

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

11 MAY 2023

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S P ROE (CHAIRMAN)

Lincolnshire County Council: Councillors Clio Perraton-Williams (Vice-Chairman), K H Cooke, A G Hagues, Mrs J E Killey and M A Whittington

Added Members: Polly Coombes (Foster Carer) and Elizabeth Bunney (Lincolnshire Community Health Services)

Officers in attendance:-

Kiara Chatziioannou (Scrutiny Officer), Tara Jones (Assistant Director - Children's Safeguarding), Andrew Morris (Corporate Parenting Manager), Emily Wilcox (Democratic Services Officer), Laura Bonner (Head of Service (East Lindsey Locality)), Deborah Crawford (Head of Service, Fostering, Adoption and Leaving Care), Sarah Lane (Interim Virtual School Headteacher), Nicola Wilkinson (NHS Lincolnshire ICB) and Richard Stone (Team Manager - Quality and Standards)

54 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Matthews and Ann Wright (Foster Carer Representative)

55 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared.

56 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 9 MARCH 2023

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 March 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

57 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF OFFICERS

The Chairman announced that since the last meeting of the Panel, the Children's Services Directorate had received an inspection by Ofsted and there was an expectation that feedback be provided in June 2023.

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL
11 MAY 2023

The Chairman had also attended the Big Conversation event, which he commended as a successful and informative event.

The Chairman has also attended the Foster Carers Celebration event alongside the Head of Service – Fostering, Adoption and Leaving Care. The Head of Service – Fostering, Adoption and Leaving Care gave an update on the celebration event, which was described as joyous and fantastic event full of gratitude and celebration and appreciation for Foster Carers.

The Foster Carer Representative reiterated the success of the event and the positive experience of meeting and celebrating with many other Foster Carers across the County.

The Assistant Director – Children’s Safeguarding was delighted announced that the department had been successful in a bid for a Department for Education Funding Grant of £1.3m over 2 years for the Staying Connected project, which was similar to the Council’s Staying Put programme which allowed young people to remain with their foster carers once they became care leavers which was important in maintaining important relationships and providing wraparound support.

58 REGULATION 44 INDEPENDENT VISITORS REPORT

Consideration was given to a report by the Team Manager– Quality and Standards, which invited the Panel to consider a 6 monthly update on the Regulation 44 Independent Visitors Service. The presentation highlighted the key updates within the report, as referenced in appendix A.

Consideration was given to the report and during the discussion the following points were recorded:

- Regulation 44 Inspections provided high challenge to identify potential emerging themes and provided the quality assurance that was needed to ensure that on a day-to-day basis outcome for children living within residential care were improving. Previous recommendations by Ofsted would be considered during inspections to any challenges or developmental issues were addressed during to ensure standards were consistent throughout services whilst meeting the needs of individual children.
- Assurance was provided that for residential homes which had been identified as needing improvement by Ofsted, Regulation 44 would work with those homes to develop and monitor an action plan to ensure that improvements were made in the areas identified.
- Members welcomed improvements to Northholme and the progress made within the service.
- Officers expressed their disappointment in respect of the Ofsted judgement of ‘inadequate’ for the Beacon children’s home, however the Panel was reassured that a series of meetings and action plans commenced immediately and following a large multidisciplinary effort the rating the home had been rated ‘good’ following a reinspection.

- In relation to Albion Street Home, the Panel welcomed the rules put in place for visitors of the homes and these were agreed to be circulated to the Panel. The need to ensure that residential homes were homely to the children and felt like a family environment was emphasised.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be endorsed and the comments made be recorded;
2. Assurance and satisfaction of Panel Members be recorded that the Independent Visitors are fulfilling their obligations in visiting the Local Authority homes each month as required and inspecting against the 9 quality standards as outlined in Part 6, regulations 43 of the Children's Home Regulation 2015

59 INDEPENDENT REVIEWING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT (1 APRIL 2022 - 31 MARCH 2023)

Consideration was given to a report by the Team Manager– Quality and Standards, which invited the Panel to consider the Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report (1 April 2022-31 March 2023). The report highlighted the key areas of the report, as referenced in the full report at appendix A.

The Panel commended the positive report and thanked Officers within Children's Services for their work during the year.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be received and endorsed;
2. That the work undertaken to date be commended and that the Panel Members be satisfied with assurances received that Independent Visitors are fulfilling their obligations in visiting the Local Authority homes be commended.

60 CHILDREN IN CARE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE - ADDENDUM TO VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2021 -22

Consideration was given to a report by the Interim Virtual School Headteacher, which provided the overview of the school attendance of children in care of Lincolnshire for the academic year 2021-22, as set out at appendix A.

Consideration was given to the report and during the discussion the following points were recorded:

- The Panel were reassured that there was an increased focus to work together to improve attendance.
- It was suggested that it be useful to include a graph showing a starting point and the progression of the education of children' in care so that progress could be monitored

in future reports. Officers confirmed that this data was monitored and could be used in future reports to the Panel.

- All children had an initial personal education plan that was completed within 10 school days of them coming into care and the level of attendance at school would be monitored. For those children who had previously been home educated, the quality of education would be assessed and children would be given the opportunity to share their views on education. A phased transition back into school would be made if appropriate.
- Whilst tuition could offer some level of support, the importance of attending school to develop personal, social and emotional skills was essential.
- An update report on attendance prior to the LCC Virtual School Report scheduled to be programmed for March/April 2024 was requested.

RESOLVED:

1. That and the report be received and that the comments made be recorded;
2. That the report be endorsed;
3. That an update on attendance statistics for the virtual school be added on the Panel's work programme.

61 CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report by the Scrutiny Officer, which invited the Panel to consider its work programme.

As requested in the previous item, the Scrutiny Officer would programme an item on the attendance for the virtual school to the work programme.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and the work programme be agreed, subject to the addition of the item listed above.

The meeting closed at 11.10 am