

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

MINUTES

20 OCTOBER 2015

Chair: * Councillor Mitzi Green

Councillors: * Christine Bednell * Janet Mote
* Simon Brown * Mrs Christine Robson (3)
* Jo Dooley

* Denotes Member present

(3) Denotes category of Reserve Member

RECOMMENDED ITEMS

64. Virtual School Report

An Officer presented a report regarding the performance of the Virtual School. Members expressed their appreciation of the way the report presented numbers of children in each cohort rather than just percentages as this gave a greater understanding of the achievement.

The report included the following:

- every local authority had a Virtual Head Teacher, to scrutinise partners in education in their provision of services to Children Looked After;
- fifty-five per cent of the 145 pupils on roll in the Virtual School were educated in Harrow;
- eighty per cent of the pupils educated outside of Harrow, and eighty-eight per cent of the pupils educated in Harrow, were attending schools rated Good or better by Ofsted;
- twenty-one percent of post-sixteen Children and Young People Looked After were not in education, employment or training, but this figure was

recorded in September when students had only recently received their exam results;

- Harrow allowed young people to remain in their placements until the end of the academic year of their eighteenth birthday, to minimise disruption to their education;
- the educational progress and achievements of Children and Young People Looked After were celebrated and emphasised, even when they did not meet age-related expectations for the child.

Following questions from Members, the Virtual Head Teacher advised that:

- at the next meeting, anonymised case studies could be provided to build narratives;
- Children Looked After were only included in the figures if they had been in care for over a year;
- Children Looked After who were in permanent placements were no longer considered to be in the care system and so were not included in the figures;
- there were various reasons for low attendance among Children Looked After, including delays in obtaining a school place, and feelings of disengagement among older children;
- partnership work was taking place with schools, parents, advocates and young people to help increase school attendance;
- the Virtual School could ask for assessments of children with potentially undiagnosed special needs;
- the Virtual School worked very closely with educational psychologists and the Special Educational Needs Team.;

In response to concern by the Panel that no CLA had achieved 5 A-C grades, the Virtual Head Teacher provided an explanation as to the issues around this and the achievements made.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Cabinet)

That the report be noted.