

Schools, Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 20th July 2016

SWOT Analysis – Cllr Brigid Jones, Cabinet Member Children, Families and Schools

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable Leadership. • Education improvement plan Year 1 has been delivered. We have a much more coherent, improved and robust set of services. • The new Education Improvement Plan contains robust plans for each of the 21 service areas. • Birmingham Education Partnership is coming into maturity, as is school improvement contract. • Improvement Plan is on track, with year 1 and year 2 delivered. • Children's Social Care we have reduced caseloads, agency use (although still too high) and staff turnover this year, and is focused on its agreed improvement plan. • Whistleblowing policy in place and working effectively in enabling staff and partners to raise concerns. • Birmingham Curriculum Statement led by the Council and welcomed by schools. • Increasing the number of adoptions. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted have highlighted a number of serious concerns relating to safeguarding in education, children out of school, and disabled children's social care. These are being urgently addressed. • Inclusion in schools is weak in this city. Our population of children out of mainstream provision is unsustainably high. • Whilst practice in individual areas is good, the SEN system is weak. A commission will look into this in the autumn. • Children's Social Care - need to secure good practice everywhere. • Corporate Parents; need to acknowledge that as elected members it is our business and that we are all responsible. • Retention of skilled social work practitioners.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birmingham Education Partnership is coming into maturity. Opportunities for future joint working and strengthening of partnership. • The Early Years Health and Wellbeing offer is going out to tender presenting an exciting new way to redesign the multiple services more coherently. • SEN commission will start looking into system in the autumn. Helping to map out a clear pathway for our SEN children ensuring that they are aware of interventions and support throughout their journey to adulthood with a key focus on maximising independence. • We are exploring whether a trust model could enhance improvements in children's social care. • Improving our offer for LAC post 16 ensuring that they have active pathway plan for further education, employment opportunities to best prepare them for adulthood. • Engagement in social work reform programmes e.g. Frontline and Step Up. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust development must not become a distraction from the improvement agenda. • Educational Excellence Everywhere White Paper threatens to undermine improvements we have made. We will need to look carefully as to how we adapt to this as a council. • The Early Years Health and Wellbeing offer doesn't have the budget it once had, and as such services in some places may reduce. • The Early Years Education sector is facing budget pressures and services will need to adapt. • Schools are facing a new funding formula which could disadvantage Birmingham. • Schools are facing a real terms funding cut. • Delivering a significant change agenda within hugely diminished budgets.