

Calderdale MBC

Wards Affected
All

Cabinet

11th March 2024

Scrutiny Review – Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health of Children and Young People in Calderdale

Report of Assistant Scrutiny Officer

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Children and Young People Scrutiny Board are undertaking a review of the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people in Calderdale. This follows reports presented at the Children and Young people Scrutiny Board indicating that the primary concern of young people in Calderdale was their emotional wellbeing. The attached interim report (Appendix 1) was adopted by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board in January 2024 and recommended to Cabinet.
- 1.2 The report makes six recommendations which are listed below. The recommendations cover three key areas: Connectivity, Empowerment

2. Need for a decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to decide whether to adopt the recommendations of Children and Young People Scrutiny Board

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 Children and Young People Scrutiny Board recommends that Cabinet adopts all recommendations of their report set out below:

Recommendation 1: Connectivity

We recommend that connections between partners are created and strengthened to increase awareness and understanding of the role of each. This may be achieved, for example, by colocation; by facilitating visits to partner organisations and providers such as MAST, Northpoint, schools and youth provision; and by holding regular and informal conversations with those partners and providers.

Recommendation 2: Connectivity

We recommend the development of a mechanism by which a holistic approach can be taken to identifying unmet need, and by which support can be provided from a range of partners working together, without the need for separate referrals into multiple services.

Recommendation 3: Empowerment

We recommend the creation and facilitation of face-to-face and virtual mentoring and networking opportunities for practitioners in education and youth provision who support young people 1:1 - a forum where they can share experiences and learning with their peers and receive advice from a professional as appropriate.

Recommendation 4: Empowerment

We recommend that there is greater recognition and support for trusted adults in key roles in local communities. Where appropriate, we believe that these trusted adults should be empowered to support the young people and families they work with and should remain actively involved in supporting and being a consistent and trusted presence even when specialist agencies become involved.

Recommendation 5: Access

We recommend that where appropriate, services visit children and young people in familiar community-based settings, or virtually if preferred. The potential of Family Hub networks should be maximised in this regard.

Recommendation 6: Access

We recommend that the development of the planned single point of contact (SPoC) should be accelerated, ensuring commitment to this from across the Council and local NHS partners.

4. Background

- 4.1 A cross-party working group of five Members was established. To date the Review group has met with Council officers, NHS partners, Open Minds, primary and secondary schools, youth provision, voluntary sector organisations and other external organisations. The working group is chaired by Councillor Tremayne.
- 4.2 The working group has been particularly pleased to have met children and young people across the borough. Their views have always been enlightening.
- 4.3 There are further meetings scheduled with schools and other partners. Councillor Tremayne will also meet with the directors of Public Health and CYP
- 4.4 The interim report of the working group was adopted at a meeting of Children and Young People Scrutiny Board on 24th January 2024. The final report will be presented to the CYP Scrutiny Board on 10th April 2024
- 4.5 The interim report makes six recommendations to the Council and partner organisations.
- 4.6 The interim report identifies three key themes: Connectivity, Empowerment and Access. It is essential that there are strong relationships between all those who provide support to children and young people across the borough.

- 4.7 The working group recognised the importance of practitioners working with children feeling that they are part of an inclusive Calderdale wide network which would facilitates exchange of good practice, ideas and information. This is of real importance to those community based partners who provide low level support and early intervention and who are often the primary access route for essential services.
- 4.8 The working group found that children and young people are centred in their communities and that therefore it is important to effectively use community locations to deliver support, particularly for those young people who can't travel to access support or who are very frightened of leaving their safe space.
- 4.9 The value of listening has been a recurring theme throughout the work of the review group. Listening to the concerns and ideas of those directly working with children and young people strengthens relationships and improves understanding of key issues.
- 4.10 Children and young people emphasised the importance of a "trusted adult" in their lives. The working group found that those "trusted adults" often provide low level support and intervention, often without recognition. The working group emphasise the value of those "trusted adults" to Calderdale's children and young people.

5. Options considered

- 5.1 N/A

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 None directly

7. Legal Implications.

- 7.1 None

8. Human Resources and Organisation Development Implications

- 8.1 None

9. Consultation

- 9.1 N/A

10. Environment, Health and Economic Implications

- 10.1 The report considers services provided to children and young people and identifies key themes around improving their emotional wellbeing and mental health

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 The report is relevant to all children and young people living in Calderdale.

12. Summary and Recommendations

12.1 Members are asked to note the report and adopt the recommendations.

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