



Brighton & Hove
City Council

Overview & Scrutiny

Title:	Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee Ad-hoc Panel- School Exclusions
Date:	5 November 2009
Time:	3.00pm
Venue	Committee Room 1, Hove Town Hall
Members:	Councillors: Fryer (Chair) Allen and Smart Non-voting Co-optee Rachel Travers (Community & Voluntary Sector Forum)
Contact:	Sharmini Williams Overview & Scrutiny Support Officer 29-0451 sharmini.williams@brighton-hove.gov.uk

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AGENDA

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Copy attached.

8. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS	
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9. EVIDENCE FROM WITNESS	
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3pm – Professor Ian Cunnigham (Self Managed Learning College)

10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING	
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14 January, 2010, Committee Room 1, Hove Town Hall at 11am.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
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The City Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. Provision is also made on the agendas for public questions to committees and details of how questions can be raised can be found on the website and/or on agendas for the meetings.

The closing date for receipt of public questions and deputations for the next meeting is 12 noon on the fifth working day before the meeting.

Agendas and minutes are published on the council's website www.brighton-hove.gov.uk. Agendas are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

Meeting papers can be provided, on request, in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or on disc, or translated into any other language as requested.

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Sharmini Williams, (29-0451, email sharmini.williams@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Date of Publication – 28 October, 2009

Agenda Item 6

To consider the following Procedural Business:-

A. Declaration of Substitutes

Substitutes are not permitted on Scrutiny Select Committees or Scrutiny Panels.

B. Declarations of Interest

- (1) To seek declarations of any personal or personal & prejudicial interests under Part 2 of the Code of Conduct for Members in relation to matters on the Agenda. Members who do declare such interests are required to clearly describe the nature of the interest.
- (2) A Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or a Select Committee has a prejudicial interest in any business at meeting of that Committee where –
 - (a) that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by the Executive or another of the Council's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees; and
 - (b) at the time the decision was made or action was taken the Member was
 - (i) a Member of the Executive or that committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee and
 - (ii) was present when the decision was made or action taken.
- (3) If the interest is a prejudicial interest, the Code requires the Member concerned:-
 - (a) to leave the room or chamber where the meeting takes place while the item in respect of which the declaration is made is under consideration. [There are three exceptions to this rule which are set out at paragraph (4) below].
 - (b) not to exercise executive functions in relation to that business and
 - (c) not to seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.
- (4) The circumstances in which a Member who has declared a prejudicial interest is permitted to remain while the item in respect of which the interest has been declared is under consideration are:-
 - (a) for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the item, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise, BUT the

Member must leave immediately after he/she has made the representations, answered the questions, or given the evidence,

- (b) if the Member has obtained a dispensation from the Standards Committee, or
- (c) if the Member is the Leader or a Cabinet Member and has been required to attend before an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committee to answer questions.

C. Declaration of Party Whip

To seek declarations of the existence and nature of any party whip in relation to any matter on the Agenda as set out at paragraph 8 of the Overview and Scrutiny Ways of Working.

D. Exclusion of Press and Public

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

Note: Any item appearing in Part 2 of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is confidential and therefore not available to the public.

A list and description of the exempt categories is available for the public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AD-HOC
PANEL- SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS

10.00am 14 OCTOBER 2009

COMMITTEE ROOM 3, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Fryer (Chair)

Also in attendance: Councillor Allen and Smart

Other Members present: Non-voting Co-optee: Rachel Travers (Community Voluntary Sector Forum)

PART ONE

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1.1 Declarations of substitutes

No substitutes are permitted on Ad-hoc Scrutiny panels.

1.2 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

1.3 Declaration of Party Whip

There were none.

1.4 Exclusion of the Press and Public

In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I (1) of the said Act.

RESOLVED-That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

2. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

3. EVIDENCE FROM WITNESSES

- 3.1 Councillor Juliet McCaffrey, is the Chair of the Student Management Committee at Varndean School and sits on the Permanance and Adoption Panel presented her concerns to the Panel.

- 3.2 Cllr. McCaffrey told the Panel she wanted to raise concerns with the Panel, from experience that she had gained from being a Parent Governor at Dorothy Stringer Primary School and at Vardean School in the past.
- 3.3 The Panel heard how the same 12 children were repeatedly excluded from one of the schools which raised the following concerns:
- What support is offered to the children that were excluded?
 - Who were these children being excluded? (These children had Special Educational Needs (SEN) and were also SEN+. The Parent Governors were aware that very few Looked After Children (LAC) were excluded).
 - There was a smaller group of children that were gifted and talented and it was uncertain as to why they were being excluded?
 - How many of these children were Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEET) and in the criminal justice system, after 16 years?

3.4 The Panel were told how these children had education at the school after 3pm and it was uncertain what happened to them, between 8.30am – 3pm, and whether the parents were at home with them.

3.5 The Panel were advised how on one occasion there was no other option but to exclude a girl as her behaviour had reached such a level. Psychological, mental health support had been requested by the mother from Children's Services however there was a long waiting time for this.

Cllr. McCaffery felt there were limited resources, on a local basis of qualified mental health support. Qualified staff could range from someone that had completed a counselling course to staff with degrees/ or a masters.

3.6 Cllr. McCaffrey told the Panel about an autistic child who had their admission rejected on the grounds that the school didn't have the appropriate services to support the pupil.

This pupil was then admitted to another secondary school, who provided 30 hours of individual support to the pupil, within school teaching time. An incident occurred in the playground which resulted in the pupil being excluded.

The family moved to Leicestershire and it was felt that the pupil received much better support as the school had a more thorough understanding of autism.

3.7 The Panel heard how *outcomes* were a further concern and whether this was monitored after the pupils had been excluded and what happened when they left school?

3.8 Cllr. McCaffrey advised the Panel that she also had concerns regarding unofficial exclusions.

3.9 In answer to a question on why a school was thinking of having their own psychologist rather than utilising Sussex Partnership services, the Panel were informed that the active governing bodies were putting pressure on the teachers to improve the behaviour of pupils. It was felt that the waiting times of Children and Adolescent Mental Health

Services (CAMHS) was delaying improving some behavioural practices, therefore the school felt it would buy in its own psychologist.

- 3.10 In response to a question on whether all the concerns were in relation to experience gained as a Parent Governor, The Panel were informed that Cllr. McCaffery also sits on the Permanance Panel and there were situations that may cause further problems for children. These being that when children were settled in school, but their home life was unsettled and they are moved to live with foster parents, this means that the school would be changed too. It is uncertain whether the “new” school would have the same level of support.
- 3.11 The Chair thanked Cllr. McCaffrey for bringing these concerns to the Panel.

4. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

- 4.1 Date of the next meeting is the 5 November, 2009. It was agreed that the times needed to change to 2-5pm, which would include any private meetings to take place during these hours and the last half hour would be a private Debrief meeting.
- 4.2 It was agreed to set up a meeting in January 2010, to start at 10am to 1pm and confirmation would be sent on e-mail and be published on the council website. Private meetings would need to take place between these hours.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 5.1 The Panel noted that the press release had been published in the Argus on the 10 & 11 October weekend.
- 5.2 The Panel were informed that the Director of Children’s Services and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People had been invited to speak to the Panel, as this was normal protocol for all Scrutiny Panels.
- 5.3 All Councillors had been e-mailed about the Panel and to contact Scrutiny if they wanted to present any information. Other groups that had been contacted were the Youth Council, Youth Offending Team, Amaze, CVSF, MOSAIC (black and mixed parentage family group).
- 5.4 The Panel requested Behaviour Policies from Varndean, Dorothy Stringer and Blatchington Mill Secondary Schools, plus Whitehawk and Moulsecomb Primary Schools.

The meeting concluded at 11.00am

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of