

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE - 28TH APRIL 2008

REPORT ON: PROTOCOL BETWEEN DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL AND DUNDEE COLLEGE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 240- 2008

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise Social Work and Health Committee of the implementation of a jointly agreed Protocol between Dundee City Council and Dundee College. This protocol will result in increased support for young people who have been, or are, looked after by Dundee City Council, and who are considering, or undertaking, a course of study with Dundee College.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Social Work and Health Committee:-

- i) acknowledges the Protocol.
- ii) recognises the valuable contribution the Protocol makes to further improving educational outcomes for young people who have been or are looked after.
- iii) remit the Director of Social Work to conclude the Protocol on the terms in the report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

4.0 MAIN TEXT

- 4.1 Children and young people who are or have been looked after by the local authority continue to have poorer educational outcomes than those of their peers.
- 4.2 In addition, young people who are care leavers are less likely to be in any form of education, employment or training than other young people of a similar age.
- 4.3 The aspirations for young people who have been looked after are often very low. For many, additional support and guidance is often required to allow them to recognise the value and relevance that further or higher education has for them and their lives.
- 4.4 In 2000 Dundee City Council adopted a Corporate Parenting Policy that states:

"When carrying out corporate parenting responsibilities the Council will adopt the behaviour of a good parent at all times. It will share collective responsibility for ensuring that children who are looked after are provided with quality experiences and the help they need to maximise their full education, social and economic potential. It will ensure that work is undertaken in partnership with children, parents and carers and in the best interests of individual children. The Council will, when carrying out these duties, act as positive advocates for these vulnerable children and will actively challenge instances with less favourable or different treatment".

- 4.5 As a good corporate parent, Dundee City Council seeks to establish positive relationships with other agencies and partners who can play a key role in assisting with improving outcomes for looked after children and young people.
- 4.6 Dundee College's Mission Statement emphasises its commitment to the community it serves, to fostering effective partnerships and focuses on employment, employability and employee skills. Dundee College seeks to ensure that every reasonable effort is made to meet individual needs and to offer appropriate support, to enable learners to access, participate and progress through their learning.
- 4.7 Dundee City Council's Discovering Opportunities Strategy commits to reducing the number of young people not in education, employment and training, and Dundee College is committed to assisting this strategy.

4.8 **HOW DOES THE PROTOCOL WORK?**

4.8.1 This protocol refers to young people:

- Who are under the age of 21 and are, or have been, looked after by the local authority, and who have applied to undertake a course of study with Dundee College.
- Who are or who have been looked after by the local authority and who continue to undertake a course of study with Dundee College.

Success of the Protocol will be monitored through the Integrated Children's Services Looked After Children Themed Group. The agreement will be reviewed annually.

Dundee College and Dundee City Council Social Work Department will work together in an integrated manner to achieve a seamless transition for looked after young people and care leavers to college. Both aim to make this transition a positive experience for these young people.

4.8.2 **Dundee City Council Social Work Department agree to the following:**

With the agreement of each young person, Dundee City Council Social Work Department will provide Dundee College with:

Relevant details of all identified young people, who are or have been looked after by the Local Authority, and who have applied to undertake a course of study at Dundee College. These details will include:

- Name of young person;
- General statement of their personal circumstances and identified support needs (if any);
- Details of their schooling and educational history, and attainment outcomes;
- Details of their assigned social worker or through care and after care worker;
- Details of any other relevant professionals or agencies involved in supporting this young person
- This information will be shared using the attached proforma signed by the young person.

- Dundee City Council Social Work Department will identify a named staff member to participate in Dundee College's Employability Academy Network Review Meetings for individual young people.

4.8.3 **Dundee College agree to the following:**

- Receive details from the identified contact of any young people, who are or have been looked after by the local authority into one central point (Employability Academy).
- Ensure an initial assessment of the young persons learning and support needs are carried out.
- Assist with information to relevant curriculum team leaders to ensure appropriate processing of applications.
- If accepted on to a specific curriculum programme assist with the development of an appropriate Personal Learning Plan.
- Assist in access to appropriate funding support for study.
- Allocate a specific support worker to the young person to ensure support.
- Ensure an effective exchange of information between External agencies supporting the young person and relevant college staff.
- Monitor and record progress and progression of the young person.
- If unsuccessful in gaining entry to a specific vocational programme, explore alternative college provision in the first instance and continue dialogue in relation to the young person through the Employability Academy.
- Provide necessary information on request to Dundee City Social Work Department in relation to young people who have been referred.
- Provide an identified contact who will also participate in the Looked After Children Group.

4.8.4 **Joint Agreement**

All relevant information will be shared, subject to the agreement of the young person.

Dundee College and Dundee City Council Social Work Department will seek to train staff on a joint basis where applicable.

Dundee College and Dundee City Council Social Work Department agree to share appropriate information required for statistical returns in relation to looked after young people and care leavers.

Dundee College and Dundee City Council Social Work Department identify a named person as the main point of contact.

4.8.5 **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The work of Dundee College and Dundee City Council Social Work Department in relation to looked after young people and care leavers will be monitored through the Integrated Children's Services **Looked After Children Themed Group**. This group will consider appropriate methods of evaluating outcomes, including feed back from young people and seek ongoing improvements in the longer term.

This agreement will be reviewed initially in June 2009 and thereafter annually.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.

There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), and Head of Finance have been consulted on this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Director of Social Work

Date: 7th April 2008