enhance current children's centre services.

Six of the existing Children's centres were designated as Family Hubs and provided the full start for life offer, the remaining 4 stayed as children's centres and offered a range of activities for families. They are known as branches of Family Hubs.

A Family Hub Board and an approved DfE Delivery Plan was established. The Plan is monitored on a quarterly basis alongside data returns submitted to the

DFE. Family hubs launched in the city over the summer holidays with a full offer of activities.

- On-line and face to face evidence-based parenting programmes Cultural activity art and drama
- Speech and language screening and support activities
- Tiny Talk baby and infant signing
- Targeted and universal stay and play activities.
- Paediatric First aid
- Cost of living activity and support (access to food banks)
- DWP Support
- Perinatal and infant mental health activity including work with Dad's

The table in the report showed the engagement in services from families in the city. Altogether there were 2860 individual engagements, over 1,000 families, 389 new registrations and 209 sessions were delivered. The offer was universal to all families with no postcode restrictions; families can attend activities across the city.

The Family Hub Initiative brought £3.6 million pounds to the city, but there are restrictions on how the money was spent. Wherever possible local providers are commissioned for the additional services that must be provided by the local authority.

One member of the Board thought this was a great intervention and asked whether regular checks were undertaken with attendees to establish what activities they prefer. The officer explained that "You Said, We Did" questionnaires were completed by attendees after every session. It was hoped to set up Parent Carer Panels with the aim of focusing children under 2 years. These panels will be used to inform us if the service got things right or need to improve/change the activities.

Another councillor also thought this was a good service and asked how families are identified in the first place. The officer explained families are encouraged by their Social Workers, if children are under 5 to 8 months, they register with Family Hubs. The service undertakes work in local community centres, working with families from different nationalities in their own surroundings. Harder to reach families are encouraged to join in activities. Leaflets and information are translated into 3 different languages.

The Board noted the report and the progress and performance of Targeted Early Help and the development of Family Hubs

21/23 Child Related Exploitation

The Board considered a report and presentation from the Director of Early Help & Children's Social Care. The report provided an update to the Board on children who have been referred for Child Exploitation (CE) meetings.

The report and presentation provided a thematic overview of the types of exploitation identified, level of risk and diversity and gender breakdown of cases

referred to CE meetings. The report also gave the Board an overview of the partnership work, campaign, and awareness work.

Highlights from the report were detailed:

- Every child referred due to exploitation received coordinated support from a range of services which may include early help, , a social worker, CE contracted services and key partners from a range of agencies.
- Research and good practice updates are sent monthly to all managers. They contained resources to educate staff, parents, children, and the wider partnership about trends emerging nationally.
- A cross border, multi-agency audit of criminal exploitation was completed which highlighted good practice in the multi-agency use of CE tools and assessments. It also showed the need for better understanding of the numbers of children with Special Educational Needs at risk of exploitation.
- Operation Keep Safe was conducted with Derbyshire Police and CE Leads, it was focused on test purchases in hotels, using police cadets. There were concerns about hotel safeguarding practice. Training was offered to the hotel sector and will broaden to other licensed persons/premises later this year.
- The Children's Society Campaign #lookcloser was supported and information and posters were provided to local business in April.
- Online Abuse Training was delivered virtually in short one-hour sessions across Derby and Derbyshire
- The modern slavery training was updated and embedded into the generic CE course.

Children in care as a group benefit from wide ranging support, from their allocated social workers, specialist workers from LA contracted CE support services and independent reviewing officers. Each home has a safer neighbourhood officer attached to it.

Children are encouraged to attend meetings to share their wishes and feelings. The more they are involved the better the outcome and they feel they have some control, understanding and say over actions to safeguard them.

There has been change to the structure of strategic boards which oversee CE service delivery. The relationship and governance arrangements between the Exploitation and Vulnerable Young Peoples (EVYP) subgroup of the Safeguarding Children Partnership and Serious Organised Crime and Exploitation groups has been clarified to support effective delivery in this area of work to ensure effective safeguarding, communication, shared priorities and positive impact for children and families.

Contracted services, Catch 22 and Safe and Sound provide specialist support to children who meet a low-high risk threshold. Children are supported by

keyworkers, parents, and a range of partners in the varied settings they engage with.

CRE training has been updated with partners and there are podcasts and self-directed learning packs online for delegates to access. These provide a basic understanding of exploitation. Councillors were offered the option to undertake training.

The CE Annual data 2022/23 was highlighted:

- 202 children were assessed as being at risk of exploitation 2022-23 this was a decrease from 237 in 2021-22
- 19% were CLA
- 36 had disabilities
- 41 had an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

The Board were informed that the historic gender gap around females identified, and males was starting to close.

The levels and types of risk were broken down into categories namely criminal or sexual exploitation. Criminal exploitation covers a range of factors including harms outside the home, place based risks, modern slavery. Most cases are referred and worked at a medium level of risk.

The Data Trends April 2022/March 2023

- CSE referrals have increased over the course of this year.
- Derby was identified as a hot spot for violent offending and exploitation due to increase in police referrals to the national database. However, this has led to more resources.

Child Exploitation Data during Quarter 1 2023/24, there were 107 children considered to be at risk of exploitation. However, the gender gap was starting to decrease.

A Board member asked about child exploitation and the danger of county lines, young people are more at risk since gangs are supplying drugs. A recent case in Derby of supplying drugs to 15-year-olds using social media was highlighted. How can this be stopped? The officer explained work with children and young people and the parents to support them. Disruption, pursue and prosecution strategies are created through SocEx tactical meetings. There are updates around county lines which are where the biggest risks are.

The Board member also asked about family therapy, could parents be helped to speak to children about issues. The officer explained there were monthly updates with resources for schools and parents to recognise issues. The work of the Early Help Team in providing wraparound support was significant.

A councillor asked how safeguarding training for taxi drivers was being promoted. The officer explained that Completion of training is required as part of the application process for a taxi licence. Updates on training are regularly sent out to the Taxi Companies.

The Board resolved:

- 1. To note the report which supported their understanding of partnership work on child exploitation.**
- 2. To consider the offer of updated child exploitation training.**

22/23 Appointment of Co-opted Members

The Board considered a report of the Head of Democracy. The report provided an update to the Board on the provision for up to eight co-opted members to be appointed to the Children, Young People and Skills Scrutiny Board to take part in discussion on education matters. It was reported that there were directly nominated faith representatives (Church of England, Catholic and Other Faiths), while between two to five parent governors can also be appointed.

The Board noted that the Venerable Nicky Fenton had resigned as the Church of England representative with effect from 17 February 2023 and that the Bishop of Derby had been approached to nominate a replacement. The report sought the Board's endorsement of the Venerable Matthew Trick and noted that recruitment to other vacancies was ongoing.

The Board resolved:

- 1. To note the resignation of Nicky Fenton as the Church of England representative to the Children, Young People and Skills Scrutiny Review Board on 17 February 2023.**
- 2. To endorse the nomination of the Venerable Matthew Trick to the Board and request that Council approve his appointment as the Church of England representative for the remainder of the four-year period from 1 October 2023 to 31 January 2026.**
- 3. To note the process for the nomination/re-nomination of the remaining co-opted 'Other Faith' representative is ongoing.**
- 4. To note that the process for nominations for two to five co-opted parent governors from local authority-maintained schools will begin on 9 October 2023**

23/23 Work Programme and Topic Review

The Board considered a report which allowed the Board to study its Terms of Reference and Remit for the forthcoming Municipal Year. The report set out key work areas, issues, and potential topic review subjects within the service areas, for discussion or inclusion in the work programme.

The Board discussed and agreed the work programme set out in appendix 1 to the report.

The Board agreed the Work Programme

MINUTES END