

Key Messages from the Leeds Children's Trust Board

Wednesday 15 June 2011, John Jamieson School

Major items of business at the meeting were: reducing the number of children in care, the Leeds Education Challenge and the Child Friendly City.

A. Children and young people's plan obsession: reducing the need for children to be looked after

This was the first in a series of reports that the Board will be receiving on a regular basis to monitor progress against the three obsessions in the new Children and Young People's Plan.

The Board discussed the current baseline position and the activity plan for taking forward work on this obsession. Members of the Board provided some very positive feedback on the progress in working relationships between partners that is being seen on the ground, against a backdrop of a huge increase in referrals coming through the system.

Key messages coming through highlighted:

- the costs of placements, particularly external placements, and the potential resources that can be freed up for investment in early intervention as action starts to turn the curve;
- the relatively low numbers of CAFs in Leeds and the need to improve confidence of the workforce and increase the numbers of CAFs being carried out;
- the provision of regularly updated data at a cluster level, which is helping to drive improvements and the commissioning of services at a local level.

Further details are available from Jackie Wilson, Chief Officer for Children and Young People's Social Care, Children's Services jackie.wilson@leeds.gov.uk.

B. Leeds Education Challenge

The Board were briefed on a series of meetings that are being used to start the 'big conversation' with elected members, groups of headteachers, governors and other stakeholders, culminating in a meeting for all heads on 12 July. School improvement, additional school places (basic need), 14-19 provision, locality working and the new relationship between schools and the local authority are all topics which feature in these conversations. At the event on 12 July Sir Tim Brighouse will also present his review of the learning landscape in Leeds at the end of the Education Leeds contract.

The Board discussed the importance of clusters built around schools to provide co-ordination of services at a local level, and stressed the desire in Leeds to build an integrated framework. The current conversations were an opportunity to demonstrate how this works to the benefit of all partners. The Board will receive further reports on progress.

For further information contact Simon Flowers, Strategic Leader for Education Integration, Children's Services simon.flowers@leeds.gov.uk.

C. Child Friendly City

The Board received an update in relation to the Child Friendly City programme. Five themed working groups have been established:

Voice and influence

Rights and responsibilities

Safety

Play

Sustainability

Leeds Youth Council is closely involved with the development of this work and has parallel working groups for each of the themes. It is intended that the two groups for each theme will join together soon to develop a menu of pledges to ask organisations to commit to delivering. Meanwhile, further awareness raising and consultation activity will take place with children and young people over the summer.

For further information contact Barbara Newton, Strategic Leader - Performance, Children's Services barbara.newton@leeds.gov.uk. Or visit the child friendly city section of the Children Leeds website www.leedsinitiative.org/children/page.aspx?id=20957

D. Other items

In brief, other items covered:

- **Leeds Safeguarding Children Board Strategic Plan 2011-15 and Business Plan 2011-12** – the Board received the Safeguarding Board's Strategic Plan for the next four years, and the business plan which sets out the first year's actions. These plans will shortly be available on the Safeguarding Board's website at www.leedsiscb.org.uk
- **Improvement Activity Update** – the Board were notified of the positive outcomes from the latest Improvement Board progress meeting with the Department for Education. A copy of a letter from the DfE confirming the outcomes of the meeting was circulated and is available with the Board papers (see link below)
- **Leeds Initiative partnership arrangements** - the Board received an update on the new terms of reference for the Leeds Initiative Board and the five strategic partnerships to take forward the city's priorities, including the Children's Trust Board. In particular the Board noted the links with the Health and Wellbeing Board which will have overall responsibility for coordinating commissioning strategies across the NHS, social care, public health and children's services.

E. Future meetings and further information

The next meeting is scheduled for 11 July. The key item will be a report on the Children and Young People's Plan obsession to reduce the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). The following meeting on 12 September will consider a similar report on the obsession to improve school attendance.

For further information about the Children's Trust Board please contact Kate Arcscott, Interim Children's Trust Board Manager, Leeds City Council kate.arcscott@leeds.gov.uk. Children's Trust Board papers can be found on the website at www.leedsinitiative.org/children/page.aspx?id=20557