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To: Cabinet – 12 July 2010

Subject: Children and Young People of Kent Survey 2009. (NFER)

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the key findings from the 2009/10 Children and Young People of Kent Survey and to discuss the implications across the County Council as we develop the next 3 year Children and Young People Plan.

Introduction

1. (1) A third Children and Young People of Kent survey has been completed. NFER were commissioned (following a procurement process) to conduct the survey which took place in Kent schools and colleges between October and December 2009.

(2) Two questionnaires were administered, one for 7 to 11 year olds and one for 11 to 19 year olds. All Kent schools (excluding independent schools) and Colleges of Further Education were invited to take part in the survey. The primary questionnaire was completed at 339 schools and the 11-19 survey at 75 schools and colleges.

(3) A total of 39,733 children and young people completed the survey (28,417 children in the 7 to 11 age group and 11,316 in the 11 to 19 age group). The total number was down on the previous survey when 45,000 took part. This can be explained by schools being required to opt into the 2009 survey (rather than opt out) and parents being given the opportunity to withdraw their children from the survey.

(4) As in previous years the survey has produced a wealth of information on the views of children and young people in Kent in relation to:

- Being Healthy
- Staying Safe
- Enjoying and Achieving
- Positive contribution.
- Economic Well Being
- Living in Kent.

(5) Each participating school and college will receive its own report with the results of the survey. There are also reports by LCSP area (allowing comparisons with previous years) and a county wide report. NFER has also provided the raw data to allow the Local Authority to undertake further analysis at district level.

Summary reports are also available for the findings for the following groups:

- Children and young people eligible for free school meals
- Children and young people with English as an additional language
- Children and young people with special educational needs
- Children and young people who are Looked After.

(6) The CFE Participation Officer also conducted 16 focus groups in schools and other locations and this enabled disabled young people or those for whom English is an Additional Language to put their views across. (A separate report is available with the outcomes from these groups).

(7) The NFER report provides valuable information for CFE and other KCC Directorates. Key topics include healthy living, attitudes to drinking and smoking, accessing information, community safety, bullying, attitudes to school, taking part in positive activities, access to leisure activities, future aspirations and perceptions of life in Kent. Specific questions will be of interest to different services, for example the question on dealing with anti social behaviour and crime should be of particular interest to community safety. The questions on taking part in exercise and accessing sport are relevant for sports development. KDAAT should find the feedback on substance misuse of value. Also, the information on accessing activities outside school and the barriers to using these activities is of particular interest to Kent Youth Service. It is also of interest to see the impact of KCC policies – for example it is noticeable that there has been an increase in the proportion of young people age 11 to 16 travelling to school by bus and a decrease in the proportion travelling by car – probably due to the impact of the Freedom Pass.

KEY DETAILS – Outcomes of the NFER Survey 2009

2. (1) The report provides valuable information on the views of children and young people in Kent. The Executive Summary and a summary table showing the key changes in results between 2007 and 2009 are attached in Appendix 1. The full report is available at the following link.

http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/Children/kct_cyp_survey_2009.cfm

(2) Overall the report is very positive and, when comparing findings with previous years, there has been significant progress in many areas. Graphs outlining trends are attached as appendix 3.

Examples include:

- The proportion of young people drinking alcohol and getting drunk has reduced (though a minority continue to report that they regularly get drunk and smoke).
- There is a decrease in those reporting feeling sad or depressed at least once or twice a week.
- Higher proportions of children (7 to 11 years) feel safe at school and in their local area compared to 2008.
- There has been an increase in the proportion of young people who feel they have a say on issues affecting the area where they live.
- There has been an increase in the proportion of children (7 to 11 year) who said they enjoy going to school and think they are doing well in school.

- There was an increase in the proportion of young people who said they haven't been bullied in the past year. Of those that said they had been bullied there has been a decrease in the physical and verbal bullying.

(3) The survey findings indicate that there are issues that need to be addressed, for example:

- Vulnerable young people score below average on the "being healthy" measure.
- Approximately half of the 11 to 16 year group report finding it difficult to learn because their lessons are disrupted by other pupils.
- Most young people think they have enough information on: the effects of alcohol and drugs (74%), the effects of smoking (74%), internet safety (73%) and sexual health (63%). **But** only 39% say they get enough information about relationships.
- 48% of young people think they are getting good careers advice but 31% are not sure and 16 % disagree (5% didn't respond).
- Although taking part in positive activities compares well with the results of the Tell Us survey, young people in Kent indicated that cost and unavailability of activities are more significant barriers to taking part compared to the national picture.
- Only 41% of 11 to 16 year olds and 37% of post 16s said they never feel unsafe on a bus or train.

(4) In the 2009 survey, NFER used "multilevel modelling" which allows more detailed insights to highlight the responses of different groups. This assists in targeting the responses to the issues raised. For example there is a strong link between being female and experiencing bullying and not feeling safe in the local community.

Using the Survey Results

3. (1) The findings of the survey are used to inform commissioning, planning, and performance monitoring of services across agencies. The Kent Children's Trust is required to publish a new Children and Young People's Plan 2011-14 by 1 April 2011, the NFER survey, along with other feedback from children, young people, parents and carers, will form a key element in the development of the new plan.

(2) The findings are being made widely available across KCC and Kent Children's Trust partner agencies so that maximum use is made of the results. As it is the third annual survey, the results now include trend information and multi-variate analysis that enables greater targeting of services.

(3) As in previous years there has been considerable interest in the survey as it not only provides a comprehensive picture of children and young people's views but it also provides very detailed information for a range of organisations including Kent health services, Kent Youth Service, KDAAT, Sports Development, Kent Safeguarding Board, Safer Kent and Kent Police. The survey results provide evidence to benchmark against key performance indicators.

(4) The survey also provides valuable data for the 414 schools and colleges that took part. This includes information about children's views on being healthy, staying safe, bullying, attitudes to school and future aspirations. Schools use this information in planning and to meet the school self evaluation requirements.

(5) Information sheets have been produced for children and young people with feedback on the key findings from the survey.

Future Arrangements.

4. (1) The survey provides a wealth of information for schools, local partnerships, the Kent Children's Trust Partners and KCC. However, the survey can be seen as costly at £158,000 i.e. about £3.97 per child. Benefits from the survey are identified in Section 3.

(2) Having completed the survey for three years, it has been decided to review how to maintain and build on the valuable intelligence this brings to Kent, while ensuring best value in future surveys. It may be possible to enter into negotiation for a better deal for future surveys and consider other methodologies. This could include making the survey totally on-line (the previous surveys have been in paper format for 7 to 11 year olds) or undertaking it every two years

(3) CFE and the Kent Children's Trust will also continue to use innovative approaches to involve and seek the views of families and communities, including children and young people.

Recommendations

Cabinet are asked to:

1. Note the contents of this report and the Children and Young People of Kent (2009/10) report.

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Background Documents