



CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING PARENT/CARERS SUB-COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD AT THE COMMITTEE ROOM - BOOTLE TOWN HALL,
TRINITY ROAD, BOOTLE, L20 7AE
ON TUESDAY 10TH DECEMBER, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor Hardman (in the Chair)
Councillor Danny Burns (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Evans and Christopher Page

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Richards.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.

10. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2024, be confirmed as a correct record, subject to an amendment to include reference to parents/carers feeling targeted by Council staff for speaking to the Sub-Committee.

11. EXPERIENCES OF PARENTS AND CARERS OF SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH SEND AND SOCIAL NEEDS WHO ARE APPROACHING, AND MOVING BEYOND, GCSE STAGE.

Members of the Sub-Committee considered verbal representations from parents/carers about the support and services available to children and young people approaching 16 years old and beyond.

The Chair advised at the start of the meeting, that some issues raised such as Post 16 Education and Skills, would fall under the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regenerations and Skills) and any follow up work would need to include that Committee.

Points were made on the following issues:

- A petition was submitted to the O&S (Children's Services and Safeguarding) in November 2023 asking for the Committee to show its commitment to EHCP's for those aged 16-25.
- There are 770 vulnerable young people aged 16-25 in Sefton with an EHCP who are not receiving the support they need.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING PARENT/CARERS
SUB-COMMITTEE - TUESDAY 10TH DECEMBER, 2024

- There are ineffective arrangements between education and health and social care services which impacts the transition from school to post 16 provision.
- 16- to 18-year-olds are too old for Children's Services but too young for Adult Services and as a result are falling through the gaps in services.
- Legally, young people should have a 'Transitions Caseworker' but there are not enough caseworkers to manage the caseloads of 770 young people.
- Caseworkers do not meet face to face with the young people.
- Parents feel that the caseworkers do not have any experience of looking after a young person with SEND and as a result do not have the empathy or experience to understand the difficulties faced by parents/carers and young people with SEND.
- Many parents/carers have experience of their sons and daughters being on roll for college or higher education, but no follow up is taking place if they struggle to attend.
- Examples were provided of 15/16-year-olds being out of full-time education with an EHCP, but no support or checks are being carried out by the local authority.
- SEND pupils sometimes manage to get through their GCSE's and as a result fall through the net as they are seen as capable, despite needing a lot of support.
- School leavers with SEND are left alone to work out things like travel and timetables at their next education provider. Parents have to fight to get the support needed or find things out as they encounter problems.
- Information such as the existence of Disability Travel Passes should be known by caseworkers and the information available on the Council's website.
- The 16 plus EHCP document is complicated to complete.
- Examples were given whereby an EHCP was in place and working but at age 18, elements such as one-to-one support were stopped. The parents/carers advised that things should not be taken out of an EHCP, as they remain in place to age 25.
- The Sefton Council website for the 'Local Offer' is difficult to navigate and contains incorrect information such as reference to keeping an EHCP in place if an individual was to start their own business.
- Cumbria Council's website was cited as being a particularly good website for SEND and Local Offer information.
- Parents of children aged below 16 are worried at what will happen to their child at age 16 and beyond.
- The Careers Connect Service does not appear to be informed about what various conditions mean for the young people.
- Many young people with SEND are bright and have potential, but due to not receiving support, have their dreams of chosen careers dashed and are instead expected to apply for benefits.
- Sefton Council should make the effort to employ more young people with SEND and offer more internships.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING PARENT/CARERS
SUB-COMMITTEE - TUESDAY 10TH DECEMBER, 2024

- Concerns were raised about the Children and Young People Plan Consultation Feedback report (reported at the Council's Health and Wellbeing Board on 4 December) which did not appear to include any reference to Children and Young People who are not in full time education or training.

The Chair thanked Parent/Carers for attending and noted that it was important for young people to be involved in conversations about their care and support and invited a young person who attended the meeting to email in and let the Committee Members know how she feels about her support at Post 16.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a joint informal meeting be set up with the O&S (Regeneration and Skills) Committee to look at the issues raised around:
 - Post 16 educational support for young people with SEND
 - The work of the Careers Connect Service and support offered.
 - Sefton Council as an employer
 - EHCP's and Employers
- (2) the O&S Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) to receive information on how the Local Offer Site is being presented and what can be done to improve it.

This page is intentionally left blank