

Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Monday 13 November 2023

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Helen Rowbottom (Chair), Daryl Brown, Mercy Umeh, Lucy Richardson and Aliya Afzal-Khan

Co-opted members: Nandini Ganesh (Parentsactive Representative) and Nadia Taylor (Parent Governor Representative)

Other Councillors: Councillor Alex Sanderson (Cabinet Member for Children and Education)

Officers:

Jacqui McShannon (Strategic Director of Children's Services)

Amana Gordon (Operational Director, Children and Young People Services)

Amelia Steele (Virtual School Head)

Peter Haylock (Operational Director for Education and SEND)

Sarah Sanderson (Head of Service (Looked After Children), Children and Young People Service)

Debbie Yau (Committee Coordinator)

Harriet Bour (Assistant Committee Coordinator)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Eleanor Allen, co-opted member.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Amelia Steele (Head of Virtual School) presented the summary version of the Virtual School Annual Report 2022/23, outlining the main achievements that had been created to share with young people. She also presented videos and slides which included the feedback, performances and experiences of the young people. In some cases, an animation had been used as a visual representation, but the voices were all H&F's children and young people.

Councillor Mercy Umeh appreciated the great presentation and thanked Virtual School's efforts in bringing wonderful experience for the children and young people.

Echoing the sentiment, Nadia Taylor noted the powerful message coming from young people's own voices and gave credits to the education service providers, local authority, mentors and teachers.

In response to Nandini Ganesh's enquiry about the Hub, Amelia Steele advised that it was a Care Leavers Hub which provided the space for care leavers to engage in networking while transforming to independent living.

Councillor Aliya Afzal-Khan considered it wonderful to hear the positive impacts of the Virtual School's work. She asked about the "Attachment Aware Schools' programme". Amelia Steele advised that a pilot "Attachment Aware Schools' programme" in partnership with the Educational Psychology team was launched with 10 schools last year. It had included centralised training on emotional coaching and relational practice, and individual school support through a link practitioner. This programme had enabled the building of stronger relationship with schools and the provision of a clear bridge between education and social care.

On the Chair's concern about the nature of collaboration with the University College London (UCL) and the source of funding, Amelia Steele noted that H&F had participated in the Promoting the Achievement of Care Leavers knowledge exchange programme run by UCL. While the work of this programme had raised the profile of H&F's care experienced young people, it aimed at creating an infrastructure to support young people across the borough into education and employment. It was led by the Virtual School, People and Talent and the Economy, which worked together to enable young people to access opportunities made available by local businesses matched by the Economy. She added that H&F's participation did not require additional funding.

Councillor Lucy Richardson appreciated the work of the Virtual School in delivering compassionate services and meeting the needs of young people. Regarding her question on the number of children and young people being served and the Council's capacity for expansion, Jacqui McShannon (Strategic Director of Children's Services) said that there were currently 213 children who would be cared for until the

age of 25. Amelia Steele added that as of September 2021, the Department for Education had extended the duty of the Virtual School Head to include promoting the education of children who had currently or previously had a social worker within the last 6 years. The Virtual School had successfully recruited an Advisory Teacher for Children with a Social Worker to provide support and guidance for the schools and parents of this cohort.

In reply to the Chair's further question, Amelia Steele explained that the Personal Education Plan was statutory and needed to be reviewed three times a year. Although the Enrichment Programme was not statutory, the Virtual School considered it a right thing to do and hence was committed to providing enrichment opportunities enabling children and young people to participate in extra-curricular activities which had given them informal ways to learn and achieve.

Amana Gordon (Operational Director, Children and Young People Services) remarked that the Virtual School focused on supporting young people to be successful in education and training enabling them to go on to be successful adults. She also highlighted the impacts of the enrichment activities held in the summer, including organising residentials, weeklong projects and encouraging young people to join after school clubs. They had enabled young people to share different levels of experience.

Concluding the discussion, the Chair appreciated the work of the Virtual School and considered the stretched efforts should be articulated into sustainable values to shape future service delivery.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted and commented on the item.

5. HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM LOCAL AREA OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

Peter Haylock (Operational Director for Education and SEND) presented the item and highlighted that H&F Local Area Outcomes Framework had been co-produced by children and young people (CYP) in H&F schools and was supported by the Council for Disabled Children. He then outlined the 5 key outcomes identified, what each meant for CYP, the key priority areas of work, and performance measurement.

On the Chair's concern as to how the 5 key outcomes had been developed, Peter Haylock said that the first phase of the development had involved some detailed in person focus groups with CYP with SEND in primary, secondary, and special schools across H&F. These stakeholders co-produced an annual survey which met different needs expressed in the focus groups for schools and parents as well as other young people to provide a response. The Framework was developed and then refined based on the survey outcomes. Peter added that his office would work with the stakeholders over the following weeks to prepare for the next survey to be held among the schools and families with CYP with SEND in January 2024.

Replying to the Chair's further question about partner organisations' involvement, Jacqui McShannon (Strategic Director of Children's Services) remarked that the

Children's Health, Education and Social Care Board was a joint-governance body working together for a range of joint projects/programmes for Children agenda, including support to CYP with SEND and the Local Area Outcomes Framework.

As regards the title of the initiative, Jacqui McShannon highlighted the long data summary presented in the strategic documents considered by the Cabinet, and the Health and Wellbeing Board. The explicit expression was made so that CYP could see their views reflected in the surveys were acted upon. Peter Haylock added that the Framework was specifically focused on H&F's CYP with SEND rather than just generic outcomes.

Peter Haylock informed members that the performance for the outcomes (page 41) contained both qualitative and quantitative measures driven by hard data and survey feedbacks. On how these would impact on the educational outcomes as asked by the Chair, Peter said that the performance of the CYP with SEND in the last four years were captured in the school cards. He undertook to provide a sample SEND scorecard to the Committee.

ACTION: Peter Haylock

Given the performance under the Framework had been measured and tracked as outlined on page 41, Councillor Aliya Afzal-Khan considered it helpful to provide data sets already available as baseline measures to assess how the Framework had been developing over time. Councillor Alex Sanderson (Cabinet Member for Children and Education) explained that after setting up the Framework, the local authority would gain a clear understanding of the picture from the data gathered and share them. Jacqui McShannon stressed that they would continue to monitor and measure success against the outcomes framework for analysing and reporting. The Chair advised that it would be useful at this stage to comment on the performance measures and for them to be more closely aligned with the outcomes.

Nandini Ganesh asked about the profile of CYP with SEND being included in the focus groups and held discussions with the local authority. She was concerned whether they could articulate their views well on complex subjects relating to employment and education. Peter Haylock noted that the CYP with SEND came from a wide mix of mainstream and different special schools. Before moving to the phase of survey and collecting data, the local authority had made sure there was a clear understanding of the questions. As this was a Framework for CYP, the authority had worked in conjunction with the schools and not parents to capture their views. On performance measures involving schools and families, these were reflected in the surveys which were co-produced with the young people.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted and commented on the report.

6. IMPLEMENTING THE INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY IN EDUCATION

Peter Haylock (Operational Director for Education and SEND) updated members on the progress of delivering the Industrial Strategy in Education, which was a lifetime

approach to STEMMM skills under a cradle to adulthood offer. He then shared the progress made so far.

Referring to the conference with teachers co-hosted by Imperial College in July, the Chair said she was looking forward to seeing practical actions, like mentoring schemes and apprenticeship offer, which would be delivered through the Industrial Strategy in Education. Peter Haylock highlighted that after the conference, a number of events had been held in White City for young people to have had interviews with businesses. Moreover, 20 businesses and 20 schools were being matched to work on curriculum mapping and delivery. They had mapped out pilot activities which would be promoted and spread to similar schools. Lastly there was an explanation of the way in which the development of inclusive employment through the Economy Team had been devised through tracking all apprenticeship opportunities within the borough.

Peter Haylock briefed that the Economy Team was meeting with Education, and the People and Talent teams regularly to review existing opportunities and gaps that needed to be filled and then developed. In response to the Chair's suggestion of inviting external people to provide inputs, Peter said that the Industrial Strategy Board had been bringing the right people together. Jacqui McShannon (Strategic Director of Children's Services) advised that more information on the oversight of the Industrial Strategy in Education would be available to this Committee when it considered the Annual Education Report.

ACTION: Peter Haylock

To foster partnerships between the Virtual School and local businesses, the Chair suggested holding a forum on future industries in the borough such that the Virtual School could go beyond learning, training and enrichment to include apprenticeship opportunities offered by local businesses for care experienced young people. Jacqui McShannon highlighted that events had been held to help schools build a curriculum that got ahead of the national agenda and standards so that H&F's CYP were able to envision a future that might be quite different from now.

Councillor Lucy Richardson was concerned about access, signposting and inclusivity of the activities and opportunities under the Industrial Strategy in Education. Specifically, she asked whether these activities would be available online and still accessible to care experienced young people beyond the age of 25, and whether they would be promoted by social workers and HCP workers.

Peter Haylock remarked that once ascertaining the positive impacts of the pilot programmes, dedicated websites that showed all industrial strategy in education activities would come on board. In terms of employment, he assured that it was truly inclusive. While an annual review for opportunities to be provided for young people had already started for Year 9, it would continue to develop further moving forward, including signposting any employment opportunities for HCP as early as possible.

Councillor Alex Sanderson (Cabinet Member for Children and Education) informed the meeting that Imperial College had a lot of information for people with Autism, from providing advice to employment opportunities. She and the Chair exchanged

views on inclusion related to online science and global innovation districts, and industrial partners in Barcelona and Milan.

In reply to Councillor Richardson's further question, Peter Haylock said that it was up to the individual Academy whether and how to track their students' careers education, by tracking and listing achievements against the benchmark and recording encounters with local businesses.

Noting that work experience opportunities were usually offered for young people leaving care or secondary school, Councillor Aliya Afzal-Khan was keen to link Industrial Strategy in Education with secondary school students. She was concerned how STEMMM employer accredited teacher training could enhance teachers' career guidance such that the students could be in touch with employers early. Peter Haylock remarked that it was in the plan to grow and develop the accredited teacher training. They also intended to start industrial education for students at Key Stage 2/3 and develop bespoke curriculum involving new internship and work experience opportunities. On offering computer science in all secondary schools in response to digital economy, Peter explained that the local authority could not mandate the subjects to be offered and the lack of computer science teachers was a real challenge to schools. The purpose of bringing in businesses to schools was a means to support STEMMM education. That was why at Key Stage 3, a pilot programme would be developed to enhance the subjects of computer science as well as design & technology through working with the business experts.

Nandini Ganesh asked if people supported internship as part of Industrial Strategy in Education as they might not necessarily lead to employment. Reiterating that annual reviews in Year 9 would start to prepare the children, Peter Haylock said internship was a big part of the initiative and would be developed further with the increasing number of participating businesses. He noted that about 72% of such opportunities had turned to employment.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted and commented on the report.

7. SUMMER IN THE CITY 2023

Peter Haylock (Operational Director of Education and SEND) provided an overview of the delivery of the Summer in the City programme this summer. The programme aimed to deliver enriching activities and food across the school holidays.

Jacqui McShannon, (Director of Children's Services) commended the Summer in the City programme, the staff invited, and all 28 providers involved for their amazing work over the summer this year. She highlighted that the programme was fantastic and enriching. However, they did encounter some difficulties with ghost bookings, the bad weather and uniformed services having new age restrictions.

Councillor Aliya Afzal-Khan emphasised that Summer in the City was a great programme with the number of participants and providers kept going up in the past three years. She asked for the definition of the term 'unique children and young

people'. Jacqui McShannon noted that the term distinguished itself from total headcount as some of the participants took part in more than one event. That was why 3,435 unique children and young people had resulted in 18,998 total attendances. As to why the number of unique participants was lowest among the three years in 2023, Peter Haylock said it might be due to bad weather and more people travelled out of London after the lifting of the COVID restrictions. The new age restrictions imposed by the uniformed services might also contribute to the low attendance.

On Councillor Afzal-Khan's concern about enlisting the breakdown in attendance and how did it guide future planning, Jacqui McShannon explained that although the Summer in the City programme was targeted at all children, the aim was to reach children that might not benefit from summer vacations. The breakdown helped the Children's Service gain a better understanding of the uptake interest for forward planning purpose. She added that the same set of data was not listed for the past two years because of the special circumstances back then when the country was still under COVID restrictions. Jacqui also noted that the demographic data compared well with the overall data of the borough, and the programme was reaching children as intended reflecting good accessibility. She hoped the enhanced promotion of the programme through social media and schools had improved its visibility. Councillor Afzal-Khan said she saw a lot of promotion of the programme in social media and noted that a couple of headmasters had received the information leaflets. She considered it might be helpful to encourage the schools to distribute the leaflets to the parents early to help boost the attendance.

Nandini Ganesh commented that to assure the parents about programme safety and quality, it might be useful to state the programme was suitable for children and list the providers involved.

Councillor Mercy Umeh congratulated officers on their work in the success of this programme. She highlighted the positive feedback received from The Nourish Hub, one of the providers at this year's Summer in the City programme.

Jacqui McShannon undertook to take on board members' comments to make the event more appealing among children and young people. She took the opportunity to send a special compliment to the Mayor who did a lot of promotion in the social media to motivate young people to join the programme.

The Chair remarked that it had been amazing to see the love and care that had gone into a number of activities in the event.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted and commented on the report.

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee noted that the next two meetings would be held on 29 January and 25 March 2024.

Meeting started: 7.04 pm
Meeting ended: 8.30 pm

Chair

Contact officer Debbie Yau
Committee Coordinator
Corporate Services
E-mail: Debbie.yau@lbhf.gov.uk