

# Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee

## Future work at a glance

Updated: January 2014

*This list is updated after each meeting of the scrutiny committee*  
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<b>Items that appear regularly at committee</b>	
<p>The Council’s <b>Forward Plan</b></p>	<p>The latest version of the Council’s <b>Forward Plan</b> 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 <b>call-in</b> 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>

<b>Future committee agenda items</b>		<b>Witnesses</b>
<b>10 March 2014</b>		
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/Interim Director
Clerking Service to School Governors	An update report on the Clerking Service for School Governors to look at how the revised service is working and the impact of the changes that have been made to the service.	Assistant Director Schools, Youth & Inclusion Support/Senior Manager Governor Services & Planning.
<b>16 June 2014</b>		
Review of School Exclusions	An update report on the progress to reduce school exclusions including actions taken so far to reduce exclusions and a report back from the Peer Review of exclusions.	Asst. Director/Head of Inclusion Support Services.
The Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)	An update report on Quality Assurance Framework with a presentation of the management action plan developed from the review.	Assistant Director (Safeguarding, LAC & SEN)/Head of Children's Safeguarding & Quality Assurance.
Review of Attainment at the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)	To receive the report of the review of attainment at the Early Year Foundation Stage from the Review Board.	Scrutiny/Asst. Director/Head of School Improvement
THRIVE	An update report on the progress of the THRIVE transformation programme at the end of second year of the programme.	Assistant Director (Safeguarding, LAC & SEN)
<b>15 September 2014</b>		
Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources	Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources is the Council's business and budget planning process. The Committee will begin the process leading to detailed scrutiny of the portfolio plans as they emerge in December 2014.	Director/Asst. Directors

<b>Current scrutiny reviews and other work underway</b>	<b>Date available</b>
<p><b>Improving educational attainment in East Sussex</b></p> <p>1. During 2012/13 the scrutiny committee noted that Key Stage 4 (GCSE) attainment in East Sussex was disappointing compared with many other authorities. More recent results show there has been an improvement at KS4 and levels of attainment are close to the national average. However, only 43% of 5 year olds in East Sussex are meeting all 7 levels of expected development at the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This means they are 9% behind at EYFS compared with the national average, which has a knock on effect for attainment at Key Stage 1, where children are 8% behind. Therefore, the Scrutiny Committee will focus on this early part of a child's school career. Possible lines of scrutiny inquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the underlying reasons for differences in attainment might lead to better strategies to tackle underperforming early years settings or pupils;</li> <li>• How the Council works with the different types of early years setting to improve educational attainment and how transitions between settings are handled;</li> <li>• An examination of new models of working such as the Early Years Village, and what other local authorities have done to improve attainment.</li> </ul>	June 2014

<p><b>Potential future scrutiny work (Proposals and ideas for future scrutiny topics appear here)</b></p>
<p><b>Raising the Participation Age (RPA)</b> 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Reducing the number of NEETs (people Not in Education, Employment or Training) amongst young people has been of particular ongoing interest for the committee.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recruitment and Retention of Head Teachers for Primary Schools</b> There has been between 22 and 27 East Sussex Primary Schools without a substantive Head Teacher. This is an area of concern due to the impact on the management of these schools and the potential negative effects on educational attainment. National trends indicate that this problem may get worse in the future. Possible lines of lines of enquiry could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An examination of the factors involved, including those specific to East Sussex.</li> </ul>

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

- An evaluation of the impact of existing measures to improve recruitment and retention of Head Teachers, to identify what further steps could be undertaken to improve recruitment.

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

<b>Background / information reports available to the Committee (Items in this list appear on committee agendas when proposed for scrutiny)</b>		<b>Date available</b>
<b>Performance monitoring</b>	<p>Performance monitoring is an integral part of scrutiny. The committee is alerted to the relevant quarterly <b>reports</b> 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"> <li>• 'Green' means that the performance measure is on target to be achieved</li> <li>• 'Amber' means that there is concern about the likelihood of achieving the performance measure by the end of the year</li> <li>• 'Red' means that the performance measure is assessed as inappropriate or unachievable.</li> </ul> <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
<b>Children's Commissioner report on illegal exclusions</b>	<p>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. <a href="http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_705">http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_705</a></p>	August 2013 (available from indicated website)
<b>Skills and Employability Capital Project</b>	<p>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.</p>	October 2012 (available on request)
<b>Children's Services statutory complaints report 2012-13</b>	<p>This includes information about compliments and other representations for the period April 2012 – March 2013.</p>	November 2013

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

<b>Term</b>	<b>What it means</b>
<b>CAMHS</b>	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.
<b>Child Protection Plan (CPP)</b>	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.
<b>Children in care</b>	Children being looked after by the local authority. See also LAC – Looked after children.
<b>Children’s Centre</b>	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.
<b>Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)</b>	The CYPP sets out the shared priorities of the <b>Children and Young People's Trust</b> partners to improve the lives of children, young people and their families in East Sussex.
<b>Children and Young People's Trust (CYPT)</b>	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.
<b>DfE</b>	Department for Education (Government department)
<b>Early years foundation stage (EYFS)</b>	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.
<b>ESBAS</b>	East Sussex Behaviour & Attendance Service
<b>Key Stage 1 (KS1)</b>	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.
<b>Key Stage 2 (KS2)</b>	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.

<b>Term</b>	<b>What it means</b>
<b>Key Stage 3 (KS3)</b>	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.
<b>Key Stage 4 (KS4)</b>	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.
<b>Key Stage 5 (KS5)</b>	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.
<b>LAC (Looked After Children)</b>	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.
<b>Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)</b>	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 <a href="http://www.eastsussexlscb.org.uk">http://www.eastsussexlscb.org.uk</a>
<b>NEETs</b>	People who are <b>Not</b> in Education, Employment or Training.
<b>Pupil Premium</b>	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.
<b>RPA (Raising the school participation Age)</b>	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.
<b>RPPR</b>	Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources is the County Council's budget and business planning process.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- protecting children from maltreatment</li> <li>- preventing impairment of children's health or development</li> <li>- ensuring that children are growing up with safe and effective care</li> <li>- undertake that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.</li> </ul>
<b>Schools Forum</b>	A body which advises the local authority on how the schools budget is spent. Members include headteachers, school governors and councillors.
<b>SE7(South East 7)</b>	South East 7 group of local authorities is a partnership of local authorities in the South East that are committed to working



<b>Term</b>	<b>What it means</b>
	together on some key work areas for mutual benefit.
<b>SEN</b>	Special Educational Needs
<b>SEND Pathfinder</b>	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.
<b>THRIVE Transformation programme</b>	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.
<b>TYS Targeted Youth Service)</b>	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.
<b>Youth Offending Team</b>	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.
<b>VSB</b>	Virtual Schools Bank.

