

Minutes of last Children & Young People Board meeting

Children & Young People Board

Tuesday, 12 March 2024

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A**

Item	Decisions and actions
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1	Welcome, Apologies and Substitutes, Declarations of Interest
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The Chair welcomed members to the meeting of the Children and Young People Board.

Apologies were received from Cllr Laura Mayes, Cllr Annabel Wilkinson, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Mark Cory, Cllr Rachel Massey and Cllr Imran Khan substituted by Cllr Mark Sutton, Cllr Robert Flatley, Cllr Helen Wetherall and Cllr Dine Romero respectively.

No declarations of interest were received.

2	Note of the Previous Meeting
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Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 January as an accurate record.

3	National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum
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The Chair invited Hannah McCowen, Manager of the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum (NLCBF) for Catch22, to update on the forum's work. Hannah introduced herself and colleagues, Nat O'Brien, Coproduction & Engagement Lead, Toni McClelland, NLCBF Digital Marketing & Events Officer, Harley Crolla, Care experienced sessional worker and Victoria Odude, Young People's Benchmarking Forum Steering Group Representative to introduce the NLCBF and present on key issues facing care experienced young people. The NLCBF is made of 134 local authority members, with the aim to improve services and support for care experienced young people, through events, networks and resources for member local authorities and use national voice to influence work with government departments and public bodies.

Members made the following comments:

- It was raised that local authorities struggle to obtain reciprocal offers from partners, for example, discounted transport across county borders.
- A member described a successful care leaver hub model used in their area, which provides an entire floor for care leavers to hold meetings, events and socials as well as co-locating support services. This has helped care leavers build community networks.
- A member described in their area that family hubs are also used as care leaver hubs and youth centres, which increased accessibility for care-leavers.
- It was raised that care leavers should receive priority for interviews and highlighted the benefits of ringfenced apprenticeships for care leavers within local authorities.
- The implementation of a national council tax reduction scheme would need to be considered in two-tier council areas, as district councils would be responsible for the council tax reduction and not necessarily for children's services.
- A member requested information on how the hubs are facilitated.

Hannah McCowen and colleagues responded to Members' comments:

- The transport offer for care-experienced young people is being discussed by the Department of Transport.
- The Care Leaver Covenant works with businesses to improve offers and opportunities for care-leavers, for instance, provision of Wi-Fi.
- It was raised that ringfenced training and work opportunities for care leavers need to build in trauma-informed support to ensure care-leavers have the best possible chance at success.
- The hubs are facilitated by local authority staff within the care teams.

Decision

The Children and Young People Board considered the presentations from the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum and young people with care experience, and Catch 22, and reflected how they can be taken forward in the LGA's work programme. Members agreed that there is a need to improve consistency of support for care leavers and that some elements of support should be provided nationally to improve consistency of support for care leavers.

Action

- Officers to share additional resources which were shared in

the Teams chat to Members, such as links to the Apprentice Network and the Care Leaver's Covenant Guide.

4 London Violence Reduction Unit - inclusive education charter

The Chair invited Coralyn Burge, Senior Manager, Maureen Mckenna, Education Consultant and Nancy Hunt, Principal Policy Officer from the London Violence Reduction Unit (LVRU) to give a presentation (slides available in agenda) on the London Inclusion Charter, which has been developed to improve levels of school attendance. The London Violence reduction unit was set up by the Mayor of London in 2019 to pioneer an approach to tackle violence, rooted in prevention and early intervention.

Members made the following comments:

- A member requested information on how the LVRU envisage this working in two tier areas.
- A member highlighted some commissioned research that was carried out in their London borough which highlighted the disproportionately larger percentage of black males who were being excluded and suspended from school. This also increased susceptibility to involvement in crime.
- It was raised that to reduce the vulnerability and susceptibility of young people to crime, schools should focus on a child-centred approach by internally excluding to allow opportunity for development. To prevent exclusion in the first instance, academics should not be the only focus in schools, to increase inclusivity particularly in Multi-Academy Trusts.
- The role of vocational education within schools was raised.
- A member highlighted different groups of young people who are vulnerable, for example care leavers or young people from a socioeconomically disadvantaged background.
- There was a request for practical solutions to help increase inclusive practice within schools. Another member highlighted that an incentive structure is needed to encourage the uptake of such practical solutions across MATs.
- It was emphasised that school attendance needed to be reviewed more generally.
- A member highlighted the need for greater resilience if there were another pandemic.
- It was raised that violence in families and communities is spilling over into schools and there needed to be an alternative to exclusion which would create a change of behaviour.

Maureen and Coralyn responded to Members comments:

- Colleagues stipulated that partnership working with a child-centred approach would be the main factor to allow inclusion

to be adopted fully, by building strong relationships across two-tier council systems and schools.

- The LVRU fund culturally competent mentors and youth workers across alternative provision and secondary schools with an increased focus on family support to help tackle the disproportionality in exclusions of young black males.
- The Charter's next stage of work includes recognising structural and institutional racism and scoping inclusive practices that could be implemented in schools and MATs to tackle this.
- The LVRU's aim is to discover solutions within the existing system that does not increase costs, for instance, a governor with a specialism in inclusion.
- The importance of vocational education was emphasised in promoting different pathways to better meet the needs of young people.
- Colleagues highlighted the need for better relational practice and positive ways to include young people to increase attainment in schools and to help address school attendance issues more widely, young people need to feel a sense of belonging and safety in school.
- The LVRU had begun the development of a programme addressing speech, language and communication needs alongside providing the support families need.
- Colleagues highlighted the need for better relational practice and positive ways to include young people to increase attainment in schools.

Decision

The Board noted the work being undertaken by the London Violence Reduction Unit and considered how it could be extended to other areas and complement existing council work to increase levels of school attendance. Members agreed that examples of good practice should be shared across the country and asked officers to explore the scope of this.

Action

- Officers to scope work needed to gather examples of good inclusive practices across the country to be shared more widely.

5 Ofsted policy position

The Chair invited Ian Keating, Principal Policy Adviser to introduce the item which called for members comments on whether the LGA should have a policy position on the role of Ofsted following the debate triggered by the coroner's findings in the Ruth Perry case and whether the Board should invite the new Chief Inspector Sir

Martyn Oliver to the June Board meeting.

Members made the following comments:

- The Chair suggested inclusion should be incorporated into the Ofsted policy position. Another member highlighted the need for a definition of inclusion.
- A member emphasised the need for MATs to be inspected.
- It was raised that there should be a level of recognition of the number of inspections local authorities are subject to and how resource intensive it is.
- A member highlighted that there needs to be a better alignment across different Ofsted inspections. An increased focus in school inspections on the contribution of schools to local SEND systems would, for example, compliment work undertaken under the SEND area inspection framework.
- It was raised that the children's demeanour and enthusiasm for learning should be considered during inspections.
- A member raised concern regarding the length of time a school goes without inspection following an outstanding award.
- The rise in home schooling following the pandemic was raised, and concern was highlighted regarding whether these parents are supported and inspected by the local authorities.
- A member raised Jon Le Fevre's research into helping the DfE explore whether schools should become a fourth safeguarding partner and further reflected on whether safeguarding should fall under the jurisdiction of local authorities.
- A member highlighted there is a need for increased flexibility in regard to children's placements, to allow local authorities to set up their own provision and simplify the approval process Ofsted require.
- It was raised that positive language and solutions should be a part of the LGA's recommendations.

Decision

The Board commented and agreed on the development of an Ofsted policy position and agreed to invite Chief Inspector Sir Martyn Oliver to the June Board meeting followed by a focused session of discussion.

Action

- Officers to invite HMCI to the June Board meeting.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chair	Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Patricia Bradwell OBE	Lincolnshire County Council
Deputy-chair	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE	Portsmouth City Council
Members	Cllr Victoria Cusworth	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Fiona Venner	Leeds City Council
	Cllr Mili Patel	Brent Council
	Cllr Garry Bridges	Manchester City Council
	Cllr Tony Ball	Essex County Council
	Cllr Roger Gough	Kent County Council
	Cllr Cordelia Law	Torbay Council
	Cllr Anne Dorrian	Boston Borough Council
Apologies	Cllr Imran Khan	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr Annabel Wilkinson	North Yorkshire Council
	Cllr Rachel Massey	Rochdale Borough Council
	Cllr Mark Cory	Colchester Borough Council
	Cllr Jon Hubbard	Wiltshire Council
	Cllr Laura Mayes	Wiltshire Council
In Attendance	Cllr Mark Sutton	Staffordshire County Council
	Cllr Robert Flatley	Derbyshire County Council
	Cllr Helen Wetherall	North East Derbyshire
	Cllr Dine Romero	Bath & North East Somerset Council
	Cllr Joshua Garfield	Newham London Borough
	Cllr Leigh Redman	Somerset County Council
	Cllr Rachel Smyth-Lyte	East Suffolk Council
	Cllr Andrew Leadbetter	Devon County Council