

Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee

Future work at a glance

Updated: August 2013

*This list is updated after each meeting of the scrutiny committee
Follow us on Twitter for updates: @ESCCScrutiny*

Items that appear regularly at committee	
<p>The Council’s Forward Plan</p>	<p>The latest version of the Council’s Forward Plan is included on each scrutiny committee agenda. The Forward Plan lists all the key County Council decisions that are to be taken within the next few months together with contact information to find out more. It is updated monthly.</p> <p>The purpose of doing this is to help committee Members identify important issues for more detailed scrutiny <i>before</i> key decisions are taken. This has proved to be significantly more effective than challenging a decision once it has been taken. As a last resort, the call-in procedure is available if scrutiny Members think a Cabinet or Lead Member decision has been taken incorrectly.</p> <p>Requests for further information about individual items on the Forward Plan should be addressed to the listed contact. Possible scrutiny issues should be raised with the scrutiny team or committee Chairman, ideally before a scrutiny committee meeting.</p>
<p>Committee work programme</p>	<p>This provides an opportunity for the committee to review the scrutiny work programme for future meetings and to highlight any additional issues they wish to add to the programme.</p>

Future committee agenda items		Witnesses
11 November 2013		
Scrutiny review of school exclusions in East Sussex	The one-year monitoring report of the scrutiny review which addressed some fundamental questions about school exclusions, such as why some schools in East Sussex appear to resort to exclusions more readily than others.	Nathan Caine, Head of Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Service
10 March 2014		
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources	To review and suggest improvements to RPPR in the light of the Committee's work; and, to consider the extent to which the Committee's recommendations have been accepted.	Scrutiny
16 June 2014		

Current scrutiny reviews and other work underway	Date available
Reviews underway appear here when agreed by the Committee	

Potential future scrutiny work (Proposals and ideas for future scrutiny topics appear here)

Improving educational attainment in East Sussex

During 2012/13 the scrutiny committee noted that Key Stage 4 (GCSE) attainment in East Sussex was disappointing compared with many other authorities. Schools in some areas of the County appear to be improving whereas there is a lack of improvement in others. Possible lines of scrutiny inquiry:

- the underlying reasons for differences in attainment might lead to better strategies to tackle underperforming schools or pupils;
- The 'Proposition for Partnership' strategy: how the Council works with the different types of schools to improve educational attainment and school performance; the effectiveness of support to underperforming maintained schools and the developing Council roles of influencer, partnership broker and service marketer to academies/free schools.
- Academies: during 2012/13 the Secretary of State for Education alleged that East Sussex was obstructing the progress with academies conversion: to consider the current position and actions being taken.

Raising the Participation Age (RPA)

The preparedness of East Sussex for the raising of the participation age (RPA) of young people in education and training) to 17 in summer 2013 and to 18 in 2015:

- The role the County Council, and others, in helping to overcome barriers to education and work and to align the aspirations of young people with employment and learning opportunities.
- Reducing the number of NEETs (people Not in Education, Employment or Training) amongst young people has been of particular ongoing interest for the committee.

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) reforms/ Transition from children's to adults' social care

An initial scrutiny investigation early in 2013 found that the Transition Service, after a year of operation, had demonstrably reduced the potential for a 'cliff edge' drop in services experienced by young people with the most challenging needs as they change from children's to adults' social care services. Further scrutiny could be undertaken to investigate:

- the experience of young people with moderate or minor needs as they move from children's to adults' social care services.
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) – the impact of the reforms and the Pathfinder approach that has been trialled in East Sussex.

Early intervention / THRIVE

The Troubled Families Programme (known in East Sussex as Family Keywork) is a key Government initiative. Improving early help and prevention services is a key priority of the Council's Children's and Young People Plan. Possible lines of enquiry could include:

- How East Sussex is improving early help and developing effective prevention initiatives. This is a key part of THRIVE.
- The impact of the Family Keywork programme in East Sussex in relation to outcomes for both children and families.
- The role of children's centres in providing effective early help for children and the potential for making wider use of them to promote

Potential future scrutiny work

(Proposals and ideas for future scrutiny topics appear here)

- community wellbeing for example as community assets through a 'one-council' approach
- the effectiveness of foster carer recruitment

Background / information reports available to the Committee (Items in this list appear on committee agendas when proposed for scrutiny)		Date available
Performance monitoring	<p>Performance monitoring is an integral part of scrutiny. The committee is alerted to the relevant quarterly reports that Cabinet and lead Members receive. Members can then suggest matters for scrutiny to investigate in more detail.</p> <p>In the performance reports, achievement against individual performance targets is assessed as either 'Red', 'Amber' or 'Green' ('RAG'):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Green' means that the performance measure is on target to be achieved 'Amber' means that there is concern about the likelihood of achieving the performance measure by the end of the year 'Red' means that the performance measure is assessed as inappropriate or unachievable. <p>The 'Red' and 'Amber' indicators also include further commentary and the details of any proposed corrective action.</p> <p>Requests for further information about individual items in the performance reports should be addressed to the listed contact. Possible scrutiny issues should be raised with the scrutiny team or committee Chairman.</p>	Every quarter
Children's Commissioner report on illegal exclusions	This report outlines the government response to an earlier report by the Children's Commissioner about illegal school exclusions called ' <i>Always Someone Else's Problem</i> '. The original report and government response are particularly pertinent because of the scrutiny review of exclusions carried out by the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee.	August 2013 (available from indicated website)

Background / information reports available to the Committee (Items in this list appear on committee agendas when proposed for scrutiny)		Date available
	http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_705	
Skills and Employability Capital Project	This briefing describes a project that is about to invest in the 'learning and skills infrastructure of East Sussex' with the aim of supporting the development of a highly skilled workforce and provide access to more sustainable employment.	October 2012 (available on request)
Children's Services statutory complaints report 2011-12	This includes information about compliments and other representations for the period April 2011 – March 2012.	August 2012 (available) Next report in August 2013

<p>Enquiries: Scrutiny Team Author: Paul Dean, Scrutiny Manager Telephone: 01273 481751 Email: paul.dean@eastsussex.gov.uk Website: http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/about/committees/meetings/scrchildren.htm</p> <p>Download this document: http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/about/committees/meetings/downloadchildrens.htm</p> <p>Find scrutiny agendas and minutes on the web: http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/about/committees/meetings/scrchildren.htm</p> <p>Accessibility help Zoom in or out by holding down the Control key and turning the mouse wheel. CTRL and click on the table of contents to navigate / Press CTRL and Home key to return to the top of the document. Press Alt-left arrow to return to your previous location.</p>	Version: 26
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------

You can follow East Sussex Scrutiny on Twitter: @ESCCScrutiny

Glossary of terms and acronyms appearing in Children’s Services Committee papers

Term	What it means
CAMHS	The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) provides advice, diagnosis of mental disorders and therapeutic work with young people to treat complex, severe or persistent mental health difficulties.
Child Protection Plan (CPP)	A detailed inter-agency plan setting out what must be done to protect a child from further harm; to promote the child's health and development; and, if it is in the best interests of the child, to support the family to promote the child's welfare.
Children in care	Children being looked after by the local authority. See also LAC – Looked after children.
Children’s Centre	East Sussex Children's Centres offer all families with children under five a range of services, information and support. Services vary depending on local needs but typically include: advice; home visiting; family 'drop-in'; child health information; help finding specialist and other services they can't provide directly.
Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)	The CYPP sets out the shared priorities of the Children and Young People's Trust partners to improve the lives of children, young people and their families in East Sussex.
Children and Young People's Trust (CYPT)	The East Sussex CYPT is a group of partners that work together in different ways to improve what we provide for children, young people and families.
DfE	Department for Education (Government department)
Early years foundation stage (EYFS)	The EYFS is a set of welfare and learning and development requirements, which must be followed by providers of care for children below 5 years old – the age of compulsory education in the UK.
Key Stage 1 (KS1)	The two years of schooling in maintained schools in England and Wales normally known as Year 1 and Year 2, when pupils are aged between 5 and 7.
Key Stage 2 (KS2)	The four years of schooling in maintained schools in England and Wales normally known as Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, when pupils are aged between 7 and 11.
Key Stage 3 (KS3)	The three years of schooling in maintained schools in England and Wales normally known as Years 7, 8 and 9, when pupils are aged between 11 and 14.

Term	What it means
Key Stage 4 (KS4)	The two years of school education which incorporate GCSEs, and other exams, in maintained schools in England, Wales, normally known as Years 10 and 11 in England and Wales.
Key Stage 5 (KS5)	An unofficial label used to describe the two years of post-compulsory education for students aged 16-18, or at sixth form, in England and Wales.
LAC (Looked After Children)	Children who are either looked after or in the care of a local authority, or are provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by a local authority. We use the term 'children in care' to include all children being looked after by a local authority.
Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)	The Children Act 2004 places a duty on every local authority to establish an LSCB. Members of the East Sussex LSCB include an independent chair, two lay members and senior representatives from a wide range of statutory and voluntary sector agencies. The LSCB coordinates the work undertaken by its members to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in East Sussex, and to ensure that the safeguarding work is effective. See http://www.eastsussexlscb.org.uk
NEETs	People who are Not in Education, Employment or Training .
Pupil Premium	The pupil premium was introduced in April 2011 and is an additional payment paid directly to schools by the government for every pupil who has been registered for free school meals at any point in the last six years (known as 'Ever 6 FSM'). Schools also receive funding for children who have been looked after continuously for more than six months, and children of service personnel.
RPA (Raising the school participation Age)	From summer 2013, all young people will have to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17. From summer 2015, this will change to their 18th birthday.
RPPR	Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources is the County Council's budget and business planning process.
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - protecting children from maltreatment - preventing impairment of children's health or development - ensuring that children are growing up with safe and effective care - undertake that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.
Schools Forum	A body which advises the local authority on how the schools budget is spent. Members include headteachers, school governors and councillors.
SE7(South East 7)	South East 7 group of local authorities is a partnership of local authorities in the South East that are committed to working together on some key work areas for mutual benefit.
SEN	Special Educational Needs

Term	What it means
SEND Pathfinder	Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Pathfinder is a national programme trying to find better ways to help families who need it. The main thing is to put families at the centre of the process when assessing their needs and those of their child, to give them more choice and control over the help they can get.
THRIVE Transformation programme	In East Sussex - a means of improving outcomes for children by investing more money in the early help services to give families the support they need <i>before</i> they get into difficulties. The thinking is that if families solve their problems before they escalate, the need for more costly social care services, such as Child Protection Plans or taking children into care, is reduced.
TYS Targeted Youth Service)	The Targeted Youth Support (TYS) Service offers young people advice, information and support around issues such as: sexual and mental health, drugs and alcohol, family and relationships, money and accommodation. Youth work sessions include: sports and arts based activities, getting involved in youth councils and local volunteering opportunities.
Youth Offending Team	The Youth Offending Team aims to cut youth crime by changing the behaviour of young people who offend. It helps them get into mainstream education and health services, so that they can be diverted from crime in the future.