

Agenda Item 6

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 10th February 2015

Agenda item: 6

Wards: All

Subject: Role of Schools in Promoting Broader Well Being of Children and Young People.

Lead officer: Yvette Stanley, Director of Children's Services

Lead member(s): Councillor Martin Welton; Councillor Maxi Martin

Forward Plan reference number: N/A

Contact officer: Keith Shipman, Service Manager Education Inclusion

Recommendations:

A. Members of the panel note and consider the contents of the report

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. Members of the panel requested a short summary report on the role of schools in promoting the broader well-being of children and young people in the borough. This report describes the ways Merton schools promote well-being with examples of how they do this. It is not a comprehensive survey of Merton schools undertaking this role, nor does it seek to judge how effectively they undertake that role. It aims to inform members of a general approach.

2 DETAILS

2.1. Promoting the general wellbeing of pupils – legal duties.

2.2. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 placed a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools to promote wellbeing.

2.3. 'Wellbeing' is defined in the Children Act 2004 as:

Physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing;

Protection from harm and neglect;

Education, training and recreation;

The contribution children make to society; and

Social and economic wellbeing.

2.4. NICE – the National Institute for Clinical Excellence also produces guidance for Primary and Secondary schools on how to promote wellbeing from a health promotion perspective. The introduction to the secondary guidance is relevant to all schools and helpfully states:

'Young people's social and emotional wellbeing is important in its own right but also because it affects their physical health (both as a young person and as an adult). Good social, emotional and psychological health helps protect young people against emotional and behavioural problems, violence and crime, teenage pregnancy and the misuse of drugs and alcohol (Adi et al. 2007; Colman et al. 2009; Graham and Power 2003¹). It can also help them to learn and achieve academically, thus affecting their long-term social and economic wellbeing. Young people's social and emotional wellbeing is influenced by a range of factors, from their individual make-up and family background to the community within which they live and society at large. As a result, activities in secondary education to develop and protect their social and emotional wellbeing can only form one element of a broader, multi-agency strategy. Secondary education establishments can provide an environment that fosters social and emotional wellbeing. They can also equip young people with the knowledge and skills they need to learn effectively and to prevent behavioural and health problems. Organisation-wide approaches in secondary education help all young people to develop social and emotional skills, as well as providing specific help for those most at risk (or already showing signs) of problems'

3 HOW DO MERTON SCHOOLS PROMOTE WELLBEING?

3.1. Ethos and Policy

3.2. All schools have vision/ethos/ mission statements which focus on pupils being safe and comfortable in the school environment so that they can become confident learners, independent thinkers and good citizens. Care for each other, healthy lifestyles and taking responsibility are embedded in schools' policies and codes of conduct. The Governors of each school will develop these policies with the school community and create the culture within which children learn. At the same time children learn that this is a learning culture and so the ethos – what is valued, what is celebrated and valued - promotes the positive social wellbeing of children. Policy related to racism may include specific curriculum activity, monitoring incidents and bringing in organisations such as Show Racism the Red Card. Anti Bullying policy may focus on helping children to feel confident to report and challenge the role of the bystander when bullying is occurring.

3.3. Curriculum

3.4. Every state funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society.

3.5. The Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education curriculum includes a range of aspects which support children's well-being including citizenship discussions, healthy living, safeguarding workshops, e safety, sex and positive relationship education, mental health promotion, drug and smoking

advice, anti Gangs work and getting along with friends. This may be completed as a programme across a year, assemblies or whole days to focus on a theme. Schools will often invite in speakers and specialist organisations. An example of this may be inviting in the commissioned substance misuse prevention service to run young people workshops.

3.6. PSHEE is not statutory in the new national curriculum, but all schools should make provision for it.

3.7. Physical Education – all schools teach PE – exercise and sport have a key role to play in developing children’s physical and mental health.

3.8. Religious Education is delivered in all schools and explores social and moral questions including learning about religions as well as learning from them. This gives children the opportunity to develop skills of reflection on significant moral and personal issues.

3.9. Other curriculum subjects can be used to address wider wellbeing – such as use of drama to explore issues and themes.

3.10. Extra- Curricular Opportunities

3.11. All Merton schools provide opportunities to access extra-curricular activities such as after school clubs, extra sports clubs and access to arts and music opportunities. This offer varies between schools, but helps children to broaden their skills and experiences. Schools will also offer residential trips and visits including overseas language visits. Schools may also offer specific self-development qualifications such as the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme.

3.12. Panels and plans

All Merton schools have processes for identifying vulnerable children and planning for their wider support. In secondary schools these may be called targeted youth support panels and in primary schools vulnerable children’s panels. Through these processes schools identify the pupils who need extra support to enable them to thrive. This may lead to referrals to voluntary organisations such as Young Carers or support from Jigsaw4u workers around bereavement; secondary schools might refer to Catch 22 for support around substance misuse. Schools may require extra advice and help so may speak to the MASH, Vulnerable Children’s Team or Transforming Families Service for advice or for referral. Schools work with families and agencies to create Teams around the Child (TAC) and may use a multi-agency assessment tool called a CASA (Common and Shared Assessment) All schools have designated teachers who oversee both early intervention and safeguarding work. In addition secondary schools have CSE champions (child sexual exploitation) who ensure the link to the council’s wider work to reduce risk around child sexual exploitation. All schools focus on providing transition support – into primary or primary to secondary transition – for more vulnerable children. In addition all schools have a designated teacher for Looked After Children. Schools pay particular attention to the wider wellbeing of looked after children who will all have a Personal Education Plan.

3.13. Special Educational Needs

3.14. All schools have Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) who will work with children, teachers and parents to identify and plan support for children with special educational needs. Schools are now implementing the changes of the Children and Families Act which encourages us all to consider the Educational, Health and Care needs of children with Special Educational Needs in a single plan. The SENCO will coordinate support – such as from the speech and language therapy team.

3.15. Medical Plans

3.16. All schools have to put in place Medical Plans to support children with long term health needs. These plans support the wider wellbeing of children with health needs by ensuring that all aspects of school life are considered in relation to the child's medical needs.

3.17. Specialist Staffing – specialist support

3.18 Merton schools employ or commission a range of staff to support the well-being of pupils including parent support assistants, mentors, Jigsaw4U workers, pastoral leaders. Governors of schools think through what the needs of their pupils are and what additional adults are required and can be afforded by each school. By employing people in these roles schools are offering increasingly targeted support to children with additional or specific needs. Many Merton schools employ Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA)s who are trained by the Educational Psychology Service to support children's emotional needs. Other schools have developed Nurture Groups. These are based on a well-researched model that provides a nurturing space with trained staff who can support children with various attachment related issues. Children feel safer having part of their curriculum in the nurture group. Some schools commission the Targeted Mental Health Service (TAMHS) which provides specialist mental health and emotional support to children, parents and school staff through early intervention and prevention approaches. Close relationships with support staff provide opportunities for training and supervision enabling more children to be supported in schools. All Secondary Schools in Merton have access to a safer school police officer – they support the staff, pupils and parents to feel safe in school .

3.19 Pupil Voice

3.20 All Merton schools have school councils which give pupils a voice in their schools and offer training in working within formal meeting structures. Pupils are involved in Headteacher selection, peer mentoring, conflict resolution, academic mentoring and playleading. School pupil leaders come together in Merton primary and secondary councils. In some schools pupils help to monitor the quality of teaching.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1. Not Applicable - this report is for general information.

5 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

5.1. Not Applicable - this report is for general information.

6 TIMETABLE

6.1. Not Applicable - this report is for general information.

7 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. Not Applicable - this report is for general information.

8 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

8.1. Not Applicable - this report is for general information.

9 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

9.1. In promoting the broader wellbeing of children and young people, schools are inherently promoting human rights, equalities and community cohesion principles in their school communities.

10 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

10.1. In promoting the broader wellbeing of children and young people, schools promote good citizenship and challenge anti-social and criminal behaviour.

11 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1. Not Applicable - this report is for general information.

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

- Not Applicable

13 BACKGROUND PAPERS

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