

Minutes of a meeting of the EAP Education, Skills and Employment

At 5.00 pm on Tuesday 22nd November, 2022, held as a remote meeting, via Zoom

Present:-

Members

Councillor Scott Edwards (Chair)
Councillor Wendy Brackenbury
Councillor Leanne Buckingham
Councillor Philip Irwin

Councillor Dorothy Maxwell
Councillor Lee Wilkes

Officers

Jan Baines	School Admissions Manager
Jenny Daniels	Democracy Officer (minutes)
Ann-Marie Dodds	Assistant Director for Education
Neil Goddard	Head of SEND
Ben Smith	Democratic & Electoral Services Manager

122 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ian Jelley.

123 Minutes of the meetings held on 8 September and 25 October 2022

RESOLVED that:-

- a) The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2022 be approved as a correct record with the inclusion of apologies received from Councillor Philip Irwin; and
- b) The minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2022 be approved as a correct record.

124 Declarations of Interest

The Chair invited those members who wished to do so to declare any interests in respect of items on the agenda.

No interests were declared.

125 Briefing on the School Admissions and Appeals Process

At the Chair's invitation the Schools Admissions Manager provided a presentation (copies of which were previously circulated) on the School Admissions and Appeals Process.

In answer to queries on the update the following was confirmed:

- i) A first come, first served basis was not applied to applications to a school. Only a school's waiting list;

- ii) People applied for a school place on-line. The in-year system was being reviewed to ascertain if more automation could be added to the process;
- iii) The Team co-ordinated all school places in the area to ensure no place was offered to more than one child. They also managed all of the waiting lists to ensure children with the highest need were offered a place at a school;
- iv) They would be working with the new Head of School Place Planning to ensure there were adequate school places;
- v) Staff were still being recruited to positions following the disaggregation of the service to North and West Northamptonshire Councils respectively;
- vi) Referrals for assistance with transport to and from school were dealt with by a separate department; and
- vii) Some children lived on the borders of North Northamptonshire travelled to another school outside of the authority area or conversely travelled in from another authority.

RESOLVED that:

The Panel notes the presentation on the Schools Admissions and Appeals Process.

126 Local Area SEND Peer Challenge

At the Chairman's invitation the Assistant Director of Education introduced this report (copies of which had been previously circulated) which provided details of how the recent peer review had been undertaken, and its findings which included strengths, areas for development and recommendations of where the Council could improve its service.

It was confirmed the report would be circulated to members and any questions could be e-mailed to the Assistant Director of Education. The report would be made public on Friday 25 November 2022.

RESOLVED that:

The Panel notes the report and presentation on the Local Area SEND Peer Challenge.

127 Update on Early Childhood Provision

The Early Years Strategic Advisor provided a presentation (copies of which had been previously circulated) providing details of an early years review which noted progress to date, the development of an early childhood board and next steps.

In answer to queries the following was confirmed:

- i) There were various ways of assisting those with special educational needs including purchasing equipment for them to use. Nurseries worked with the parents of children with special needs so that strategies that worked in nursery could be replicated at home;
- ii) There was adequate space for working parents and those with additional special needs. They had a duty to work with the sector to provide training and support of areas to provide services;
- iii) Any parent on benefits could receive up to 15 hours of childcare to benefit them to be able to work or undertake training. It was up to the parent on whether or not they took this up; and

- iv) There were 400 nurseries in North Northants offering both private and public sector provision. The Early Years Strategic Advisor would provide a link to where details of these could be found.

RESOLVED that:

The Panel notes the update on Family Hubs.

128 Virtual School Head Annual Report

At the Chair's invitation the Head of the Virtual School set out the Service's annual report, noting that it provided education for looked after children (LAC) wherever they be educated, including where necessary to place them out of the county. There was a need to ensure that wherever these children were placed, that setting understood the child's needs and that they were receiving all the assistance they were entitled to. The Virtual School was responsible for providing settings to ensure a child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) was met.

This was the first time a report was made to North Northamptonshire Council and it was based on the performance and outcomes for children.

Children received 3 PEP's a year. There could be new children in and some children out of the system. There were 1,003 statutory PEPs created in the last year and the School had been able to provide at least 2 PEPs to each child in 97% of cases for the year. There was a 3-year trend of improving quality, with 79% of PEPs quality assured as good. 93% of early Years PEPs had been completed and post 16 PEPs were a key focus for the current year as they only stood at 76%.

89% of young people aged 16+ years were in education, employment or training. Participation gaps were also provided for them. Holidays were based around sport, music and drama and 89% of children had accessed them.

Future development for this year included an increase in post 16 PEPs. Direct support to schools who had emotional wellbeing was also required. The work was governed by the Corporate Parenting Board and would be presented to them in January 2023.

In answer to queries on the report the following was confirmed:

- i) The School had a statutory duty to monitor and promote the education of LAC. They also had a wider duty to look after previously LAC. They provided training to parents, guidance, support and training to schools. They also had a non-statutory duty to provide education to any children who have had a social worker.
- ii) PEPs were attended by a designated teacher, carer, support worker and the Looked After Child could also attend. The Virtual School could also attend but they did not have the capacity to attend every one of them. They had attended approximately 46% of them;
- iii) The Head of the virtual School worked for both North and West Northamptonshire Councils;
- iv) The School provided pupil premium plus funding which a school could use to provide things like music lessons for a child.

- v) There was an age assessment team within the social care team who undertook assessments when an unaccompanied asylum seeker entered the country. No child was placed in a school until this had been undertaken.

RESOLVED that:

The Panel notes the Virtual School Head Annual Report.

129 Forward List of Items for Education, Skills and Employment EAP

RESOLVED that:

The forward list of items for the Education, Skills and Employment EAP be noted.

130 Close of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair thanked members and officers for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at 6.41 pm