

City of York Safeguarding Children Board

Report

Title: Involving children and young people in the work of the CYSCB

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Related items: Eoin Rush / Judy Kent (Performance)

Introduction

In April the CYSCB received a paper providing a broad overview of existing children and young people's involvement arrangements across York and options for how this work can be developed in the arena of safeguarding.

This paper provides an update on work in this area and related recent messages from children and young people.

The key drivers underpinning this work include:

- The "Framework for the inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children" published by Ofsted:

"As well as listening directly to children, young people and their families, inspectors will take into account any available evidence held by the local authority that demonstrates how the views of children, young people and families or carers have been taken into account in the evaluation, development and design of early intervention and child protection services."

- Previous Ofsted inspections and peer reviews have consistently challenged us about the involvement of children and young people in their individual case planning, service development, strategy and commissioning; and more specifically have challenged us to provide evidence that our involvement/ engagement activity has had an impact / made a difference;

- New shared Safeguarding Board/ YorOK Board priorities in respect of strengthening the voice and influence of children and young people;
- The new performance framework for the Safeguarding Board places the views and experience of children, young people and families at the centre.

Actions taken so far

Since the April CYSCB approved work to develop this area, a number of actions have already taken place.

- One-to-one meetings – Niall McVicar has held a number of one-to-one meetings with key practitioners who will need to contribute to the Safeguarding Involvement Action Plan. The aim of these meetings was to understand the current strengths and weaknesses of how the system operates in relation to children and young people's voice.
- YorOK Involvement Group – At two YorOK Involvement Groups discussions have been held with partners to identify strengths and weaknesses within existing systems. The group has also reviewed the Ofsted descriptors for what "good" looks like in relation to children and young people's voice.
- YorOK Involvement Action Plan (safeguarding) – An initial set of actions has been drawn together to look at what steps need to be taken to develop this work. Key actions from this plan are explored in this paper.

Future actions

Future actions can be thought of as falling under these four broad headings:

- **Getting the right coverage** – Involvement should form a patchwork that covers all children and young people in York. For children and young people in need of help and protection this coverage is uneven.
- **Getting better quality** – Too often where good quality involvement work is taking place this is a result of dedicated

individuals rather than a systematic approach to good quality involvement.

- **Using knowledge more systematically** – Where involvement work is taking place often the impact of this work is limited to a particular project or interaction. A more systematic sharing and use of messages from children and young people is essential.
- **Understanding outcomes** – An area in need of much greater development is “is anyone any better off”.

Some key planned actions are explored below. It should be noted though that at this point some of these actions are at an early stage of development and some may not be feasible or appropriate.

- **Project Group** – As part of the initiation phase of addressing planned actions a project group will be established. In time this group will be discontinued and the work amalgamated into the overall work of the YorOK Involvement Group. The aim of the project group is to bring together a partnership of key players who can help establish a “think involvement” approach?
- **Benchmarking exercise** – A short term option would be to carry out a benchmarking exercise of existing social care cases. This would be a simple paper based on and online survey. Although there are limitations to the effectiveness of this approach it could provide a helpful baseline of information. A similar baseline exercise is being carried out by Darlington Borough Council.
- **Sampling experiences** – East Riding Council is carrying out telephone based samples of a proportion of children and young people in care. This is something that could be explored further as an option for York.
- **Distance travelled measurement** – This action would be a longer term plan to use a standard set of well-being questions to measure where children and young people are at the beginning of a package of support and at the end of an interaction. The attractiveness of this model is that it provides a level of evidence to demonstrate the impact of working with families.
- **Remodel and extend advocacy provision** – Currently advocacy is only provided to Looked After Children and demand for this service is rising (thanks to better awareness). As part of the

remodelling for how advocacy is accessed and facilitated the long held aspiration of extending this offer to children on the child protection register should be explored.

- **Better capturing of existing work** – It is clear that there are examples of good involvement of children and young people but that more could be done to capture this and demonstrate it.
- **Complaints process and promotion** – The number of children and young people using the complaints processes is very low. Some of this will reflect on service levels and the effectiveness of advocacy but it also needs to be considered in the context of awareness and accessibility of these processes.
- **Workforce Development** – Training packages on how to listen to children and young people needs to be developed so that practitioners are able to engage children and young people and capture messages appropriately.
- **Trends and reporting** – Common methods need to be agreed between partners for drawing together information on trends and themes from children and young people so that these can be reported upon to a more strategic level.

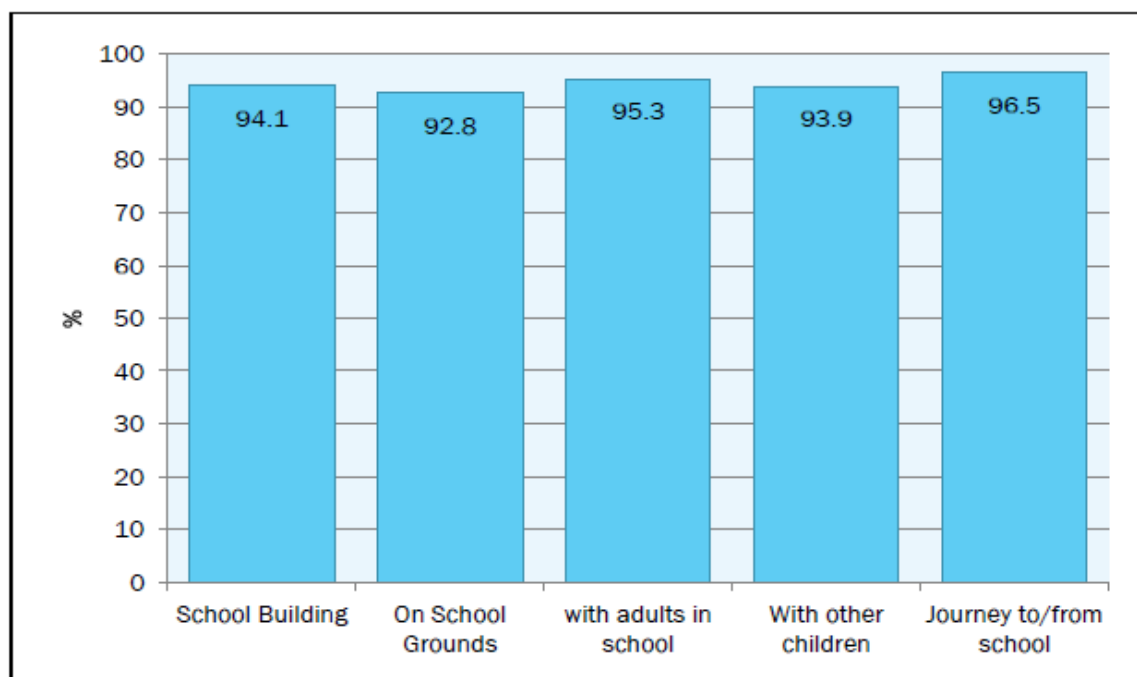
Recent work – Stand Up for Us 2013

The Stand Up for Us survey has been running since 2011 and aims to monitor the prevalence and nature of bullying behaviour in primary and secondary schools in the City of York. In 2013, the survey was developed further to explore in more detail, aspects of physical health and emotional wellbeing. In particular, and in alignment with the previous study, the Stand Up for Us survey aims to:

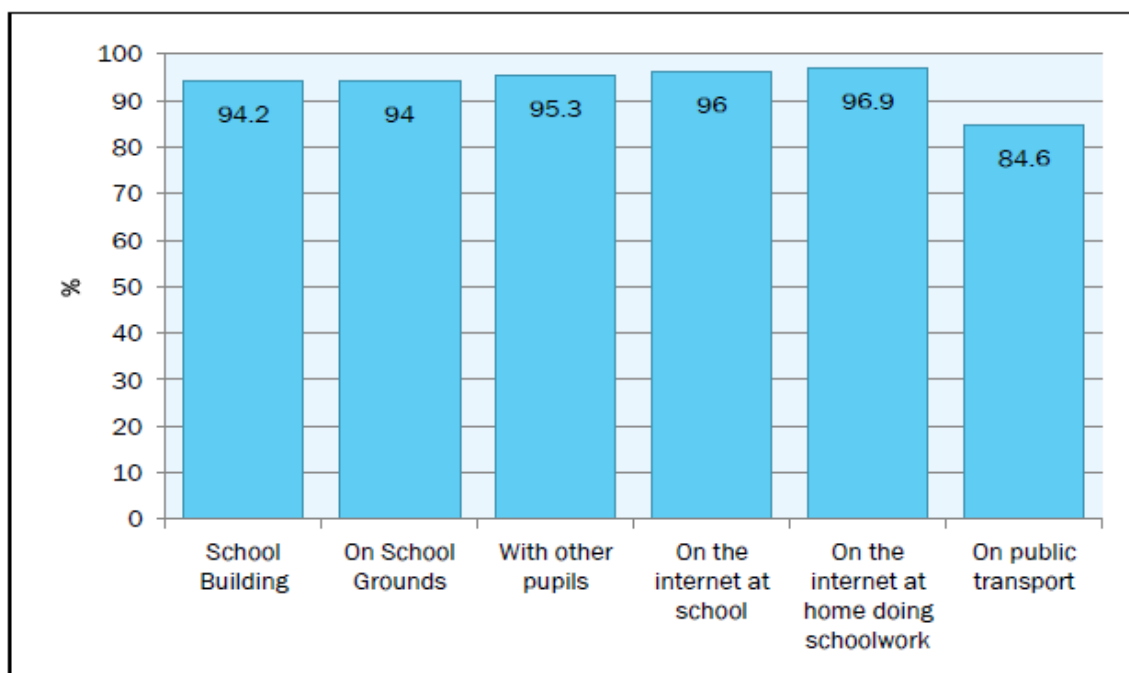
- Identify the prevalence of bullying in the primary and secondary schools within the City of York.
- Identify the nature and location of bullying in and outside school.
- Document the nature and prevalence of bullying, and compare schools data with the citywide data.
- Identify and explore patterns of behaviour over time.
- Document and monitor aspects of physical health and emotional wellbeing in primary and secondary school pupils.

Data collection took place between March and May 2013 and data were collected from 30 (58%) primary schools and all 10 secondary schools in the city. Some high level messages from the 2013 survey are explored below.

The chart below shows how safe primary school pupils feel in different areas around school.



The next figure shows how safe secondary school pupils feel in different places in and around school.



A new section for the 2013 survey was exploring pupils' use of technology and e-safety. Some key facts and figures include:

- 59.3% of primary school pupils and 83.0% of secondary school pupils have a mobile phone.
- 23.2% of primary school pupils and 68.9% of secondary school pupils have a social networking profile. For secondary school pupils:
 - 40% of pupils have their social networking profile set to private.
 - 20% of pupils reported making friends with someone online who they did not know offline.
- 7.9% of primary school pupils and 10.8% of secondary school pupils reported having no one to talk to if they are worried about something.

Recommendations

Board members are asked to:

- Support the development of the Involvement Project Group and encourage relevant partners to actively participate.
- Comment on actions taken so far in relation to children and young people's voice.
- Receive an update report at a future meeting.

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