

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE AGENDA



Tuesday 14 June 2016

at 4.00 pm

**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Beck, Clark, Hall, Hamilton, Harrison, Lauderdale and Moore.

Co-opted Members: Julie Cordiner (C of E Diocesan representative) and Michael Lee (RC Diocesan representative).

School Heads Representative's: Mark Tilling (Secondary), David Turner (Primary)

Six Young People's Representatives

Observer: Councillor Thomas, Chair of Adult Services Committee

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2016 (*previously circulated and published*).

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

None.

5. KEY DECISIONS

None.



6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

None.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 Annual Complaints Report - 1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015 – *Assistant Director, Children's Services*

7.2 OSCARS (Out of School Provision) OFSTED Report – *Director of Child and Adult Services*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 12 July 2016 at 4.00pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.



CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

8 MARCH 2016

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

Present:

Councillor Chris Simmons (In the Chair)

Councillors: Ged Hall, John Lauderdale, Trisha Lawton and Brenda Loynes.

Co-opted members:

Mark Tilling (Secondary Head Representative)
David Turner (Primary Head Representative)

Young people's representatives:

Matthew Childs, Callum Reed and Caitlyn Towers.

Officers:

Sally Robinson, Director of Child and Adult Services
Mark Patton, Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19
Helen White, Participation Manager
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Officer

75. Apologies for Absence

Councillors Mary Fleet and Sheila Griffin.

Co-opted members: Julie Cordiner (C of E Diocesan Representative)
and Michael Lee (RC Diocesan Representative).

Councillor Richardson, Chair of Adult Services Committee (Observer).

76. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Simmons, Hall and Loynes declared personal interests in Minute No's 79 and 80 as school governors.

Mark Tilling (Secondary Head Representative) and David Turner (Primary Head Representative) declared personal interests as school heads and governors.

77. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2016

Confirmed.

78. **School Admission Arrangements – Response to Petition** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

Key Decision test (ii) applies. Forward Plan Reference Number: CAS 046/16.

Purpose of report

To update Members on the responses received and to provide recommendations following receipt of a petition which requested a review of admission arrangements for primary school places.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that following the primary National Offer Day (16 April 2015) there were a number of parents dissatisfied that they did not receive one of their school preferences. The Local Authority (LA) subsequently received a petition signed by 367 people seeking a review of the admissions policy on the allocation of primary school places to include attendance at nursery as part of the admissions criteria. The petition was brought to the attention of Children's Services Committee on 16 June 2015. The petition stated:

"Petition for local schools for local children in Hartlepool

Many children have been turned down for school places within their local neighbourhood and have been sent out of their catchment area, we the undersigned request that the school admissions policy is reviewed and amended to give children in the catchment area more of an equally opportunity to attend the school where they have attended the Nursery and gained confidence, trust, made new friends and most of all settled into the school setting."

Members resolved that headteachers should be made aware of the terms of the petition. Headteachers were informed and governing bodies were also made aware of the petition during their autumn term meetings. Autumn term meetings concluded in December 2015. Headteachers and Governing Bodies were invited to provide responses on whether the LA's admission arrangements should be changed to include attendance at a school nursery within the oversubscription criteria.

Members were advised that any recommendations to change the oversubscription criteria could only apply to schools for which the LA is the admission authority (community and voluntary controlled), would be subject to a formal consultation and any changes would affect the 2018/19 admission arrangements. All other schools and academies are

responsible for their own admission arrangements therefore it would be a decision for them to consider any changes to their oversubscription criteria.

The report outlined the current over subscription criteria and the results of the consultation. It was clear from the consultation that there was little support for any change to the existing criteria by the inclusion of reference to attendance at the school nursery. The Assistant Director highlighted that the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) that works with the Department for Education and helps to clarify the legal position on admissions policies in schools had issued advice in its 2014/15 annual report which stated –

Main Finding - The practice of giving priority for admission to the reception year to children who have attended nursery provision has again been found to be unfair to other local children, constrains parents' preferences for child care and pre-school provision and does not comply with the general requirements of the Admissions Code.

OSA comments made in relation to complaints received in 2013/14 are below:

Schools that wish to give priority to children attending certain nursery provision still do not consider carefully enough the requirements for admission arrangements to be fair for all children starting compulsory schooling so that they all have a fair chance of securing a place in a reception year class irrespective of decisions made about pre-school provision.

The Assistant Director advised Members that when parents accept a nursery place they are made aware that attendance at nursery does not guarantee a place at that particular school.

Given the comments obtained from the Office for the Schools Adjudicator and the fact that the majority of schools, who expressed a view, were against the proposal, officers sought Member agreement not to include attendance at nursery within the oversubscription criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.

The Chair supported the view that inclusion of such a criteria would disadvantage those parents that chose alternative pre-school services. The considerable pressure on school places particularly in the north of the town had led to a re-appraisal of the capacity of some schools and the October meeting of the Committee had approved capital schemes to increase school capacity at two schools (Minute No. 43, 6 October 2015 refers).

The Chair considered that in light of the advice of the Schools Adjudicator it would not be prudent to formally consult on a change to the oversubscription criteria.

Decision

That no formal consultation on a change to the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools relating to the attendance at a school nursery be undertaken.

79. 2016/17 Schools' Capital Works Programme
(Director of Child and Adult Services)**Type of decision**

Key Decision – test (i) & (ii) applies – Forward Plan Reference No. CAS 045/16.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to seek approval to the 2016/17 Schools' Capital Works Programme, as detailed in confidential Appendix 1 to the report, in order to progress the design and detailed costing exercise in time for the majority of projects to be carried out during the summer holiday period. The confidential appendix to the report contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para. 3).

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that each year, during January or early February, the Department for Education (DfE) announces capital funding allocations, these being, School Condition Allocations (SCA) formerly known as Capital Maintenance and Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) for the school estate in Hartlepool both for the Local Authority (LA) and the Voluntary Aided sector (VA).

At the time of writing the report, the Assistant Director indicated that the capital funding allocations had not been communicated to the LA. However, last year the DfE stated that SCA allocations for 2015/16 would be indicative of the funding that responsible bodies would receive in 2016/17 and 2017/18. DfE further stated that SCA will be revised annually to reflect schools moving responsible body e.g. converting to Academy status, opening or closing. During 2015/16, no schools had closed, opened or converted to Academy status, therefore, the schemes detailed in Appendix 1 to the report were considered affordable using the same allocation made in 2015/16, which was £705,409. At the meeting, the Assistant Director stated that the final allocation had been confirmed by the DfE as £702,848. The resultant shortfall between the

allocation and the total of the schemes proposed would be met from the contingency in order to allow the schemes to proceed as planned.

While the financial details and the schemes were set out in the confidential section of the report, the Assistant Director assured Members that the selection of the schemes had been an open and transparent one involving the Schools Forum and the Schools Capital Group.

The schemes proposed in confidential Appendix 1 to the report would be funded from the 2016/17 Schools Capital Allocation now confirmed as £702,848, the unallocated funding of £170,000 and the remaining 2015/16 contingency of £91,230. Schools will also be expected to contribute 10% towards the schemes.

Members welcomed the proposals. The Chair requested that dispensation to the Director of Child and Adult Services to authorise works where there was a significant emergency and/or health and safety risk should be done in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.

Decision

1. That the schedule of 2016/17 capital works programme as summarised in the confidential Appendix 1 to the report be approved, subject to the LA agreeing contributions from schools towards individual schemes in line with the shared funding principles established by the Schools Forum. The confidential appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para. 3).
2. That retrospective approval be given to the three schemes which have been funded from contingency as detailed in the confidential Appendix 1 to the report.
3. That the Director of Child and Adult Services be delegated appropriate dispensation and discretion in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to authorise works where a significant emergency / health and safety risk is exposed.

80. Suitability Projects (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

Key Decision (test (i)/(ii) Forward Plan Reference No. CAS 047/16).

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to update the Committee regarding the schemes that had been selected by Schools' Forum, following a suitability survey exercise carried out by Schools' Capital Subgroup, and to seek approval for these proposed schemes, as detailed in confidential Appendix 1 to the report, in order to progress a design and detailed costing exercise. The appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information (para. 3)).

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that in 2014 it was agreed, by a Schools' Forum Task and Finish Group, that the priorities for suitability projects would be: to ensure that all buildings were wind and water tight; primary cooking and nutrition curriculum provision; secondary science provision; and building issues affecting the delivery of the curriculum. In order to assess fairly the needs of each school it was agreed to carry out suitability surveys, applying Department of Education methodology which assesses whether areas within a school (teaching and non teaching) are fit for purpose.

There was a significantly high number of issues highlighted that far outstretched the budget available. Issues highlighted that fell into category A 'unable to teach curriculum' and category B 'teaching methods inhibited' were progressed forward for feasibility assessment and costing. These schemes alone had an estimated total cost of £4,233,689.

Schools' Capital Subgroup made the decision to prioritise the issues that posed a health and safety risk. In November 2015, Hartlepool Borough Council's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team reviewed highlighted issues and gave advice on associated risk. A Task and Finish Group convened to take on this advice and prioritise potential schemes.

Issues not deemed to be a health and safety risk were not considered, those that were deemed to be to be a risk were categorised as high, medium or low priority. The Schools' Capital Subgroup agreed that all 'high' and 'medium' priority schemes be selected for progression.

At their meeting on 20th January 2016, Schools' Forum agreed to support the progression of schemes identified as priorities by Schools' Capital Subgroup. They also supported a recommendation for Schools' Capital Subgroup to review and agree curriculum related priorities for

DSG funding. It was also agreed that the subgroup would review funding issues relating to asbestos management in schools to see if DSG funding can be allocated to support this.

The current budgetary position is as detailed in the table below:

Proposed Spend £	School Contribution £	Funding Required £
664,033	66,403	597,630
319,000	31,900	287,100
983,033*	98,303	884,730
	Budget Available £	1,250,400
	Remaining Budget £	365,670

The remaining budget includes funding previously allocated to science laboratories at English Martyrs School and Sixth Form College. The school was benefitting from Priority School Building Programme - Phase 2, therefore the allocation would not be required.

Schools were expected to contribute 10% of the total cost of their schemes from their school budget. Two of the schemes listed were pending bids that have been made by academies to the Education Funding Agency. If these bids are successful the costs for the schemes will not need to be covered by this funding.

The report also set out issues around the contractor the schools may choose to deliver the schemes and the treatment of VAT at Voluntary Aided schools.

The Chair noted that in recommendation 2 the remaining budget referred to amounted to nearly one third of the whole budget sum and considered, therefore, that it would be appropriate for a similar report being submitted to a future meeting to seek approval to the schemes to utilise the remaining budget. The Assistant Director commented that in light of the timescales involved, some of the schemes that may form part of such a report may require retrospective approval if it was necessary to progress works to be undertaken during the summer holidays for example.

Decision

1. That the schedule of proposed schemes as summarised in confidential Appendix 1 to the report be approved, subject to the LA agreeing contributions from schools towards individual schemes in line with the shared funding principles established by Schools' Forum. The confidential appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to the

financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para. 3);

2. That the remaining available budget be allocated to priorities affecting the curriculum to be determined by Schools' Capital Subgroup and agreed by Schools Forum and subject to a report being submitted to this Committee whilst accepting that some of the approvals may be retrospective should schemes need to be progressed prior to the next meeting of the Committee;
3. That an appropriate certification process be put in place, as outlined in paragraph 6.5 of the report.

81. Better Childhood Programme (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key Decision.

Purpose of report

For members to approve the implementation of the first phase of the transformation programme Better Childhood Programme.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Child and Adult Services reported that the Better Childhood Programme (BCP) is a cross public sector transformation programme supported by Cleveland Police, the CCG and Hartlepool Borough Council. As part of this programme Hartlepool Borough Council and its partners had developed proposals for the redesign and integration of their services in Hartlepool with the aim of:

- Improving outcomes and life chances for children, young people and families
- Improving the resilience of families and communities and reducing family breakdown
- Supporting more families through early intervention and prevention
- Moving from a culture of 'identification and referral' to one where workers 'own and intervene'
- Reducing demand for specialist services, bringing numbers of Looked After Children in line with statistical neighbours.

A report was presented to Children's Services Committee on 1 December 2015 providing an update on the Better Childhood Programme. It set out work that had been undertaken to review demand for children's services and work that was ongoing to redesign services with partners.

The Better Childhood Programme document, attached as an appendix to the report, set out all the work undertaken through the programme and included the case for change, the redesign work carried out with children, families, workers and partners, overall vision, proposed structures, and timelines for implementation.

The Children's Strategic Partnership had developed a vision and priorities for the Better Childhood Programme (page 7 of Appendix A to the report) and the vision states:

"Our ambition as a children's partnership is to enable all children and families in Hartlepool to have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and be supported to be safe in their homes and communities."

The priorities are:

1. Children and young people have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and are safe.
2. Improving family relationships, strengths, skills and ability to cope.
3. Reducing the impact of domestic violence, mental health, drugs and alcohol misuse on children and families.
4. Helping parents, carers and young people to gain skills and get jobs.

Consultation had taken place with children, young people and parents to understand what services could have done differently to make their lives better. This information had been used by the workforce (in both HBC and NHS trust) to redesign services as set out in the document attached to the report.

The proposed changes were within the current budget. One of the key drivers of the project was to realise further efficiencies through more effective integrated early intervention thus reducing the demand for and costs associated with children needing specialist services. Staff had been significantly involved with this transformation programme from the outset and the proposals set out had been developed by staff teams.

There would be a change of management for a number of HBC and NHS Trust staff and work is ongoing to ensure that they are consulted with. HBC staff briefings and communications had taken place throughout the programme.

The Director also highlighted that the future services would be designed on a locality basis and discussions were ongoing on the locations. The Director also stated that the implementation of the new integrated structure had now been scheduled for 1 May.

The Chair commended officers and partners for the excellent work

undertaken in developing the redesigned services which had been a very significant undertaking. The change in service delivery had required not just inter-departmental cooperation but a culture change in the way people worked. The willingness to make those changes showed the commitment to provide the best outcomes for young people in Hartlepool.

Decision

That the implementation of the first phase of the transformation programme Better Childhood Programme be approved.

82. Development of Sub Regional Adoption Service (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To inform Children's Services Committee of the national policy agenda in relation to adoption and the local response to scope the development of a Tees Valley Adoption Service with the assistance of a grant from the Department for Education.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Child and Adult Services reported that since the election in 2015, the momentum in the reform of adoption services had increased with the Prime Minister announcing in November 2015 that a range of new measures intended to double the number of children placed with adoptive families at the earliest possible point, halving the time they are waiting in care for the full process to be completed, and the intention to change regulations around the assessment of potential special guardians.

As part of the reform of adoption services, the Department for Education (DfE) has committed £4.5m to stimulate change in the sector supporting early adopters of regional adoption agencies to accelerate their development and early implementation. In October 2015 the Tees Valley local authorities submitted an expression of interest to the Department for Education for an adoption reform grant to scope the development of a Tees Valley Adoption Service. Initially this project was being led by Middlesbrough Borough Council, however, due to unforeseen circumstances Hartlepool Borough Council had now taken on the lead authority role.

In February 2016, the signed Grant Agreement was received from the DfE for the phase one, 2015/16 allocation. Phase one of the

programme involved the development of a transition plan which would enable the partner authorities to strategically plan the future delivery model for a regional adoption agency and develop an option appraisal which would enable informed decisions to be made. A range of activities would be undertaken over the coming two months to put the local partners in a strong position to draw down funding for 2016/17 to implement the transition plan. Further reports would be submitted to the Committee in the coming months once the design and detail of the proposed new Tees Valley Adoption Service was developed.

A Member questioned if the introduction of the Tees Valley adoption agency would lead to reduced staffing locally. The Director commented that each area currently had relatively small teams so bringing them together would create some resilience. The Director believed that were there to be any staffing savings these could come through early retirement and/or voluntary redundancies if necessary. One of the criteria that any new adoption agency had to meet was that it had to be financially viable and sufficiently resilient to comply with government requirements.

The Chair commented that he was pleased that the work on the new agency was being led by Hartlepool. The Chair commented that he was assured that if the new agency came into being there would still be the same local focus for Hartlepool children being cared for in Hartlepool and receiving the same consideration they did now.

Decision

That the report be noted.

83. Dedicated Schools Grant 2016/17 (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that the local authority (LA) received funding for education via the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This was split in to three areas: the Schools Block, the Early Years Block and the High Needs Block. The report set out for Members information an update on the funding allocation for 2016/17 for each of the blocks.

The table below summarised the DSG allocation for 2016/17 –

DSG Funding Allocation 2016/17			
Block	2015/16	2016/17	Increase/ (reduction)
	£m	£m	£m
Early Years*	4.489	4.489	(0)
Schools	60.748	61.449	0.701
High Needs	10.489	10.622	0.133
Total	75.726	76.560	0.834
Academy Recoupment	(26.404)	(26.718)	(0.314)
Grant Received HBC	49.322	49.842	0.520

* subject to actual participation

Hartlepool has been allocated a total of £49.842m after academy recoupment. The report went on to explain in detail how the funding for each of the three blocks would be utilised and the main issues affecting each sector.

In relation to the Early Years Block, the Assistant Director highlighted that from September 2017 legislation would be in place to allow eligible 3 and 4 year old children in families that work access up to 30 hours per week early years provision. It was uncertain at this stage what level of funding would be offered, however, there was a commitment from government to increase the amount of funding paid to providers. Work was underway to determine how this new commitment would be delivered in Hartlepool. The Assistant Director also highlighted that Hartlepool had responded well to the offer of free early years entitlement for two year olds and had the best take up across the country with participation currently at 88%. Three and four year old participation levels continue to be good with take up steady at a rate of 90%.

In relation to the Schools Block, the authority was awaiting the consultation from the DfE regarding the national funding formula for 2017/18 and future years. There was a great deal of uncertainty of the impact to the authority and schools. The publication was imminent and further information would be reported to Children's Services Committee when it becomes available.

The Assistant Director indicated that in relation to the High Needs Block longer-term options to manage the pressures would be considered as part of a review. A further detailed report would be submitted to Children's Services Committee in due course. There was insufficient funding to support the existing level of support paid to providers, within the High Needs block. This was a concern as early indications were

showing that there were more children and young people presenting with more complex needs. In order to understand the current picture in relation to demand and supply a sufficiency assessment would be completed with proposed options to meet the increase in demand.

The Chair referred to the consultation exercise announced by the Secretary of State for Education on the future of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The Chair assured Members that officers were already working with schools through the Schools Forum on the potential changes a reviewed DSG could bring. The Assistant Director commented that it was hoped that all Hartlepool schools would be united in their response to the consultation through the Schools Forum. A Headteacher representative stated that the Schools Forum was meeting in the very near future to discuss the consultation document, which did contain some very radical suggestions. There was also a proposal that a response would be submitted through Schools North East.

Decision

1. That the report be noted and that further updates be submitted to Committee when the DfEs consultation relating to a national funding formula had been received.
2. That further updates in relation to the implementation of the extended hours for three and four year olds be provided in due course.
3. That an update report be submitted to Committee when the high needs block had been reviewed and funding options had been identified.

84. Free Breakfast Provision for Primary School Children *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide Committee with an update on the pilot schemes for the provision of free breakfast to primary school children.

To provide feedback on the current schemes in place at Grange Primary and West View Primary.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Chair initially commented that this issue had been raised by Council where he had made his view clear that providing children with an

adequate breakfast was the responsibility of parents/carers. While the authority would do everything to assist a school provide breakfasts for children it was not well placed to provide any additional funding.

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that at the full Council meeting on 7 August 2014 the proposal of providing all primary school children with free healthy breakfasts was raised. Consequently in September 2014 a questionnaire was issued to all primary schools requesting feedback on the current breakfast provision available to pupils and inviting headteachers interested in exploring the proposal in further detail to attend a meeting to consider any implications.

Five schools expressed an interest in investigating how the scheme would work and subsequently, West View Primary school began a pilot scheme in June 2014 involving two classes rolling out the provision to the full school in the following September; and Grange Primary introduced their free breakfast provision, across the whole school in the Spring Term of 2015. St Bega's introduced a scheme in the 2014/15 Summer Term however; their scheme was not financially viable and ended in at the end of the 2014/15 academic year.

The Assistant Director commented that it was difficult to isolate a specific improvement in children's performance and correlate that to the provision of breakfast at school. The two schools at the forefront of the breakfast provision in Hartlepool did, however, believe there was an improvement.

The meeting discussed the issues around the provision of breakfast at school for pupils and the benefits in performance and behaviour, provable or not. There were potential issues around some children having two breakfasts on a morning; one at home and then one at school, and in some other local authority areas there had been some concern around the potential of this adding to the childhood obesity problem. Some concerns were noted around the Kellogg's provision and their dietary suitability. The Chair added that there were a number of voluntary organisations also providing breakfasts.

In concluding the debate, the Chair indicated that there were some obvious concerns around the provision of breakfasts in schools, some insurmountable, some not. The evidence of improvements in behaviour or performance were inconclusive, though anecdotally there was support from the two schools providing the free breakfast in Hartlepool. Funding would remain an issue with schools either meeting the costs directly or utilising free schemes such as the Kellogg's scheme. The Chair had indicated to Council that an annual report would be provided and requested that an appropriate report be forwarded to Council taking on board the comments of the Committee.

Decision

1. That the feedback from the two pilot schemes for the provision of free breakfasts to primary school children be noted and that in light of the operation of the scheme and the facilitation of breakfast provision by the Council, no further action by this Committee was required.
2. That an appropriate annual update report be submitted to Council.

85. Key Stage 4 Pupil Achievement Summary 2015 (Provisional) *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide a summary of Key Stage 4 pupil achievement outcomes from public examinations 2014-15, and to indicate any significant trends.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that there are nationally benchmarked outcomes for young people at the end of Key Stage (KS) 4. Young people are expected to make three levels of progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4. The key measure of attainment for young people at the end of Key Stage 4 continued to be 5+ GCSE passes at grades A*-C, including English and mathematics (5A*CEM). There were national floor standards of attainment and progress for maintained schools to reach at the end of Key Stage 4.

The data presented in the report was un-validated. Validated data was due to be released in March 2016. The Assistant Director corrected one of the outcomes detailed in the report –

“4.3 Attainment in mathematics rose to 36.8 in 2015 compared to 36.0 in 2014, against a national rise from 38.0 to 38.3.”

The Assistant Director stated that it was difficult this year to compare the improvements from KS2 to KS4 for this year's cohort of pupils as due to a teaching boycott of the KS2 tests in 2010 that data didn't exist. Hartlepool was the only area where the boycott had been 100% across all schools. Professor David Jesson from York University had undertaken some research into the cohort of children that had did not sit the 2010 tests and the correlation between that and their GCSE performance in 2015. A large proportion of the progress in the

performance measures was not refined as the initial measures were too crude.

A headteacher representative commented that from the work undertaken by Prof. Jesson it appeared that the 'high attainers' may have fallen short of their expected improvement at KS4. There were questions as to how that would affect schools inspections and it was understood that inspectors had been advised to treat the data with some caution. The wider concern was that the next time KS4 results could be performance checked against KS2 would be in 2022 due to the changes being made in GCSEs. GCSE testing had been 'toughened' in 2011 and the new changes coming forward next year would also include a further 'toughening' of the exams. Schools would be left doing the best they could to assess pupil performance with some very crude data measures.

The Chair questioned if the research was suggesting that progression was impaired by not having the 2010 SATs. The action taken by teachers at that time had been supported by the local authority and there was obviously no expectation that the action would have an impact five years later. The headteacher representative commented that it appeared that the reported performance of more able students may not be as high as schools would have liked or expected. The work undertaken by Prof Jesson could be utilised to provide some sort of benchmark for the future.

The Assistant Director commented that it had to be noted that for the sixth consecutive year all Hartlepool mainstream secondary schools were above the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. There were still some concerns around boys' performance when compared with girls, though some good work was being undertaken in schools to address this. Science was also an area of concern; there was improvement in attainment but there was a wish to see that improvement accelerating. The work being undertaken by the Education Commission would have significant benefits in these areas and there would be regular update reports to Committee on that work.

Members also queried the reduced risk that two secondary schools in Hartlepool will not achieve a 'Good' grading at their next Ofsted inspection. The Assistant Director indicated that because the leadership and management of these two schools was graded 'Good' at their last inspection and current evidence in these schools now suggests that students are making good and better progress, the next inspection would look at this area for a greater level of improvement to justify a repeat grading of 'Good'.

Decision

That the report be noted and Hartlepool Secondary Schools be

congratulated on their continued improvement in educational standards.

86. HealthWatch Hartlepool Asylum Seeker and Refugee Health Consultation Report (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To inform the Children's Services Committee of the outcomes of the recent Health focused consultation events undertaken by HealthWatch Hartlepool with the town's asylum seeker and refugee community as referred to committee by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Chair commented that he had been present at the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board when the HealthWatch report had been considered. There had been a debate around the provision of mental health services to children with refugee status. Members had suggested the reference to this Committee so that it could be assured that there were appropriate services in place.

The Director of Child and Adult Services stated that there were a range of mental health services available to refugee families and in this instance to the children of those families and specialist services would be available to them. It was anticipated that five families would be arriving in May with a further five families at a later date. There were officers working towards assuring there were robust services ready to deliver the right package of support to the families when they arrived.

Decision

That the report and the recommendations within the HealthWatch Hartlepool Asylum Seeker and Refugee Consultation Report be noted.

87. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

The Chairman ruled that the following items of business should be considered by the Committee as a matter of urgency in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(B) (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 in order that the matter could be dealt with without delay.

Council Motion – 21 January 2016

The Chair referred to the following motion made at Council on

21 January 2016 (minute no. 118 (11) refers) –

“Sir Michael Wilshaw’s fourth annual Ofsted report will have made unpleasant reading for us all. In it he names 16 local authority areas in England where fewer than 60% of children attend good or outstanding secondary schools, have lower than national GCSE attainment and make less than national levels of expected progress. Hartlepool is one of them.

Although it is hard to argue about the statistics, there can be much debate about the responsibility for and causes of the difficulties faced by our schools.

This Council believes that our dedicated teachers and school staff do an amazing job, in trying circumstances, and national leaders would be better employed putting forward solutions, rather than pointing fingers.

Nevertheless inaction is not an option and council therefore resolves to invite Mr Wilshaw’s to Hartlepool to discuss with councillors, officers and education leaders in the town about how he believes we can address these shortfalls and continue our pursuit of academic excellence in all our educational establishments.”

The Chair indicated he had responded to the motion in debate stating that he was concerned that he did not want to undermine progress made by Officers who were working already with the Regional Inspector, OFSTED. The Chair suggested, therefore, that this issue be referred to the Children’s Services Committee and that the Schools Forum also consider this issue.

The Chair believed that officers in partnership with schools were doing everything possible to give the young people of Hartlepool the best start in life that they could. With Members support, the Chair indicated that he believed it would be sufficient for the compliance with the motion at Council for the Committee to continue to monitor the performance of Hartlepool’s schools at all key stages as at present through the receipt of regular monitoring reports. The Committee indicated its support.

Retirement of Chair of Committee

The Chair indicated that as this was the last meeting of the Committee in the municipal year, this would be his last meeting as Chair as he was standing down from the Council in May. The Chair extended his thanks to Members, officers and all those that had been involved in the Committee during his time as chair for their support and contribution to some excellent meetings. The Chair commented that the local authority had very committed and experienced officers who were a credit to the authority and the town, and he would retire from Council safe in the knowledge that they would continue the excellent work in delivering first class education services in Hartlepool.

The Vice-Chair, Councillor Hall, proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair and commended him on his commitment to the education of young people in Hartlepool through his years as a teacher and latterly as an elected councillor. The volume of work undertaken by a Chair of a Policy Committee was significant and not reflected in the meetings the public attended. Members supported the vote of thanks and commented in similar terms.

88. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 89 – (Exmoor Grove Satellite Provision) – This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely, information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (para. 2).

89. Exmoor Grove Satellite Provision (*Director of Child and Adult Services*) This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely, information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (para. 2).

Type of decision

Non- key decision.

Purpose of report

For members to approve the development of a satellite provision to Exmoor Grove Children's Home.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Child and Adult Services reported on a proposal to develop a satellite unit to the Exmoor Grove children's residential and short break unit.

Decision

That the development of a satellite provision to Exmoor Grove Children's Home as reported be approved.

The meeting concluded at 5.55 pm.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 21 MARCH 2016

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

14 June 2016



Report of: Assistant Director for Children's Services

Subject: ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT
1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To present the Annual Complaints Report of the Child and Adult Services Department on complaints and representations for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.

2.2 The Annual Report is attached as **APPENDIX A** to this report.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Annual Report provides information on the complaints and representation frameworks appropriate in the Department. It draws together information in relation to complaints that have been received and dealt with during the reporting period.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 The report offers an opportunity to demonstrate learning that has occurred from complaints and actions implementation as a result.

4.2 The content of the Report includes the following areas:

- The stages of the statutory children's complaints procedure
- Complaints and compliments received 2014/15
- Learning lessons and service improvement

4.3 The Report provides an analysis of complaints and compliments and draws comparisons with the previous year. Performance is highlighted in a range of areas so that practice issues may be considered.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

N/A

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

8. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

10. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 That the Annual Report is noted and online publication agreed.

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 It is a legal requirement that an Annual Report be published on complaints, presented to the relevant Policy Committees and made available to staff, Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission and the general public.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS
N/A

15. CONTACT OFFICER

Sarah Ward
Principal Social Worker, Child and Adult Services
Email: Sarah.Ward@hartlepool.gov.uk



Complaints, Compliments and Representations Report

1 April 2014 - 31 March 2015

Hartlepool Borough Council
Child and Adult Services



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Cover photograph courtesy of www.careimages.com

1. Introduction

Welcome to Hartlepool Borough Council's Child and Adult Services Department's Complaints, Compliments and Representations Annual Report. The report covers the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 and is for adult services, children's services and public health.

The report outlines:

- Details of the complaints and compliments received over the reporting period;
- Lessons learned and resulting improvements following enquiry into complaints;
- Performance in relation to handling of complaints.

2. Background

Complaints and compliments are valued as an important source of feedback on the quality of services. Each complaint is investigated and, where appropriate, redress made. Equally important is the work to learn lessons to prevent a repeat of failure in service quality and continually improve services.

2.1. What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about a service that is being delivered, or the failure to deliver a service. The Local Government Ombudsman defines a complaint as *"an expression of dissatisfaction about a council service (whether that service is provided directly by the council or on its behalf by a contractor or partner) that requires a response."*

A complaint can be made in person, in writing, by telephone or email or through the council's website. It can be made at any office. Every effort is made to assist people in making their complaint and any member of staff can take a complaint.

2.2. Who can complain?

A complaint can be made by:

- A person who uses services
- A carer on their own behalf
- Someone who has been refused a service for which they think they are eligible
- The representative of someone who uses services or a carer acting on their behalf. This could be with the consent of the service user or carer or in the case of someone who does not have the capacity to give consent, where they are seen to be acting in the best interests of that person.
- Anyone who is or is likely to be affected by the actions, decisions or omissions of the service that is subject to a complaint.

3. Child and Adult Services Complaints Frameworks

Hartlepool Borough Council's Adult and Children's Social Care, Children's Services and Public Health Complaints Framework is derived from the statutory procedure for complaints relating to Adults and Children's social care, the Public Health Complaints, Compliments and Comments Procedure (June 2014) and the corporate complaints procedure. The overall responsibility for the three areas rests with the Department's Complaints Manager (Social Care Development Manager). The remit of the Complaints Manager is:

- Managing, developing and administering the complaints procedures.
- Providing assistance and advice to those who wish to complain.
- Overseeing the investigation of complaints that cannot be managed at source.
- Supporting and training staff.
- Monitoring and reporting on complaints activity.

The framework covers situations where there is dissatisfaction about actions, decisions or apparent failings of services within the department.

3.1. Adult Social Care Complaints Framework

A single level integrated complaints process was introduced on 1 April 2009 with the implementation of the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.

These regulations place a duty on NHS bodies and adult social care organisations to coordinate handling of complaints and to advise and support complainants through the procedure.

A joint protocol for the handling of complaints that span more than one health or social care organisation had been developed to ensure a comprehensive response is provided to complaints that cross more than one organisation.

The complaints procedure aims to be as accessible as possible. The policy is flexible to ensure that the needs of the complainant are paramount and allows the Department and the complainant to agree on the best way to reach a satisfactory outcome. Full details of the complaints policy and procedure are available on the council's website. Briefly, on receipt of a complaint the level of impact is determined and complaints screened according to their content as being red (high impact), amber (moderate impact) or green (low impact). The process for handling the complaint is dependent on the impact.

3.1.1. Timescales for the resolution of complaints

Staff will always try to resolve problems or concerns before they escalate into complaints and this ensures that, wherever possible, complaints are kept to a minimum.

Since the introduction of the 2009 regulations the only mandatory timescale is that the complainant receives an acknowledgement within 3 working days. The legislation allows for a more flexible approach to the amount of time in which complaints should be dealt with. In our policy, we aim for even the most complex of complaints to be completed within 65 working days. If timescales cannot be met, a new timescale should be discussed with the complainant. Locally, timescales have been introduced for amber and green complaints of 40 and 20 working days respectively.

There is a time limit of 12 months from when the matter being complained about occurred to when a complaint may be made. After this time, a complaint will not normally be considered. However, the 12 month time limit does not apply where the local authority is satisfied that the complainant had good reasons for not making the complaint within that time and where it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly.

3.2. Children's Social Care complaints framework

The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 came into force from 1 September 2006. This procedure is for all representations received from children and young people, their parents, foster carers or other qualifying adults about social care services provided or commissioned by children's social care.

The Regulations are now fully embedded into the children's social care complaints system and information derived from complaints is included in the annual monitoring of children's social care and reported to Ofsted.

All children, young people or their families who make a representation are offered the services of an Advocate to enable their views to be effectively promoted.

There are three stages to the procedure.

» Stage 1

Local Resolution: The aim of stage 1 is to sort out the matter as quickly as possible. The complaint will be allocated to a manager who will contact the complainant to discuss the complaint. Stage 1 of the complaints procedure should be completed within 10 working days but if there are a number of issues to look into, this can be extended up to 20 working days. The complainant will receive a response to the complaint in writing.

» Stage 2

Investigation: This part of the procedure is used when the complainant remains unhappy after their complaint has been responded to at Stage 1 or the

complaint is sufficiently serious enough to warrant a more formal investigation. Investigations are conducted by an Investigating Officer who must be independent of the service area being complained about. An Independent Person is also appointed at Stage 2. This is a statutory role and the Independent Person (who is external to the council) works alongside the Investigating Officer with a remit to ensure that the process is open, transparent and fair.

Reports completed by the Investigating Officer and Independent Person are submitted to an Adjudicating Officer (usually the Assistant Director).

The investigation and adjudication process should be concluded within 65 working days.

» **Stage 3**

Independent Complaint Review Panel: If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2, they may request that the issues are taken to a Complaint Review Panel (Stage 3). The Panel consists of an Independent Chair and two independent panel members. The Panel considers the complaint and can make recommendations to the Director of Child and Adult Services.

The Director is required to make a formal response to any findings and recommendations of the Review Panel within 15 working days of receiving the Panel's report.

3.3. Public Health Complaints

When complaints are received into the department relating to a Public Health function the Public Health Complaints, Compliments and Comments Procedure provides the framework for resolution.

Where a person is dissatisfied with a public health function they have received, they have a right to complain. The complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days. The complaint would usually be investigated by a senior officer. The regulations allow a maximum of 6 months to respond to a complaint (NHS Bodies and Local Authorities Partnership Arrangements, Care Trust, Public Health and Local Healthwatch Regulations 2012). We will however endeavour to respond as quickly as possible.

3.4. Corporate complaints

Where complaints are received in to the Department that do not come under the jurisdiction of the statutory social care or Public Health complaints procedures, the Corporate Complaints Policy provides the framework for resolution. This includes complaints in relation to services such as: sport and recreation, special educational needs and the integrated youth service. Complaints in relation to schools are dealt with by individual schools and their governing bodies. Local authorities have no legal obligation to investigate the substance of a complaint regarding an individual child and have no powers of direction in this regard.

» **Pre-formal Complaint Stage**

An initial attempt should be made to resolve a complaint as quickly as possible. A complaint at this stage should be responded to within 5 working days.

» **Formal Complaint**

Where a person remains dissatisfied with a service they have received, they have a right to proceed to a formal complaint. The complaint should be completed within 20 working days.

» **Chief Executive Review**

If a person remains dissatisfied with the response to the formal complaint, they have the right to request the complaint to be reviewed by the Chief Executive.

3.5. Referral to the Local Government Ombudsman

If, at the end of the relevant complaints procedure, the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome or the way in which their complaint has been handled under any of the procedures, they may ask the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) to investigate their complaint. Complainants may also approach the LGO directly without accessing the complaints process. In those cases it is usual for the LGO to refer them back to the council for their complaint to be examined through the relevant complaints process before they intervene.

4. Principles and outcomes

Good handling of complaints and representations involves:

- Keeping the complainant at the centre of the complaints process;
- Being open and accountable;
- Responding to complainants in a way that is fair;
- Being committed to try to get things right when they go wrong;
- Seeking to continually improve services.

Statutory complaints are underpinned by the following:

- A procedure that aims to be fair, clear, robust and accessible;
- Support being available to those wishing to make a complaint;
- Timely resolution following enquiry into complaints/representations;
- Lessons learnt following complaints and services improved;
- Monitoring being used as a means of improving performance.

5. Public information

Information about the complaints and representations framework is accessible via the council's public access points and also the council's website. Carers and service users of children's and adults social care are provided with leaflets explaining the procedure when they take up a new service and when care plans are agreed and reviewed.

Information in other formats such as large print or Braille or translation in languages other than English are made available upon request.

6. Summary of representations

6.1. Adult Social Care

6.1.1. Compliments

Compliments are generally recognised to be an indicator of good outcomes for service user and carers. They also serve to provide wider lessons regarding the quality of services.

During 2014/15, 56 compliments have been received relating to Adult Social Care. Appendix 1 provides some examples of compliments received during the period.

6.1.2. Complaints received in 2014/15

A total of 17 complaints were received. One complaint was withdrawn by the complainant leaving 16 complaints investigated. The number of complaints received has increased by 2 from last year.

However, there was one complaint received in 2013/14 where the investigation was suspended as the substance of the complaint was intended to be considered by the Court of Protection. Following a change of circumstances, the Court of Protection did not consider the application and the complaint investigation was reinstated. Therefore, the number of complaints investigated in 2014/15 rose to 17.

Of the 17 complaints investigated, 14 of these have been concluded and 3 remain ongoing. Of the 14 concluded complaints:

- 1 complaint was upheld
- 7 complaints were partly upheld
- 5 complaints were not upheld
- and a finding could not be reached one way or the other in the remaining complaint

Examples of the complaints received and lessons learned are outlined in Appendix 2.

6.1.3. Client groups

Adult Social Care			
Client group	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13
Older Persons	4	10	9
Learning Disabilities	1	2	0
Physical Disabilities and Sensory Loss	2	2	4
Adult Mental Health (Integrated Service) or AMHP function	4	1	1
HIV/Aids	0	0	0
Substance misuse	0	0	0
Carers	0	0	0
Commissioned Services	6	1	0
Total number of complaints received	17	15	14

The service users who were the focus of the complaints were 7 males and 9 females. The remaining complaint which was submitted by a female did not relate to a service user.

Complaints which are considered either complex or have a number of elements are usually investigated by someone independent of the council. In 2014/15, Independent Investigating Officers were appointed to 11 of the 17 complaints investigated. The remaining 6 complaints were investigated and responded to internally. Of the 17 complaints investigate

6.1.4. Advocacy services

Of the 17 complaints investigated, none of the complainants chose to have an advocate to assist them with their complaints. However, one complainant chose to have a support worker from a mental health charity to assist them during the complaint investigation.

6.1.5. Timescales and the Grading of Complaints

There is no statutory timescale for investigating and responding to a complaint relating to adult social care. However, the overall aim is to respond to complaints in a timely manner. The likely timescales for investigation are discussed with the complainant at the outset of a complaint investigation and updates on progress of the investigation are provided by the Investigating Officer at regular intervals. There are a range of factors that can impact upon timescales such as:

- Whether the complaint has been considered low, moderate or high impact;
- The number of points of complaint for investigation;
- The availability of the complainant and other key people the Investigating Officer needs to interview;

- The time taken to conduct interviews with key people which can range from complaint to complaint;
- Seeking appropriate consent for obtaining information from partner agencies and awaiting the necessary information to inform the complaint investigation;
- Reading case files and records and obtaining copies of local policies and procedures;
- Consideration all available information and the drafting of a complaint investigation report;
- Carrying out factual accuracy checks on the draft report and providing feedback to the complainant before finalising and submitting the final report.

6.1.6. Complaints carried forward to 2015/16

Of the 17 complaints investigated in 2014/15, 4 have been carried forward to 2015/16.

6.1.7. Complaints considered by the Local Government Ombudsman in 2014/15

There were no complainants who approached the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) in 2014/15 for their complaint to be considered.

6.2. Children's Social Care

6.2.1. Compliments

During 2014/15, 7 compliments have been received relating to Children's Social Care. Appendix 1 provides some examples of compliments received during the period.

6.2.2. Complaints received in 2014/15

A total of 37 complaints were received. Five complaints were withdrawn by the complainants and the Council determined one was not eligible to complain. A total of 31 complaints were investigated. The number of complaints received has increased by 10 from 2013/14. An example of the complaints concluded are outlined in appendix 2.

- Of the 31 complaints investigated, 29 of these have been concluded and 2 remain ongoing.
- 30 of the 31 complaints were responded to at Stage 1 in the first instance. Of these, 29 complaints were concluded at Stage 1. The one complaint that progressed from Stage 1 to Stage 2 remains ongoing.
- One of the 31 complaints was not considered at Stage 1 and proceeded directly to Stage 2. This complaint progressed to Stage 3 Independent Complaint Review Panel and it is not known whether the complainant will progress matters onto the LGO.
- A complaint, received in 2013/14, which was being investigated at Stage 2 was carried forward into 2014/15. This complaint progressed to Stage 3

Independent Complaint Review Panel and it is not known whether the complainant will progress matters onto the LGO.

6.2.3. Advocacy services

Of the 31 complaints investigated, one complainant chose to have an advocate to assist them with their complaint and one was assisted by a Support Worker.

6.2.4. Complaints considered by the Local Government Ombudsman in 2014/15

There were no complaints in relation to children's social care that progressed to the Local Government Ombudsman in 2014/15.

6.3. Public Health

There were no complaints received in relation to Public Health. Statistical comparisons were made with regional Local Authorities which confirmed the number of complaints received in this area were extremely low or non-existent.

7. Lessons learned

Lessons learned are an important aspect of the complaints framework. Appendix 2 outlines the context of some improvements that have been put in place as a direct result of complaints and representations received in adult social care and children's social care.

8. Conclusions and way forward

8.1. Going forward

We continue to ensure that a person-centred approach is adopted for the handling and investigation of each complaint. We will continue to focus on ensuring that we monitor that: complainants receive appropriate and timely feedback on complaints; appropriate apologies are offered; and any service improvement recommendations are delivered.

8.2. Action plan

- We will continue to promote the complaints procedure for children's social care services to a range of networks to ensure that children and young people feel confident and able to approach the department with any particular concerns.
- We will continue to raise awareness of and promote the complaints procedure for adult social care and public health.

- We will liaise with Independent Complaints Advocacy (ICA), the organisation commissioned by the Council to deliver an advocacy service for NHS complaints, to ensure that the service is meeting the needs of the local population.
 - We will continue to raise awareness of lessons learnt from complaints and ensure they are fed into policies, procedures and practice.
-

Appendix 1: Examples of compliments received across Child Adult Social Care services

Adult Social Care

"I wanted to send this email to represent family members and thank your team for the care, support and empathy while she was one of your clients, as she regularly commented on how your staff considered all of her needs, and moved swiftly to ensure things were put in place as quickly as possible to keep her safe and comfortable."

From a family member about a Social Worker

"Thank you so much for being so thoughtful and kind. The moment you walked into our lives my mam and dad were safe."

From a family member about a Social Worker

"I would like to express my gratitude for the care I have received over the last six weeks, since my discharge from hospital. I certainly would not have managed without the help of the carers who came to my home. They were all kind and caring and gave me a great deal of support and encouragement and always asked before they left, if there was anything else I needed."

From a service user about the Reablement Team

"You were professional, knowledgeable and efficient, but managed to be warm and caring and make my sister feel that you listened and understood her. You also dealt with some challenging interpersonal issues, with the management of the care package. Yet, despite the dilemmas you were presented with, you were respectful and considerate to all concerned, at all times."

From a family member about a Social Worker

Children's Social Care

"I'm very happy that you were my Social Worker and I hope you do well in your next family and work the magic you always do. I will really miss you."

From a Young Person about a Social Worker

"K deserves the praise and recognition for her outstanding work and I would hope that on the basis of this letter that you will personally make contact with her to offer your commendations to her for the work she undertakes with young challenging children."

From a Parent about a Family Support Worker

"A has a natural aptitude in combining professionalism with a personal and sensitive consideration for others. She is never rushed and always gives as much time to the children as they need. In our opinion A is a credit to her profession and to Hartlepool Child Services."

From a Foster Carer about a Social Worker

Appendix 2: Sample of complaints and lessons learned in Child and Adult Social Care Services

Adult Social Care	
Details of complaint	Lessons learned and where appropriate, actions taken
The complaint related to when an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) should have been commissioned for a service user.	A briefing note was disseminated to all adult social care staff reminding them of the duty to instruct an IMCA where appropriate as well as confirmation of the process for accessing an IMCA.
The complaint, which referred to the quality of care of a commissioned service, highlighted variations in the records which accompanied an individual when moving care home placements.	Guidance to care home providers regarding the records which should accompany new residents to a care home as well as those which should accompany residents when transferring between care homes was updated and reissued.
The complaint, which related to a commissioned service, related to a failure to notify family members about a change in the needs of the person being cared for.	The commissioned provider concerned should consider reviewing both its induction and communicating with families procedures. This was communicated with the care home concerned and monitored by the Commissioned Services Team.
The complainant believed she should have been allowed a direct payment and was dissatisfied that the Department failed to review its decision in this regard.	Social Workers and Occupational Therapists were reminded about the Department's direct payments procedure, guidance and eligibility criteria. The Department reviewed its direct payments procedure and guidance as part of a wider review of policies and procedures.

<p>The complainant had lost confidence with his allocated worker and requested a new worker.</p>	<p>As the Department was about to conduct interviews, to demonstrate the Department's commitment to ensuring a new worker would be compatible, the complainant was invited to be part of the interview panel. The complainant did not take up this opportunity but was satisfied with the new worker that was appointed.</p>
<p>The complainant, a relative of the service user, voiced concern that checks were not carried out to ensure the appropriate records accompanied a service user to hospital.</p>	<p>An explanation was provided in relation to the events that surrounded the service user's admission to hospital and an apology was made. Workers were reminded of the need to carry out appropriate checks.</p>
<p>The complainant, the relative of a service user, was dissatisfied with the care provided to her relative. She was of the view that there was no consistency with care provision.</p>	<p>It was noted that care charts were not routinely reviewed or analysed and a recommendation was made that care charts are routinely considered at reviews to enable analysis to appropriately inform the person's care. This recommendation was accepted and implemented.</p>

Children's Social Care Details of complaint/Outcomes	Lessons learned and where appropriate, actions taken
This complaint referred to the handling of a request for statutory checks for prospective foster carers from an independent fostering agency.	The procedure for responding to such requests was reviewed and a revised procedure implemented. The revised procedure included timescales as well as guidance to staff about redirecting any enquiries arising from the statutory checks to the team responsible for dealing with such.
This complainant expressed concern that an addendum report prepared for Court was only provided to her when she arrived at court for the hearing and this was insufficient time to read the report.	An apology was provided to the complainant and information this was not acceptable practice. Reinforced with social workers the need to ensure reports are shared with family members who do not have legal representation in court hearings.
The complainant alleged a lack of support from Children's Services which led to her children being removed from her care. Although the complainant had moved outside of the Local Authority area, her children were placed within the Local Authority's boundaries. The complainant expressed some anxiety and frustration with her housing situation, was facing eviction and might have to move to a smaller property. She asked if Children's Services might assist with a letter supporting that she needs a property of the same size as her children continue to have overnight contact on a regular basis.	The complainant asked, as a desired outcome to her complaint, if it would be possible for Children's Services to provide her with a letter of support to Housing outlining the need for a property with a minimum of 2 bedrooms. The Team Manager agreed to do this.

<p>The complainant referred to inaccurate information being shared.</p>	<p>Enquiries were made which found inaccurate information was shared. An apology was provided and Social Workers and Team Managers reminded of the importance of checking information.</p>
<p>The complainant, the father of a child who lived outside the locality, expressed his dissatisfaction at not being invited to Child Protection Conferences or any Core Group meetings held in respect of his child.</p>	<p>It was established the father had not been invited to any meetings as he had stated. An apology was given, an update provided to him in respect of his child and assurances made that he was now added to the invite list for further Core Groups and Review Child Protection Conference.</p>
<p>The complainant, a young person who had been in a foster placement, was unhappy that some of his personal belongings were broken and did not work because they had been in outside storage at the foster carer's home.</p>	<p>Although it was thought some of the young person's belongings were already broken before they had been placed in the outside storage, it was agreed that new items would be purchased as these were important to him.</p>

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

14 June 2016



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: OSCARS (OUT OF SCHOOL PROVISION) OFSTED REPORT

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To inform members of the recent OFSTED inspection of OSCARS Play Centre and their achievement of a grade of Outstanding for all areas of provision.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 OSCARS childcare provision for children aged 3 – 16 years provided by the local authority. It is based at West Hartlepool Rugby Club. The setting opens 3pm – 6pm, Monday to Friday during school term time and sessions from 8am – 5.45 in school holidays. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special education needs and/ or disabilities.

3.2 OSCARS is required to be registered with Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

3.3 The service was previously inspected in August 2012 and was graded by OFSTED as outstanding.

4. OFSTED PROCESS

4.1 An OFSTED inspector visited OSCARS on the 21st April 2016 and inspected the following areas:

- Effectiveness of leadership and management
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare.

Inspection activities included:

- Observed the quality of interaction and assessed the impact this has on children's enjoyment.
- Meeting with the provider including a review of all relevant documentation including self evaluation and evidence of suitability of staff.
- Spoke to parents and took account of their views.
- Spoke to children and staff throughout the inspection.

5. OUTCOMES AND AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 The full Ofsted report is attached as **Appendix A**. The overall outcome for the inspection was **Outstanding**, and the grade outstanding was applied to all areas inspected. Key findings were:

“Leadership is inspirational. Leaders support their staff team to provide exceptionally high-quality childcare.”

“Children’s behaviour is exemplary.”

The staff **“are exceptionally skilled at following the children’s lead.”**

“Parents speak extremely highly of the leaders and staff and how well informed they keep them. They talk about the tremendous level of confidence their children have gained since joining and of the friendships they have formed”.

“arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and staff are vigilant in their approach. They have excellent working relationships with professionals to support the individual needs of all children in their care”.

- 5.2 There is one recommendation for further improvement:

- To evaluate the impact of planned changes to the outdoor environment in supporting children’s physical skills.

The team has already started to consider this and will work to address this over the coming months.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The provision is mainly funded by charges to working parents and carers for this provision and provides valuable respite services for vulnerable children in Hartlepool. A small contribution to running costs is provided by Hartlepool Borough Council, however plans are in place to ensure the service is fully self financing by next financial year 2017/18.

7. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS

All parents and carers are given information on how to claim costs to cover childcare expenses ensuring working parents on low incomes are supported. Where complex issues arise referrals are made to the Children's Hub.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 For members to note the inspection report and outstanding outcome for OSCARS out of school provision and note the commitment of the OSCARS team in gaining this grading.

9. CONTACT OFFICER

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Oscars

West Rugby Club, Catcote Road, Hartlepool, TS25 5PF



Inspection date	21 April 2016
Previous inspection date	10 August 2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Not applicable	

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- Leadership is inspirational. Leaders support their staff team to provide exceptionally high-quality childcare. They convey a culture of reflective practice and have an ambitious approach to providing an outstanding level of care to children and their families. The highly motivated staff work exceptionally well as a team.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. They offer support and encouragement to each other and invite others into their play. Children work collaboratively on tasks and demonstrate excellent social skills. They help to devise the rules of the club. Children demonstrate exceptional negotiating skills when creating their own rules for new games and play cooperatively with each other.
- Staff are exceptionally skilled at following children's lead. Children have chosen representatives for a club council. The council invite children to put their ideas forward and suggest areas for improvement. Children display their own work and help to organise the layout of the environment. This helps to promote children's emotional well-being and sense of belonging.
- Parents speak extremely highly of the leaders and staff and of how well informed they keep them. They talk about the tremendous level of confidence their children have gained since joining and of the friendships they have formed.
- Practice is very inclusive. Staff value the diversity of children's experiences. Through activities and discussions, children actively gain an understanding of people, families and communities. Children choose different countries they would like to learn about and staff support children's learning exceptionally well.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- evaluate the impact of planned changes to the outdoor environment in supporting children's physical skills.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of interaction and assessed the impact this has on children's enjoyment.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider. She looked at relevant documentation, such as the club's self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the provision.
- The inspector spoke to a small selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children throughout the inspection.

Inspector

Emma Allison

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and staff are extremely vigilant in their approach. They have excellent working relationships with professionals to support the individual needs of all children in their care. There are robust policies and procedures in place. All staff demonstrate an exceptional level of understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and the steps to follow should they be concerned about the welfare of a child. Self-evaluation procedures are highly precise and targeted to swiftly address any gaps in provision. Leaders and staff communicate with parents and children and use innovative ways to collect their ideas. They have successfully addressed the recommendation raised at the previous inspection. Purposeful training opportunities are sought to support the continuation of the high quality of professional development staff receive. Staff implement their learning extremely well to enhance the experiences for children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Staff know children tremendously well. They provide a highly vibrant and stimulating environment based on their current interests. Children demonstrate extremely high levels of confidence and motivation. They are exceptionally well involved in contributing to the organisation of the environment. Staff consistently listen to children's ideas and suggestions. This supports children to feel valued and respected. Staff offer children unique opportunities to think about their suggestions and provide creative ideas to help encourage children to solve problems they encounter. Children are heavily involved in the planning process and offer regular ideas and suggestions to the layout of the areas. All staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of how children learn. The highly stimulating activities on offer complement children's learning at school. Children's imagination skills are extremely well supported. Children enjoy spending long periods of time in 'box city' surrounded by cardboard boxes. They develop their own unique games and use their thinking skills to create their models.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Staff promote children's awareness of healthy lifestyles remarkably well. Children demonstrate a particular interest in finding out about the sugar content in certain foods and drinks. Staff provide children with an excellent range of activities and resources to help extend their physical skills. Children take part in obstacle courses and large-group activities. Staff have identified development opportunities to enhance the current outdoor play space to help extend children's climbing and balancing skills even further. An extremely effective key-person system is in place. This meets children's individual needs very well. Children listen attentively to staff and demonstrate close attachments to them. They are kind, considerate and extremely helpful. Children have a mature attitude and develop an excellent understanding of responsibility and how to influence change constructively.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY442230
Local authority	Hartlepool
Inspection number	1041983
Type of provision	Out of school provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	3 - 16
Total number of places	56
Number of children on roll	231
Name of provider	Hartlepool Borough Council
Date of previous inspection	10 August 2012
Telephone number	07771936968

Oscars was registered in 2012. The out-of-school club employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The out-of-school club opens from Monday to Friday 3pm until 6pm term time only and 8am to 5.45pm during school holidays.

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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