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Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Legal & Democratic Services

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07 October 2019

PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 8TH OCTOBER, 2019

Agenda No Item

3. Questions from Members of the Public

Fiona Abbott
Principal Democratic Services Officer

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Question from Mr Webb to the Cabinet Member for Children & Learning – Cllr Anne Jones

Question 1

What process is used with the local primary schools and Southend Borough council to support year 5 pupils and does the portfolio holder think that having one week cramming is good preparation for the exam rather than regular support throughout a year from their school?

Answer

Thank you Mr Webb for your question regarding 11+ preparation and support for Year 5 pupils.

It would be a matter for individual schools and Academy Trusts to offer the degree of support, if any, that they choose to offer for year 5 pupils to prepare for the 11 plus. In addition, the grammar schools themselves also run ‘familiarisation events’ and open days.

As part of the Council’s 2050 roadmap, it includes the ambition “that more Southend pupils are able to attend a Grammar school if they choose.” As such, we encourage all schools to provide information and support for families, should their children be suitable candidates, and the families wish for them to be considered for a grammar school place.

This year, for the first time ever, more than half of the Year 7’s entering Grammar schools this September are Southend pupils. The increase is as a result of various initiatives the Council has undertaken in liaison with local schools. We provide information directly to parents including open day leaflets and targeted letters. In addition, SBC has offered a summer school (which was primarily aimed and offered in the first instance to the most disadvantaged families) to familiarise young people with the kinds of questions they might expect in the examination. The Council also authors an 11+ website which includes practice questions as well as information about the exam itself in terms of how it looks, appropriate content, signposting and links to useful information.

Question from Mr Webb to the Cabinet Member for Children & Learning – Cllr Anne Jones

Question 2

A 16 year old female is thrown out of home. She cannot get hold of her social worker because they are on holiday. What procedure should be put in place to support her and find her a place to live?

Answer

If a young person has an allocated Social Worker and they are unavailable then the team duty worker under the direction of the Team Manager would assess the situation and the needs and wishes of the young person. As appropriate this would be undertaken in partnership with our Housing Department.

Following assessment we would develop and implement a plan to address the concerns. This would involve working with the young person, their parents and wider family and network to identify a solution.

If a young person is assessed as needing to come into Local Authority care or needs other housing then young people will only be placed in appropriate accommodation to meet their needs i.e. foster, residential care or supported accommodation.

We will leave no young person homeless. There is a clear process that we adhere to address issues of potential homelessness for 16 or 17 year old young people.

If this situation arises out of office hours then this will be undertaken by our Emergency Duty Service.