

REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 23 JUNE 2014

REPORT ON: KINGSPARK SCHOOL EXTERNAL REVIEW - ACTION PLAN

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 253-2014

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Education Committee with the core action plan and governance arrangements in light of the recent independent review of Kingspark School.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to:
- note the contents of the report and;
 - remit the Director of Education to bring back to committee an update on progress in December 2014.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

- 4.1 As a result of ongoing child protection allegations from a small number of families at Kingspark School, the Dundee Childcare and Protection Committee (DCCPC) commissioned an independent review. The review covered matters relating to specific children attending Kingspark School, Dundee City Council, in the period 1 March 2013 to 30 September 2013. The Executive Summary of the report is attached as Appendix A.

The review examined:

- a the appropriateness of the decisions made about how to respond to concerns at the time they were raised and subsequently;
- b whether the actions that followed properly implemented those decisions; and
- c whether the subsequent conclusions reached were appropriate based on the information assembled.

The objectives of the review were to:

- a establish whether there are lessons to be learned about how better to protect children and young people and whether agencies, acting individually and/or collectively, could or should have taken any other actions, all to help ensure children get the help they need when they need it in the future. To that end the review should be understood as a process for learning and improving service and as a means of recognising good practice; and
- b if appropriate, make recommendations for action.

- 4.2 The Independent Review concluded that decisions taken in response to the concerns raised about the children who are the focus of this review were appropriate. In addition to this the report concluded that policy and procedures relating to care and protection in the city were robust, promptly implemented and applied rigorously.
- 4.3 It was stressed that not all concerns raised about pupils at Kingspark School were reported using locally agreed child protection procedures and that this led to delayed implementation of

agreed procedures and resulted in potential evidence being unavailable. In addition to this the report found that improvement was required in relation to consistency of home-school communications and relationships, aspects of dealing with challenging behaviour and mechanisms for supporting parents and others to raise any concerns.

- 4.4 The report set out 12 recommendations for action. Given that a number of the actions are related specifically to the Education Department and the school, an Action Plan Group was formed to take forward the recommendations in the form of a core action plan. The action plan with timescales is attached as Appendix B along with the membership of the group.
- 4.5 To reinforce the importance of partnership working, and the multi agency nature of Kingspark School, the Action Plan Group comprises multi agency officers, parents, school staff and representatives from the voluntary sector.
- 4.6 To ensure clear governance is in place the Action Plan Group will meet from early June and report directly to the Dundee Child Care and Protection Committee who will be responsible for ensuring that all 12 recommendations are fully implemented. Regular reports will be brought to Education Committee with clear indications of progress, impact and whether timescales are being met.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of sustainability, strategic environment assessment, anti-poverty, equality impact assessment and risk management. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Democratic and Legal Services and Chair of the Child Protection Committee have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Report by Alistair Marquis.

Michael Wood
Director of Education
June 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

REPORT OF AN INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF AGENCY AND INTER-AGENCY DECISION MAKING AND ACTIONS TAKEN IN RELATION TO CONCERNS EXPRESSED ABOUT THE CARE AND PROTECTION PROVIDED TO SPECIFIC CHILDREN AT KINGSPARK SCHOOL, DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 Background

- 1.1 This independent review was commissioned by the Dundee Child Care and Protection Committee (DCCPC) and was triggered by concerns raised in the period 01 March 2013 to 30 September 2013 about specific children attending Kingspark School, Dundee. The review should be understood as a process for learning and improving services and of recognising good practice where this is identified.
- 1.2 Kingspark School makes provision for pupils with a wide range of additional support needs. With a pupil roll of approximately 176 pupils it is one of the largest special schools in Scotland.
- 1.3 The independent review was completed by Alastair Marquis, Independent Education Consultant between December 2013 and March 2014. The reviewer's background includes significant relevant operational experience in Additional Support Needs, previous Chief Inspector in Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and a recognised National Specialist for Child Protection.
- 1.4 The reviewer conducted interviews with staff members across all agencies, visited Kingspark School and reviewed relevant documents. A small number of parents of pupils at the School also provided information to inform the review process.
- 1.5 The objectives of the review were to:
 - a) establish whether there are lessons to be learned about how better to protect children and young people at Kingspark and identify any gaps in actions taken; and
 - b) make recommendations for action as necessary.

2 Summary of Findings

Broadly, the review findings concluded that:

- 2.1 Decisions taken in response to the concerns raised about the seven children who are the focus of this review were appropriate.
- 2.2 Policy and procedures relating to the care and protection of children in Dundee are robust and are implemented promptly and consistently including very appropriate co-ordinated multi-agency involvement in considering any potential child care and protection case. Staff involved with the care and protection of children are committed to applying child protection procedures rigorously in all cases.
- 2.3 Not all concerns raised about pupils at Kingspark School were reported using locally agreed child protection procedures; this led to delayed implementation of agreed procedures and resulted in potential evidence being unavailable.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.4 There is improvement required in relation to consistency of home-school communications and relationships, aspects of dealing with challenging behaviour and mechanisms for supporting parents and others to raise any concerns.

3 Summary of Recommendations

The independent review includes the following recommendations:

- 3.1 The system for receiving, acknowledging and responding to complaints or enquiries raised by parents should be reviewed.
- 3.2 A review of all practices, school aims and documentation should be conducted and action taken to address any shortcomings. Issues of school-home communication, communication links between Kingspark School and relevant respite provisions and the pupil records system within the School should be included in such a review.
- 3.3 The School should review processes and ensure it is easy for both visitors to the school and staff to raise concerns regarding children's welfare. The process should be clearly advertised and accessible to all.
- 3.4 The School should review how it manages students' challenging behaviour and ensure robust recording processes.
- 3.5 Child protection training for all Kingspark staff should be reviewed to include enhanced recognition of the impact of staff behaviours and attitudes on children. Respite care staff in Dundee City and Angus Councils, as well as relevant NHS Tayside staff should be involved in regular joint update child protection training with Kingspark staff.
- 3.6 Agencies should ensure that appropriate staff have the skills and confidence to interview children or young people with additional support needs where this is appropriate.
- 3.7 Procedures for reporting incidents involving pupils at Kingspark School should be reviewed and include a system for regular review by senior leaders within and external to the school. Procedures should include specific provision for the notification of Councils governing places at Kingspark School of any serious incident at the school involving one of their residents.
- 3.8 A planned Education Department review of the nature of the Additional Support Needs that Kingspark School makes provision for and the age range it caters for should be progressed.
- 3.9 Dundee City Council should continue working toward implementation of integrated documentation and systems relating to children and young people under the implementation of the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) national agenda.

Alistair F Marquis, MBE, BA, MEd, DipCollEd, FColIP
Independent Education Consultant

05 May 2014

The group responsible for implementing this action plan will report back to the Dundee Child Care and Protection Committee. The group will be chaired by Jennifer King, Education Manager (ASN, Educational Psychology & Inclusion).

Group membership: Kingspark staff (Laura Smith, Head Teacher; Laura Hart, PT; Katie Timney, PT); Kingspark Parent Council (Pamela Morris and Pronita Banarjee); DCC Education Department (Jennifer King, Education Manager); DCC Social Work (Alison Leuchars & Susan Morrison,); NHS Tayside (Christina Kiddie, AHP, and Sarah McLauchlan, Head of Nursing); Angus Council (Kim Walker); Voluntary Sector (Moira Bisset, Parent-to-Parent; Moira Leck); Workforce Development (Frances Greig)

The 12 recommendations arising from the Independent Review have been clustered under key areas in order for them to be addressed coherently.

Key area	Independent Review recommendation/ref	Improvement outcome	Action already taken	Action required	By whom	By when
Communication with parents (5.1; 5.2)	<i>5.1: Raising concerns/complaints</i>	All parents know and understand how they can raise concerns and have them addressed by the school.	The school handbook and parental letters have been updated to provide easily accessible advice on how to raise concerns.	- School and council monitoring of actions taken are analysed and reported on in the school's improvement plan and standards & quality report. - Clear signage is in place at key points across the school (eg entrance area) - A termly update is issued to all parents/carers and staff.	Senior Managers Kingspark staff and key Angus staff. Parent representatives.	June 2015 Allows time for feedback to be gathered, analysed and reported on
	<i>5.2: Home-school communication & documentation</i>	All parents will experience a consistently high standard of communication between home and school, as reported in feedback to the school.	A Family Support Worker has been allocated to the school to provide targeted support for specific families . PTs have a planned programme for the autumn term where staff training on the completion of home school communication will take place for all staff.	- A review of practice in relation to home-school documentation and practice. - All documentation will be written in 'Plain English'. - Key documentation will be available in written and spoken format.	Parent representative; teaching and support staff reps; senior management team representatives.	October 2014

Key area	Independent Review recommendation/ref	Improvement outcome	Action already taken	Action required	By whom	By when
Partnership working (5.3; 5.6)	<i>5.3: Raising concerns</i>	Visitors and partners to the school know and understand how they should raise concerns and have them addressed by the school.	The headteacher regularly reminds partners and visitors to the school of how they can should concerns. 'Meet the Team' events are already organised for all parents and partner agencies on 27 August in order to allow all stakeholders to meet the new Promoted staff Team.	- Focus group discussion with the Partnership forum for the school. - Information/guidance is displayed and shared with all partners/visitors. - School and council monitoring of actions taken are analysed and reported on in the school's improvement plan and standards & quality report.	Partnership forum representatives	October 2014
	<i>5.6: Thresholds for intervention, recording & reporting</i> <i>5.6: Communication with respite care staff</i>	Staff across different settings will have a shared and consistent approach, with agreed thresholds to intervention. School and respite care staff have agreed protocols for reporting and recording incidents involving children and young people.	The school CP officers already meet termly with Dundee respite care staff to discuss strategies etc.	- A joint training programme will be planned, delivered and reviewed with a focus on consistent approaches to intervention. - There will be a review of the communication links between school and council care staff and the development of agreed protocols for recording and reporting all incidents. - An annual questionnaire will be developed and issued to staff across all settings to ascertain their views on the appropriateness of intervention thresholds and their understanding of reporting protocols.	Kingspark staff DCC & Angus council staff NHS staff DCC workforce development rep Kingspark staff DCC & Angus staff	- August 2014 start date - Work completed by February 2015 - Initial review in June 2015

Key area	Independent Review recommendation/ref	Improvement outcome	Action already taken	Action required	By whom	By when
Challenging behaviour (5.4; 5.6)	<i>5.4: Promoting proactive approaches</i>	The school's approaches to promoting positive behaviour and 'Helping pupils without making them helpless' are shared more widely and understood by parents, partners and the wider community.	A presentation for parents took place in November 2013 prior to a Parents' Evening.	- A comprehensive review of the school's approaches to promoting positive behaviour. - An analysis and review of the CALM process and the impact of CALM training to ensure that CALM techniques are used as the final resort.	Kingspark staff Vol sector reps Parent reps	- September 2014 start date. - Initial review June 2015
	<i>5.4: Monitoring use of physical intervention (ref 5.8)</i>	There is a simplified/unified system for recording, analysing and responding to incidents which involve physical intervention; accidents; and violence experienced by staff	A council working group is addressing this for longer term re-design of an electronic system. Kingspark are piloting a simplified/unified proforma which will inform the new council system.	- The new system will be implemented from August 2014. - It will be reviewed in January 2015 with a view to incorporating further improvements. - Central staff will monitor the number of incidents involving physical interventions, the number of pupils involved and the nature of incidents. These will be discussed with the senior management of the school on a termly basis and action taken as required.	Kingspark staff Education department staff and key Angus staff.	- August 2014 - Review in January 2015 - Monitoring to begin in October 2014.
	<i>5.6: Joint training with partners on challenging behaviour</i>	Staff across different settings will have a shared and consistent approach to responding to challenging behaviour	Early discussions have taken place with Angus, DCC and NHS reps	- A joint training programme will be developed to include all relevant staff. - A ongoing training programme will be	Kingspark staff DCC & Angus Council staff NHS staff DCC workforce development rep	- October 2014 start date - Work completed May 2015 - Review

Key area	Independent Review recommendation/ref	Improvement outcome	Action already taken	Action required	By whom	By when
		by placing increased emphasis on ways to promote positive behaviour.		developed and delivered on a termly basis for existing and new staff.		August 2015
Child Protection (5.5)	<i>5.5 Review of Child Protection training</i> <i>5.5. Staff approaches to communicating with and about children/young people</i>	All staff have a shared understanding in recognising the impact of their behaviour and attitudes on children and adults.	Kingspark staff have an initial child protection training session planned for August 2014, based on updated guidance and case scenarios.	- The new Child Protection and Disability Toolkit will be used for training purposes. - The Learning & Workforce Development service will examine existing staff development programmes and develop one on communication. - A comprehensive analysis of CPD packages on communication will taken place to identify relevant training material and resources.	Kingspark staff DCC & Angus Council staff NHS staff DCC workforce development rep	- August 2014 start - Review June 2015
Data management (5.8; 5.10; 5.11; 5.12)	<i>5.8: Review of procedures for recording/reporting individual pupil incidents</i>	There is a simplified/unified system for recording, analysing and responding to incidents which involve physical intervention; accidents; and violence experienced by staff.	A council working group is addressing this for longer term re-design of an electronic system. Kingspark are piloting a simplified/unified proforma which will inform the new council system.	The new system will be implemented and reviewed from August 2014. This will ensure that information is more easily accessible and that the current use of several recording formats is reduced.	Kingspark staff Education department staff and key Angus staff.	From August 2014
	<i>5.10: Review of recording and access to information/chronologies for pupils; classes; year groups</i>	Information about pupils in relation to incidents/ events is available in an easily accessible format, allowing trends and	Kingspark management team have audited and identified a reorganised structure for pupil	Actions in 5.8 will inform and address recording in this area.	Kingspark staff Education department staff and key Angus staff	- June 2014 start - Review January 2015 - Monitoring ongoing

Key area	Independent Review recommendation/ref	Improvement outcome	Action already taken	Action required	By whom	By when
		patterns to be identified and responded to	information/recording.			
	<i>5.11: Overview of recording & monitoring of complaints/allegations</i>	A running log of complaints is reviewed regularly to identify any patterns and actions followed up by school and education managers	Kingspark management team have audited and identified a reorganised structure for recording and monitoring of complaints/allegations.	There will be a termly review & follow up of impact which actions have had between Kingspark SMT & Education Manager of complaints/allegations	Kingspark SMT Education Manager (ASN, Educational Psychology and Inclusion)	October 2014 Termly thereafter.
	<i>5.12: Integration of planning & documentation across DCC and NHS Tayside</i>	A single planning system, consistent with GIRFEC, will be shared across agencies/authorities. This will be used for every Annual Review, CSP and post 16 school planning meeting in session 2014-2015.	Kingspark staff have contributed to the design of the Single Child's Plan for DCC (Training for all promoted staff is already arranged for 18 August 2014) In session 2015-2016 the Single Child's Plan will replace all ASPs in the school and will become the planning and recording tool for all pupils.	Training for Kingspark staff in using the Single Child's Plan	Kingspark staff Manager (ASN, Educational Psychology and Inclusion)	August 2014
Review of ASN provision (5.9)	<i>5.9: Benchmarking of ASN; age range; staffing</i>	The capacity of Kingspark is informed and quality assured by comparative national data	Initial benchmarking has taken place with one other LA.	Progress full benchmarking with national networks, e.g. ADES/ASLO	School SMT Manager (ASN, Educational Psychology and Inclusion)	October 2014 – May 2015
	<i>5.9 Education dept reference group to progress priorities in ASN audit and review</i>	Placement of pupils with complex ASN in specialist provision in Dundee is based upon rigorous staged intervention processes and criteria	Kingspark HT & Education Manager are leading on the reference group taking forward a management review of Additional Support Needs in relation to	Complex ASN and Local Management groups will be implemented from October 2014	Education Department reference group. School staff. Multi-agency staff. Angus staff.	May 2014 – August 2015

Key area	Independent Review recommendation/ref	Improvement outcome	Action already taken	Action required	By whom	By when
			the placement of pupils with complex needs.			