

North Yorkshire County Council
Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee
6 December 2019
Work Programme

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report asks Members to consider the Committee's work programme for 2019/20, taking into account the outcome of discussions on previous agenda items and any other developments taking place across the county.
- 1.2 The work programme schedule is attached at Appendix 1.

2.0 Scheduled Committee dates/Mid-Cycle Briefing dates

- 2.1 The new calendar of meetings was made available at the November council meeting. Here are the relevant dates of this committee.
- 2.2 Committee Meetings
- Friday 28 February 2020 at 10am
 - Friday 26 June 2020 at 10am
 - Friday 4 September 2020 at 10am
 - Friday 11 December 2020 at 10am
 - Friday 26 February 2021 at 10am
- 2.3 Mid Cycle Briefing Dates
- Friday 17 January 2020 at 10am (all members invited to attend)
 - Friday 3 April 2020 at 10am
 - Friday 29 May 2020 at 10am
 - Friday 24 July 2020 at 10am
 - Friday 16 October 2020 at 10am

3.0 Elective Home Education

- 3.1 Elective Home Education (EHE) is the term used by the Department for Education (DfE) to describe parents' decisions to provide education for their children at home instead of sending them to school. This is different to home tuition or education provided by a local authority other than at a school.
- 3.2 A workshop for all the committee membership was held on Friday 1 November 2019. The slides from this workshop have been sent to committee members. The session brought members up to date with latest guidance and the range of action being undertaken and planned by the Children and Young Peoples Service.
- 3.3 It is fair to say that the level of national and local awareness and attention in the topic has increased significantly over the last two years. Members recognized that much has changed since the issue was reported to you last

year: There has been a major parliamentary enquiry; published guidance “Elective home education, Departmental guidance for local authorities in April 2019” has made the government’s position on the responsibilities of schools, parents and local authorities much clearer; and the findings of an OFSTED inquiry have clarified particular issues such as “off-rolling” - of which more later.

- 3.4 North Yorkshire’s experience of increasing numbers of known EHE children is in keeping with national trends. LAs have reported an average 20% year-on-year increase in the number of children and young people known to be home schooled over the previous 5 years.
- 3.5 Some key points from the session:
- a) The directorate has embraced and pushed forward the requirements and implications of the recently released DfE guidance.
 - b) Members supported our offer when notified about of a parent’s intention to home educate, whereby:
 - a visit is offered to the family.
 - Working with the Inclusive Education Service and Education and Skills, the C&F Early Help Service has developed the EHE pathway which relates to:
 - The notification from schools of a parent’s intention to home educate.
 - The offer of an annual visit for children who are educated at home.
 - The offer of an EHE identification badge, which is renewed annually.
 - c) As an authority we are compliant with the latest guidance. Pleasingly, it has provided the impetus to improve our understanding of EHE in the county generally - for example, using our power to require schools (including independent schools) to provide information about children who leave at the school’s standard transition times, to help ensure that there is knowledge at local authority level of a child’s schooling status.
 - d) Members noted that of the reasons quoted by parents for choosing to home educate the largest proportion, by some distance, was “stress and anxiety”. Whilst it was acknowledged that this category could cover a range of experiences, members wondered whether it points towards just how many parents who opt to home-school their children are doing so possibly to avoid bullying, exam pressure and stress. This is about children having some sort of difficulty at school. The decision to home educate might sometimes be taken 'on the spur of the moment', often as a response to difficulties in relation to the child's schooling, difficulties that might or might not be resolvable. Members believed this may tell us a great deal about where NY efforts should be addressed.

- e) Where parents have withdrawn a child from a setting they regarded as unsatisfactory, LAs should be willing to explore options which are different from the previous setting. Members liked the practice whereby we commit to exploring with parents and the school the extent to which additional support can be put in place at the school even if initial efforts to secure this have not worked.
- f) The directorate's procedures and practices around NYCC visits appeared thorough, especially in terms of identifying concerns and possible additional support needs.
- g) Some parents choose to home educate their children because they believe this is the best option. The worry for members was those parents and carers who are not actively choosing elective home education but are being compelled into it.
- h) Members were reassured about efforts to identify "off-rolling". This is the controversial practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without using a permanent exclusion, when the removal is primarily in the best interests of the school, rather than the best interests of the pupil. This includes pressuring a parent to remove their child from the school roll. It was noted that OFSTED if it finds evidence of the practice will now publish this in their inspection report. And under our new framework which takes effect later this year, any schools that are off-rolling are likely to be judged inadequate for leadership and management.
- i) Members would be interested in it being established whether there is any correlation between closure of rural schools and situations where parents believe making arrangements for their child to attend the new school is more problematic, even traumatic, than educating at home.
- j) There was some discussion about LAs and Academies being compelled to provide a breakdown for all pupils in each year group removed from all schools in their area for home education. The information provided could be the trigger for further scrutiny where there are concerns that particular schools have higher numbers of parents de-registering children.
- k) Members noted that OFSTED's increasing interest in the reasons why children move to EHE from schools, and the findings of their recent research into the topic, is one of the areas being looked at by a Cross-directorate Working Group.

3.6 Members praised the officers, Barbara Merrygold and Simon Osman, for the manner in which they presented the material to members, their grasp of the issue and its ramifications, and how they responded to the range of questions posed.

- 3.7 In the light of information given, and the evidence in front of them, members who attended believed that the directorate has a good understanding of the issues associated with EHE, and procedures and practices are well thought through and are effectively observed.
- 3.8 The overall conclusion was that the issue is being handled well.
- 3.9 The consensus was that no further detailed work is needed at this stage, but members asked that your group spokespersons keep a weather eye over the topic and bring it to your attention when they believe that would be useful.
- 3.10 I know your Chairman is minded to revisit this informal session in about 6-9 months to pick up developments and progress.

4.0 Young People with additional needs transitioning to Adulthood

- 4.1 On average just over 100 young people will "move" from Children's Services to Adult Social Care, of whom a third will have an array of complex needs.
- 4.2 As scrutiny members it is important that you assess how well we are supporting and responding to need during this very important stage in a young person's life. This committee's interest in this topic is shared by the Care and Independence Overview Scrutiny Committee. A joint session follows this meeting.

5.0 Annual Report of the Looked After Children's Group

- 5.1 This report has now been deferred to your Mid cycle briefing on the 17 January 2019. All members are invited to attend. By the time you meet it will have been seen by the Executive at its meeting on 17 December 2019.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 The Committee is asked to confirm, comment or add to the areas of work listed in the Work Programme schedule.

DANIEL HARRY
SCRUTINY TEAM LEADER
County Hall,
Northallerton

Author and Presenter of Report: Ray Busby
Contact Details: Tel: 01609 532655
E-mail: ray.busby@northyorks.gov.uk

21 November 2019
Background Documents Nil

YOUNG PEOPLES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Scope

The interests of young people, including education, care and protection and family support.

Meeting Details

Committee Meetings	Friday 6 December 2019 at 10am
	Friday 28 February 2020 at 10am
	Friday 4 September 2020 at 10am
	Friday 11 December 2020 at 10am
	Friday 26 February 2021 at 10am

Programme

Friday 6 December 2019 Committee Meeting at 10am. Brierley Room			
TOPIC	CONTENT	APPROACH	LEAD
Report of the Young Peoples Champion	Account of Activity over the past year. Discussion of Issues and challenges – especially connected with inclusion and engagement of young people.	Consideration of report.	Cllr Annabel Wilkinson
Looked After Children	Annual Report of the Looked After Children Members Group. Account of Activity over the past year. Assessment of progress against the LAC strategy	Consideration of report. Discussion of Issues and challenges.	Chair - Cllr Annabel Wilkinson assisted by Julie Bunn and Vicky Metheringham
Young people and Sex Education; Managing Risk and Safeguarding	How young people are helped to learn about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up. How we support schools to equip young people with the information, skills and values to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable	Linked to Healthy Child Programme changes	

	relationships and to take responsibility for their sexual-health and well-being.		
Friday 28 February 2019 at 10am			
TOPIC	CONTENT	APPROACH	LEAD
Young Carers	Especially those who support adults with mental health issues. The practical and emotional support made available to young people to ensure they enjoy and achieve, just like their peers. How NYCC works in partnership with schools, and GPs to identify young carers, raise much-needed awareness of their situation, and offer the support that they need, when they need it.	Consideration of Briefing Paper	
Children, Adolescents and the Media (online networks, social inclusion and bullying)	The challenging social and health issues that online youth experience. Benefits and Risks of Youth using social media. Examination of the core issues of bullying, popularity and status, depression and social anxiety, risk-taking, and sexual development.	Consideration of Implications. Particular focus on Cyberbullying and Online Harassment. Possible witness sessions.	
Teacher recruitment - the Rural Challenge	The challenges faced by schools, especially those in rural areas, in recruiting teaching staff. How NYCC/traded services supports.	Briefing report and possible witness sessions	
The experience of young people in foster care as they transition into adulthood			

Mid Cycle Briefing Items

Date	Probable Item
17 January 2020	Small Schools and their sustainability – scoping

Date	Probable Item
	<p>A light touch look back at cases over, say, the last 18-24 months of local authority maintained schools which had proceeded to full closure rather than achieve academy status.</p> <p>Teacher Recruitment Working with Academies - how they reflect views of communities they serve</p>
3 April 2020	The Citizenship Agenda: Education and Democratic Citizenship

Other sessions

Young People with additional needs transitioning to Adulthood

Informal workshop session with Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee members (likely to be at the end of the 6 December committee meeting)