

**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 9 DECEMBER 2011**

**Statement from: Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell, Executive Councillor for Children's Services and Adult Learning**

**Annual Children's Services Assessment**

Children's Services in Lincolnshire County Council perform excellently. This performance has been sustained from 2010 to 2011. The large majority of services, settings and institutions inspected by Ofsted are good or outstanding, and very few are inadequate. Almost all provision helps children and young people to learn and stay safe. As found elsewhere, changes to secondary provision are taking place with some schools forming federations and others becoming academies. Previous inspection judgements for these schools have been taken into account in the assessment. The key area for further development identified in last year's assessment remains.

The unannounced inspection of contract, referral and assessment arrangements for children in need and children who may be in need of protection carried out in February 2011, found areas of strength and much practice that met requirements. There were no priority actions requiring urgent attention. The two areas of development identified at the previous inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements have been addressed and show satisfactory improvement.

**Birth to Five Service wins Nursery World Award**

I am delighted to announce the Birth to Five Service has won, for the second time in three years, the national award for the best LA Early Years Service in the country. This is a wonderful achievement combined with improved performance in this area.

**Lincolnshire pupils triumph at LAFTAs**

I attended the Schools' LAFTAs Film Awards on Monday 17 October. This was a great evening showing some magnificent film and animation work our young people have produced. Acclaimed actor Jim Broadbent, patron of the LAFTAs Film Awards, celebrated the achievements of Lincolnshire's young film makers with a personal address at the start of the evening. Pupils from all over Lincolnshire descended on The Engine Shed at the University of Lincoln. The LAFTAs Film Awards ceremony is now in its fifth year and was marked with more short film and animations than before. The project is developing an exciting partnership with 20th Century Fox. Winners were announced from both primary and secondary schools in a range of categories, including fiction, film and animation. All winners received a unique trophy designed and manufactured by the pupils of Sleaford St George's Academy with the help of internationally renowned sculptor Roger Lee.

## **Music Service**

Our Music Service Jazz Band won, for the fourth year running, the national Jazz award and this builds on some outstanding performance.

I attended the Mass Strings Celebration at the Meres Centre on 19 November and we were all entertained by 300 young players. The evening welcomed back some former Lincolnshire Music Service students and there were many new players taking part for the first time. There are dates in the Music Service diary for events up until July 2012 and I would recommend that Members do take the opportunity to attend and see for themselves how talented our young people are.

## **Takeover Day – 11 November 2011**

Many events involving Young People took place around the County on 11 November. We arranged a special mock Children & Young People's Scrutiny meeting involving a number of Council Members and 7 young people representing you people in care, young carers, youth cabinet and students from Horncastle Grammar School. Two items were debated; Improving Post 16 Learning Provision in Lincolnshire and the Consultation form DfE's plans to remove the statutory duty on schools to deliver work related learning in KS4. It was agreed to feed the comments raised at the meeting into the next formal meeting of the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee.

## **Social Care**

Open referrals remain relatively stable at approximately 450 per month with a slight decrease in October 2011 to 404. 90% of initial and 85% of core assessments remain in timescale, which is within our target and excellent performance in comparison with our regional authorities.

The number of children looked after has slightly increased to 485 as of 7 November 2011, owing to a number of large sibling groups. This fully meets our target of 36 per 10,000 children.

As a continued consequence of our low number of accommodated children, children subject to a Child Protection Plan have increased to 335. This is because of the need for all professionals to work with some children under a tightly managed Child Protection Plan.

We are working hard to fully establish our reconfigured locality teams consisting of social care, and targeted services, youth provision, family centres and family work. Our locality teams will further develop our integration agenda by providing all appropriate services for children in need and those in need of protection. For example, a family may be allocated a social worker, targeted youth work and parenting group work through our Children's Services.

## **Families Working Together**

The Families Working Together team is supporting a total of 62 families including those on a programme of managed exit from the service. An evaluation form for exited families has been drawn up and is being piloted. The health questionnaire has

been revised and training has been organised on this for the team. Partners have agreed wording for a consent form which is being used with families to share data.

A small partnership task group is being drawn together by the Commissioning Team to create a local definition of a family with complex needs. The DfE estimates that there are 1300 – 1400 families with complex needs in Lincolnshire. This group will carry out a local estimate in order to inform pilot developments.

A DVD is being developed to evaluate why the Families Working Together service has made such a difference to families who have had service engagement over a number of years.

A contract has been drawn up, working with Barnado's, to provide volunteers to work with Key Workers to implement the Family Support Plan. A meeting has taken place with Working Links, the successful provider on the ESF funded contract to work with families with complex needs, to discuss joint working.

### **Youth Centres**

There are no current plans to close any of Lincolnshire County Council's Youth Centres. Building on the concept of Big Society, we are looking to work collaboratively with communities, partners and other agencies on the use of facilities and the development of high quality youth provision across Lincolnshire.

*We have:*

- 40 active Youth Centres
- 33 operating from County Council owned Youth Centres (8 of which are on school sites)
- 7 leased/rented (4 of which are on school sites)

*What has happened so far?*

- There has been a significant reduction in levels of youth work staff as a result of our review. However, we have retained some youth work professionals in the new roles of Youth & Community Development Workers who have been selected into new posts as of 5 September 2011.
- We have secured at least 1 evening delivery of positive activities per week from each of our 40 Youth Centres (using our new Youth and Community Development Teams).
- We have produced Community Profiles for each location to inform developments.
- We have identified 13 locations where universal prevention activities will play an important role in supporting more focused targeted activities – these are primarily in areas where there is a greater need to support vulnerable and at risk children and young people.
- We are holding stakeholder meetings to discuss the development of Youth Centre provision in the community. Some schools and voluntary organisations have expressed an interest in taking this forward.

### **Primary Education**

During the early part of November I attended Primary and Secondary Headteachers briefing around the county.

We are delighted to announce that Reepham CE Primary School was placed in the Top 100 state Primary schools in the country by the Sunday Times.

### Ofsted Inspections

Currently, we have the following numbers of Primary, Junior, Infant or Nursery schools in each category:

<b>Ofsted Judgement</b>	<b>Lincolnshire</b>	<b>National</b>
Outstanding	10.2% (28 schools)	9%
Good	52% (143 schools)	44%
Satisfactory	36% (100 schools)	39%
Inadequate	1.8% (5 schools)	7%

We continue to be increasingly successful in supporting schools to achieve stronger outcomes in their Ofsted inspection, which is often through supporting Headteachers to be strong and have clear rationale in their discussion with inspectors. We also support teachers so they are confident with their lesson preparation and planning and ensure the learning environment reflects high expectations and standards.

Ofsted have now launched their parental views on-line survey so the primary team have begun a monthly monitoring of the responses logged for each school. The new Ofsted Framework starts in January 2012. Extensive training has been provided to ensure schools are able to prepare to respond to the more challenging inspection system.

### Key Stage 2 Results 2011

Key stage 2 results are still provisional, final release expected before Christmas.

12 Lincolnshire Primary schools are now Academies with 5 likely to convert during the next term. A further 5 are in the application stage.

### Secondary and Post-16 Education and Training

Five Lincolnshire secondary schools have been Ofsted inspected since September 2011. Three schools were upgraded from Good to Outstanding, one maintained its overall effectiveness of Good and one remained Satisfactory. Currently there are no Lincolnshire secondary schools in an Ofsted category. 35% are graded Outstanding, 39% are graded Good and 26% are graded Satisfactory.

### GCSE results: Comparison with statistical neighbours

The continuing improvement in the proportion of Lincolnshire students achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grade C or better including English and Mathematics (5+A\*-C E&M) was reported in August. Provisional results now also indicate that attainment in Lincolnshire is higher than in all 10 of our statistical neighbours. In 2011, 65.5% of girls achieved 5+A\*-C E&M, compared to an average of 60.9% for our statistical neighbours and to a national average for girls of 62.2%. Boys achieved 58.4% 5+A\*-C E&M, compared to an average of 53.2% for our statistical neighbours and a national average for boys of 54.6%.

## **School Sixth Forms**

Census data has been received for all but four school sixth forms and academies. Some have failed to recruit expected numbers for 2011-12, which will exacerbate the potential impact of the reduction in funding (as school sixth form funding is brought in line with that of further education colleges). Several school sixth forms have courses with few learners (less than 10) and discussions are taking place with the affected schools in an attempt to minimise impact on the curriculum and learner choice in the future.

## **Apprenticeships**

A contract has been agreed with the Work Based Academy to recruit two Apprenticeship Champions to promote apprenticeships to employers. This is important in order to create opportunities for those young people who would prefer an apprenticeship route, and will fill a gap resulting from the reduction in National Apprenticeship Service presence in Lincolnshire (reduction from 4 staff to 1). A tender has been published for proposals to develop 'Mechanisms that overcome the barriers facing small to medium sized businesses to Apprenticeship recruitment'. This will also support the growth of Apprenticeship opportunities. Forty young people (aged 14-16) have commenced Student Apprenticeship programmes in September 2011. The Student Apprenticeship programme has been developed by the local authority to replace the successful national Young Apprenticeship Programme which has now been withdrawn.

## **Special Schools**

There are no Special schools in an Ofsted category and only two of the 21 schools are judged by Ofsted to be less than good in all aspects of their work. The necessary level of intervention is in place to ensure that the two schools make rapid and sustainable progress. It is particularly pleasing to note that St Francis Special School was judged to be Outstanding in May 2011.

The outreach offer from Special Schools and centrally managed support teams has been enhanced in response to the review recommendations and we have moved to a situation where the level of outreach support offered in each of the districts has been substantially increased. A particular focus on the needs of children and young people with social and communication difficulties (autism) will go some way to address concerns expressed by parents and carers when a new funding mechanism for SEN in mainstream schools was introduced this year.

Capital investment in Special Schools has been welcomed and is having a very positive impact on the opportunities being made available for children and young people. This is particularly the case at Sandon School and the Beacon Centre, where joint working and a shared capital programme will prove to be of considerable benefit to those children and young people with complex learning difficulties in the care of the local authority. Early indications are that more children and young people are being kept within the county as a result of this strategy, there are significantly reduced transport and staffing costs and most importantly the children and young people are accessing 24 hour provision that fully meets their needs.

## **Education Beyond the Classroom and Vulnerable Children**

The year has seen a real increase in the range and variety of activities for vulnerable children. This has included an expanded JUMP (Joint Universities Mentoring Programme) focusing on Looked After Children with new activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, an Arts Award, a popular food technology programme, adventure education and a music programme. These activities have taken place at the Freiston Environmental Centre and at the On Target Learning Centre based at Lincoln City Football Club. Supplementing this has been a successful Foster Carer Training Programme with family sessions at Freiston focusing on areas such as family learning and Family Challenge Days. Short Break programmes for disabled children at Freiston have also included respite care for parents and carers.

## **Life Long Learning**

I had the pleasure of attending a Celebration of Adult Learning recently where I presented the 'Tutor of the Year' Award for Lincolnshire. At this celebration I had the opportunity to talk to a number of learners who wanted to share their stories of the positive impact attending one of our Learning courses had had on their lives. The Lifelong Learning Service continues to deliver high quality learning opportunities in local community venues which are highly regarded by Learners, as evidenced by the 96% satisfaction rate. In the 2010/11 academic year the Learning Service, in partnership with Providers and Schools, delivered a wide range of courses across Lincolnshire. They engaged with 8,462 individual learners, a 3% increase on the number recorded in 09/10, which was achieved despite reduced funding demonstrating a continued drive towards improving value for money whilst maintaining the quality of service and delivery offer. This Service really makes a difference to people's lives, in the words of one of the learners "I'm soooo happy I could cry! Don't believe it still! I would like to thank you all, thank you! You've changed my life".