

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 13th February 2019

Wards: All wards

Subject: Departmental Update Report November 2018

Lead officer: Rachael Wardell, Director of Children Schools and Families

Lead members: Cllr Kelly Braund, Cabinet Member for Children Services

Cllr Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Cabinet Member for Education

Contact officer: Sharon Buckby, Interim Head of Service for Policy, Planning and Performance

Recommendations:

A. Members of the panel to discuss and comment on the contents of the report.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. The report provides members of the panel with information on key developments not covered elsewhere on the agenda and affecting the Children, Schools and Families Department since the panel's last meeting in November 2018. It focusses on those aspects of particular relevance to the department and those where the Panel expressed an interest in receiving regular updates.

2 DETAILS

2.1. **Ofsted notified Merton on the 9th January 2019 of their intent to** undertake a 'Focused Visit' to assess the effectiveness of children's social care with a focus on the MASH, First Response, Plans and Planning. Activity for the Focused Visit was split over two phases. Phase one provides the opportunity to analyse our strategies, processes, procedures and the effectiveness of auditing through a desk analysis of documents we supply. Phase two is an on-site visit, with two inspectors spending two days with the service teams so that they can fully understand how effective our social work practice and multiagency safeguarding is. The visit took place on 16 and 17 January. Unlike in a full inspection, the visit outcome is not a report incorporating judgements. However, following the visit, Ofsted publishes a letter outlining how effective they think we are in those areas considered during their time with us. The outcome letter is published on or around the 8th February and after publication it can be found here: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/315> We will table the report at the

13th February Scrutiny Panel. Ofsted will return for the Annual Engagement Meeting in the first week of March 2019.

- 2.2. **Other inspection activity.** CSF anticipates both YOT and SEND inspections in the near future. Regular work is under way in both areas to maintain and improve our services and multi-agency partnership arrangements. The Youth Crime Prevention Partnership Executive Board is holding a Visioning Event on 25 February to further develop the Youth Justice Team's business plan. Monthly integrated commissioning meetings are used to progress the health, education and social care partnership around SEND, and both areas are monitored at a monthly Continuous Improvement Board.
- 2.3. **Harris Academy Wimbledon and secondary school admissions.** The handover of the High Path site (excluding the Elim land) has now passed to the ESFA to commence demolition works, with arrangements in place for Elim to make a temporary move in March to enable the contractor's programme to complete the permanent school for September 2020.
- 2.4. Applications for admission to secondary school in September 2019 closed on 31 October 2018, with a subsequent closing date of 11 December 2018 for those applications classified as 'late for good reason'. 1 March 2019 is 'offer day'. Online applicants for a secondary school place will be able to view the outcome of their application online from the evening of this day. Paper applications will receive a postal response.
- 2.5. **Special Education Provision** In addition to the works now under way to expand Cricket Green, outline proposals for the creation of additional places for children with special educational needs have been included in the capital programme for coming years, including a secondary school autism unit, primary SEMH provision, a primary ASD base, a secondary SEMH / medical PRU and new ASD provision. One of the proposals is to provide a 24 place ASD base at Stanford Primary School through adaptation of their surplus accommodation and the school has recently commenced a consultation as required for Academy schools.
- 2.6. **Contextual Safeguarding:** As well as threats to the welfare of children from within their families, children may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online. These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including: exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines; trafficking, online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. Extremist groups make use of the internet to radicalise and recruit and to promote extremist materials. Any potential harmful effects to individuals identified as vulnerable to extremist ideologies or being drawn into terrorism should also be considered.
- 2.7. Merton has been invited to join three other London boroughs and a further five authorities across England and Wales in the implementation of a

Contextual Safeguarding framework. The Programme will involve the time and input from a dedicated researcher from Bedfordshire University to support a bespoke intervention plan and pilot process, to engage in ongoing learning forums and acting as a point of contact for other boroughs in England who are interested in implementing a Contextual Safeguarding framework.

- 2.8. Merton has also been successful in a bid to the Home Office Early Intervention Youth Fund, launched as part of the Serious Violence Strategy. Merton's Participation Team will be recruiting a Responsive Community Engagement Team (ReCET), that will be co-located in the Adolescent and Family Service, delivering participation based activities with young people at risk of crime and community sites affected and/or able to provide sustainable diversionary activities. The funding also creates a Contextual Engagement Management post that will monitor referrals and evaluations, provide safeguarding oversight and group supervision in addition to supporting Merton's implementation of the Contextual Safeguarding framework.
- 2.9. **Prevent** This is included as a standing item in the Departmental Update following the CYP Scrutiny Meeting in January 2019. There is nothing new to report this month.
- 2.10. **Family Drug and Alcohol Court** The Pan London FDAC Partnership has concluded its first year with interventions delivered to 58 families and 97 children. Of these, 31 cases have completed the interventions with final recommendations from FDAC that 52% of children should remain with their families. Merton made 5 referrals of which 1 case was pre-birth, 3 pre-proceedings and 1 case in proceedings and the majority of parents are using both alcohol and drugs. These cases have yet to finish their interventions. All boroughs will be notifying Merton in July 2019 of their intentions to stay or leave the Partnership following the end of the mandatory two -year term.
- 2.11. **Multi-systemic Therapy Social Impact Bond** The Pan London Care Impact Partnership has concluded its first year with Merton providing above the 16 minimum referral numbers, finalising at 19. Of these cases 10 have concluded their interventions with 9 children staying out of care. There are currently 8 boroughs within the Partnership with Barking and Dagenham and Kingston and Richmond (AFC) joining in October 2018 and January 2019. A further 5 boroughs have expressed an interest in joining the Partnership however this is currently under review.
- 2.12. The Annual Staff Conference took place on the 23rd and 24th January 2019. The purpose of the Conference was to enable direct engagement between staff and the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and external leaders from our partner organisations including the CCG, Fire Service and Love Wimbledon. Speakers were able to present key achievements against priorities for each Division over 2018/19, alongside the main corporate focus for the last two years and reintroducing the new Target Operating Model and the new objectives of Resilient Merton; Collaborative Merton; SMART Merton; Ambitious Merton. CSF staff delivered workshops on Ambitious Merton, with a view to asking colleagues

from the across the council what they believed were the challenges faced by young people in Merton and to identify the solutions to those challenges.

2.13. Ofsted School Inspections: During week commencing 24th January Raynes Park had an unannounced Section 5 Inspection. It was triggered by pupil mobility in academic year 2016-17. The report will be with the school during the first week of February and approx. 19 days after the inspection will be published

2.14. Ofsted has launched a consultation on the new inspection framework for Early Years, Schools and Colleges. We have arranged for Ofsted to brief our Head Teachers in their scheduled meetings and we are also offering further sessions to assist schools in responding to the detail of the proposals.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. No specific implications for this report

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. No specific implications for this report.

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. No specific implications for this report.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. None

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. None

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. None

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. None

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1. None

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1. None