

Public Document Pack



**Service Director – Legal, Governance and
Commissioning**

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Wednesday 24 June 2020

Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

Children's Scrutiny Panel

The **Children's Scrutiny Panel** will meet in the **Virtual Meeting - online** at **10.00 am on Thursday 2 July 2020.**

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view via the Council's website.

The items which will be discussed are described in the agenda and there are reports attached which give more details.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Muscroft', on a light-colored background.

Julie Muscroft

Service Director – Legal, Governance and Commissioning

Kirklees Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair/Clerk of their intentions prior to the meeting.

The Children's Scrutiny Panel members are:-

Member

Councillor Andrew Marchington

(Chair)

Councillor Aafaq Butt

Councillor Paul Davies

Councillor Amanda Pinnock

Councillor Richard Smith

Councillor Paul White

Toni Bromley (Co-Optee)

Dale O'Neill (Co-Optee)

Linda Summers (Co-Optee)

Agenda

Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

Pages

1: Membership of the Committee

This is where Councillors who are attending as substitutes will say for whom they are attending.

2: Interests

1 - 2

The Councillors will be asked to say if there are any items on the Agenda in which they have disclosable pecuniary interests, which would prevent them from participating in any discussion of the items or participating in any vote upon the items, or any other interests.

3: Minutes of the Previous Meeting

3 - 8

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 13 March 2020

4: Admission of the Public

Most debates take place in public. This only changes when there is a need to consider certain issues, for instance, commercially sensitive information or details concerning an individual. You will be told at this point whether there are any items on the Agenda which are to be discussed in private.

5: Deputations/Petitions

The Committee will receive any petitions and hear any deputations from members of the public. A deputation is where up to five people can attend the meeting and make a presentation on some particular issue of concern. A member of the public can also hand in a petition at the meeting but that petition should relate to something on which the body has powers and responsibilities.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10 (2), Members of the

Public should provide at least 24 hours' notice of presenting a deputation.

6: Public Question Time

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, questions from the public must be submitted to executive.governance@kirklees.gov.uk by 10am on 1 July 2020

7: Impact of Lockdown and What has Been Done to Keep Vulnerable Children Safe. 9 - 24

To provide Members with a Service Update with regards to the provision of services to vulnerable Children, Young People, their families and their carers During COVID 19. To also provide a wider overview of the actions and steps taken to ensure that children in Kirklees are safe and contact is maintained during the current emergency.

Contact: Julie Bragg/ Elaine McShane

8: Update on the wider opening of schools and the planning for next academic year 25 - 38

This report provides an overview in relation to schools since the outbreak of Covid-19 and explain the engagement, collaboration and planning in place that has supported a wider opening for children and young people

Contact: Jo-Anne Sanders

9: Almondbury Community School update 39 - 44

To provide Children's Scrutiny panel with an update on the implementation of the Council's decision to change the age range of Almondbury Community School from the 1st September 2020.

Contact: Martin Wilby

10: Children's Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/21 45 - 46

The Panel will consider the proposed areas of focus and activity for the 2020/21 municipal year and to discuss the method and means to be used to continue the Panel's work going forward.

Contact: Leigh Webb, Principal Governance & Democratic Engagement Officer

11: Dates of Future Meetings

13 August 2020 – 2pm
1 October 2020 -2pm
12 November 2020 – 2pm

12: Improvement Journey - Update

To provide and update (as of June 2020) in respect of Ofsted recommendations following inspection in June 2019.

Contact: Elaine McShane

13: Exclusion of the Public

To resolve that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

14: Improvement Journey - Update

An exempt report relating to Agenda Item 12.

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| KIRKLEES COUNCIL | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| COUNCIL/CABINET/COMMITTEE MEETINGS ETC | | | |
| DECLARATION OF INTERESTS | | | |
| Childrens Scrutiny Panel | | | |
| Name of Councillor | | | |
| Item in which you have an interest | Type of interest (eg a disclosable pecuniary interest or an "Other Interest") | Does the nature of the interest require you to withdraw from the meeting while the item in which you have an interest is under consideration? [Y/N] | Brief description of your interest |
| | | | |
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Signed: Dated:

NOTES

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your disclosable pecuniary interests under the new national rules. Any reference to spouse or civil partner includes any person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or as if they were your civil partner.

Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses.

Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority -

- under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
- which has not been fully discharged.

Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.

Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.

Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) - the landlord is your council or authority; and the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.

Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -

- (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
- (b) either -

the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or

if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Contact Officer: Helen Kilroy

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY PANEL

Friday 13th March 2020

- Present: Councillor Andrew Marchington (Chair)
Councillor Paul Davies
Councillor Richard Smith
Councillor Paul White
- Co-optees Toni Bromley
Dale O'Neill
- In attendance Julie Bragg, Service Manager (Children and Families)
Tom Brailsford, Service Director (Resources,
Improvement and Partnerships)
Ronnie Hartley, Head of Service Education Safeguarding
and Inclusion
Elaine McShane, Service Director - Family Support and
Child Protection
Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director - Learning & Early
Support
Martin Wilby, Acting Deputy Assistant Director, LA
Statutory Duties Learning and Skills
- Observers: Councillors Viv Kendrick and Carole Pattison
- Apologies: Councillor Amanda Pinnock

- 1 Membership of the Committee**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Amanda Pinnock.
- 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
The minutes of the meetings of the Panel held on the 17th January 2020 were agreed as a correct record.
- 3 Interests**
No interests were declared.
- 4 Admission of the Public**
All items were considered in public session.
- 5 Deputations/Petitions**
No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Public Question Time

No questions were received from the public.

7 Number and age of Children in Care

The Panel considered a report giving the latest data on the number and age of children in care presented by Julie Bragg, Head of Corporate Parenting (Children in Care and Care Leavers).

Julie Bragg highlighted the following key areas:-

- The number of children in care at the end of January was 672; a number of these children were being closely monitored;
- In January, a number of sibling groups had come into care, 2 groups of 5 children;
- There had been an increasing positive trend in the number of children leaving care and in some instances children had returned to family members;
- It was unlikely that children under the age of 4 would remain in care and would have a permanence plan for adoption;
- The focus within the service for children in care aged 11 to 15 years, was on the reunification model where children returned to live with their parents and a thorough assessment was undertaken in these circumstances to ensure that this was the right decision for the child.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding concerns in relation to the rise in number of children taken into care under the age of one and the shortage of adoptive parents, Elaine McShane advised that the first and foremost priority was to ensure that children were safeguarded. The Board was informed that priority viability checks and assessments would be undertaken of extended family members to arrange for the child to stay with a family member before they were taken into care. Elaine McShane explained that the scheme for extended family members was called Special Guardianship and that this had seen a recent significant rise to 380. The Board was informed that meetings took place to consider the timeliness of the adoption process to ensure a child was not waiting an extended period of time. Elaine McShane also advised the Board that robust decision making was in place to ensure children were not kept waiting an unacceptable period of time to be adopted.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding how many children taken into care was due to domestic abuse, Julie Bragg advised that there could be multiple factors why a child was taken into care, for example, neglect, drug abuse, mental health, and it was difficult to be specific on one single factor.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding the high number of children placed outside the district, Julie Bragg advised that the increase was due to the number of children in care looking for suitable matched placements and it was sometimes necessary to go to external foster carers. Elaine McShane advised the Panel that occasionally decisions were taken to place children outside the district, but these were well informed decisions and taken with the safeguarding of the child being the first and foremost consideration. The Panel was informed that significant consideration was given to placing children outside of the district and the decisions were not taken lightly. Elaine McShane further explained that she was involved in any decisions taken to place children over 20 miles outside of Kirklees.

Children's Scrutiny Panel - 13 March 2020

Tom Brailsford advised the Panel that a draft Sufficiency Strategy was now available. The Panel agreed to consider a future report on the Draft Sufficiency Strategy, which would include plans of how Kirklees was going to transform fostering locally.

Elaine McShane advised the Panel that work was currently being undertaken on the Post 16 Provision and looking at people who come and work in Kirklees to provide that provision. The Panel was informed that there was currently a tendering exercise being undertaken around post 16 provision within Kirklees, which would consider the vulnerabilities of young people. The Panel agreed to consider a future report on Post 16 Provision.

Cllr Marchington, Chair of the Panel, agreed to keep a watching brief on the rising trend of children in care and how this was being managed.

RESOLVED –

1. The Panel noted the report on Number and Age of Children in Care and thanked Julie Bragg for her contributions.
2. That Councillor Marchington would keep a Lead Member watching brief on the rising trend of children in care and how this was being managed.
3. The Panel agreed to consider a future report on Post 16 Provision.
4. The Panel agreed to consider a future report on the Draft Sufficiency Strategy, which would include plans of how Kirklees was going to transform fostering locally.

8 Almondbury Community School update

The Panel considered an update on the implementation of the Council's decision to change the age range of Almondbury Community School (ACS) from the 1st September 2020 presented by Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director (Learning and Early Support) and Martin Wilby, Senior Strategic Manager (Education and Access).

Martin Wilby highlighted the following key points:-

- every pupil had been offered a matched preference where one had been made at their preferred school;
- a uniform support package was in place for families of children who had already transferred to a new school; a number of applications for contributions had been received and these were being processed;
- uniform vouchers were available for those children who had not yet moved school, to be able to claim free school uniform items from shops in Huddersfield;
- all staff had been aligned to either the primary or secondary phase based on where they carried out the whole or majority of their duties within school; staff had been given the opportunity to comment on the alignments which had now been confirmed;
- a review of the Primary staff at ACS had commenced and consultation was being undertaken with staff on the new staffing structure;
- a deployment process had been agreed with the partner schools to share suitable vacancies with staff before they were advertised;
- following the Ofsted monitoring visit at ACS on the 12th and 13th November 2019 the outcome had been published on the 19th December and the Inspector had

Children's Scrutiny Panel - 13 March 2020

concluded that leaders and managers were taking effective action towards the removal of special measures;

- The Academy Trust was the approved sponsor for ACS as a Primary School, Old Bank Junior Infant and Nursery School and Newsome High School; the other schools involved in the Academy Trust were outlined within the report;
- Feedback from parents and children was being captured so that lessons could be learnt for future school transitions and changes.

The Panel agreed to visit Almondbury Community School to help the Panel develop their understanding of the issues in relation to improving educational outcomes.

Martin Wilby informed the Panel that temporary admission arrangements had previously been in place for 2020-2021, consultation had taken place through the normal process from December 2019 to February 2020 to consult on making these arrangements permanent. Martin Wilby advised the Panel that the priority admission areas had been extended with the partner schools to cover the previous priority admission area covered by ACS.

The Panel was informed that each member of staff from ACS had been aligned to either a primary or secondary phase of ACS and the alignment had been carried out on where they spend the majority of their duties. Martin Wilby confirmed that a deployment process had been agreed with the partner schools and was being shared with ACS secondary school staff before the posts were advertised. Jo-Anne Sanders informed the Panel that Kirklees was working with partner schools for potential job opportunities and were supporting staff.

The Panel thanked officers for the support given to parents throughout and for the financial contributions made towards the cost of uniforms.

The Panel agreed to receive details of engagement events being organised by the schools for parents in order that members of the Panel could attend if available.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding transport issues, Martin Wilby advised that there was still more engagement work to do with a small number of parents regarding the existing procedures. The Panel was advised that there was a Transport Appeals process was in place where appropriate.

RESOLVED –

1. The Panel noted the update on Almondbury Community School and thanked Jo-Anne Sanders and Martin Wilby for their contributions.
2. That the Panel visit Almondbury Community School to help the Panel develop their understanding of the issues in relation to improving educational outcomes.
3. That the Panel receive details of parent engagement events in order that Panel Members could attend if available.

9 Review of 2019/20 Work Programme and consider items for 2020/21 municipal year

The Panel considered the progress on the work programme during the 2019/20 municipal year and considered issues for inclusion in the Panel's work programme during the 2020/21 municipal year.

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Councillor Marchington thanked the Panel and Officers for their hard work and contributions to the 2019/20 work programme and outcomes.

The Panel noted that the following key areas had been the focus for the Panel during the 2019/20 municipal year:-

- Scrutiny of partnerships across different areas of the council;
- Visits had been undertaken by the Panel to the Single Point of Access at Northorpe Hall and the Multi Agency Meetings; Youth Offending Team (YOT); the Panel had met a young offender who was involved with YOT; The Panel had also attended the YOT Board;
- Data and performance reports had been considered at the informal meetings;
- The Panel had considered an update report on SEND at the informal meeting on the 13th March 2020 and seen how data was being collected to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The Panel agreed to carry over the following topics to the 2020/21 work programme:-

- Continue to scrutinise partnerships and boards during the 2020/21 municipal year, for example, Corporate Parenting Board and Health and Wellbeing Board and the Panel would look at how data was collected and used to improve outcomes;
- SEND and High Needs – 6 monthly reports to be considered by the Panel and visits would be arranged to some of the SEN Teams to corroborate the information in the presentations provided to Panel Meetings;
- Review of the Improvement Journey within Children's Services;
- Exploitation Strategy – the Lead Member agreed to keep a watching brief to monitor the impact on children and young people in the borough;
- Educational Outcomes – the Panel agreed to consider future updates to learn about what the educational impact had been for the children who had moved from Almondbury Community School and were they getting the right amount of results and opportunities; the Lead Member agreed to keep a watching brief;
- Number and age of children in care;
- Performance reports would be considered at Informal meetings;
- Youth Services and Initiatives.

Panel Members agreed to forward any further items for inclusion in the 2020/21 work programme to the Governance Officer.

RESOLVED –

1. That the progress on the 2019/20 work programme for the Children's Scrutiny Panel be noted.
2. That the items be noted for inclusion in the Panel's work programme during the 2020/21 municipal year
3. Panel Members agreed to forward any further items for inclusion in the 2020/21 work programme to the Governance Officer.
4. That the Governance Officer be authorised to liaise with officers on agreed actions.

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Name of meeting: Children's Scrutiny Panel
Date: 2nd July 2020
Title of report: Impact of Lockdown on the number of children in care and what has been done to keep vulnerable children safe.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report is to ensure that board members have a Service Update with regards to the provision of services to vulnerable Children, Young People, their families and their carers During COVID 19. It also provides a wider overview of the actions and steps taken to ensure that children in Kirklees are safe and contact is maintained during the current emergency.

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards? | NA |
| Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?) | NA |
| The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny? | NA |
| Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name | |
| Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance? | NA |
| Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning? | NA |
| Cabinet member portfolio | Cllr V Kendrick Children's Portfolio |

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public

(Have you considered GDPR?)

Yes GDPR has been considered. The information in this report does not identify any individuals.

1. Summary

Supporting the Workforce

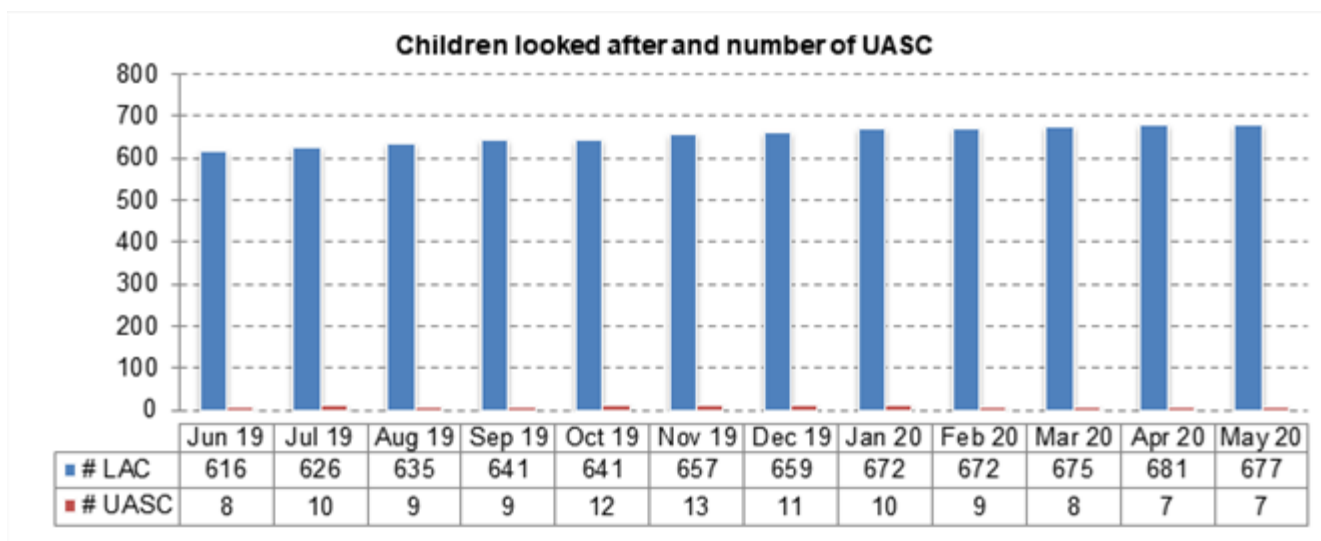
A range of measures has been undertaken to support the workforce across a range of services including managerial support, check-ins, prioritisation clarity and advice on dealing with Covid-19 presenting clients. Additional evidence has been provided to Covid-19 Corporate co-ordination team in relation staff rotas and establishment of staffed rotas. The number of staff in each service base has been reduced to ensure we have more than adequate space for Social Distancing (2 meters apart). Initially there were a number of staff who were self-isolating however since Easter there has been an increase in staff returning from self-isolation and being available to work. Staff and teams continued to be deployed to the areas of greatest need.

Social Workers who are working from home are updating records, care plans and assessments. They continue to contact children, parents, carers and professionals through use of technology such as skype, 'WhatsApp' trying innovative ways to maintain good relationships with their children and families and continue direct communication with children.

Team Managers, Service Managers and Heads of Service are maintaining visible leadership on each worksite, working on a rota basis to ensure Social Workers and Managers have direct access whilst in work to discuss cases where concerns may be escalating to ensure safe, swift and accountable decision making takes place in a timely manner.

As time is progressing Social Workers are finding working from home increasingly difficult. They have raised issues in respect of feeling isolated and concern regarding not providing consistency for the children and families they work with. We are taking their concerns very seriously and are currently reviewing how we can increase Social Workers within work settings. This will be based on the Governments Guidance on the next phase whilst also ensuring safe distancing and infection control measures.

Children Looked After:



The numbers of children in care at the start of lockdown was 675 there was a slight increase by the end of May 2020 to 677. On the 19th June 2020 the numbers of children in care were 691 this increase is due to two sibling groups.

Social Workers have continued to undertake statutory visits to children who are in the care of the Local Authority. As within the Assessment and Intervention part of the Service each Team Manager, overseen by the Service Manager for the area, have RAG rated and risk assessed to ensure those at most risk or vulnerability are given priority. This has been regularly reviewed during the lockdown period and amended to ensure that children and young people continue to receive a service to meet their changing needs when appropriate.

As with children and young people within Assessment and Intervention Risk Assessments have taken place in relation to all Children Looked After and their attendance at school. The risk balances the view of the School, carers, Social Worker and the voice of the young person. The assessment is fluid and decisions continued to be reviewed based on what is in the best interest of the child or young person.

Keeping in Touch Co-ordinator - Children in Care

At the start of the lockdown period the Children's Rights Team (CRT) contacted every Kirklees Looked After Child (age 7+) and Care Leaver by letter, to ensure they knew how to contact the service if they wanted advocacy / support. The Keeping in Touch Coordinator is following these letters up with all children and young people who do not currently have an Advocate, to enquire after their health and wellbeing, directly with the child/young person and /or their carer. Independent Visitor's remain in contact with children and young people via several social media platforms, to maintain relationships and provide independent emotional and practical support to young people.

The team has also set up a 'Challenge' competition in response to the Covid-19, as a tool to keep in touch with children and young people looked after. The Children's Rights web page is updated each Monday morning with the new challenge. The links to the website are posted on the team's Facebook and Twitter page and an email is sent with the links to the Fostering Team and Kirklees Fostering Network who share the challenge with their contacts. There are 4 winners each week receiving a £10 high street voucher. All entries receive a certificate. One positive from the challenge competition is that the CRT Team have had a number of children enter that the team had no previous involvement with.

LAC Reviews- Children in Care.

As a response to Covid 19 all Review meetings for Children Looked After have been held virtually. A key priority for this change in service delivery has been to ensure that children's views and voices were heard. Independent Reviewing Officers have addressed this change by working in partnership with the Children's Rights Team and the service has utilised a variety of tools to communicate with children to gain their views. In particular, older children have presented as more able and willing to be involved in their Review meetings when provided with the opportunity to join virtually. The option for young people to participate in their Review meetings virtually or phone, is a Service development that will be retained to support and enable their participation in the Review Process.

Children's Residential homes and short break settings

Covid-19 has been particularly challenging for residential homes in relation to the day to day operations. Our front line staff have endeavoured to ensure of children's homes have continued to operate as normally as possible whilst managing COVID related risks. In relation to staffing we have experienced some challenges including some staff who are shielding and unable to complete their duties from home and increased sickness levels due to staff anxiety in relation to some challenging behaviours from some children that increase

the risk of COVID transmission. Public Health guidance and advice has been sought including infection control; The NHS guidance has been followed and staff have worked tirelessly to try to ensure that young people are following the guidance to reduce risk of Covid-19 in our homes. This has been a challenge particularly in the disability homes as due to personal care needs and children not understanding the guidelines, PPE has been necessary to keep staff and children safe. We have risk assessed all establishments and, in several situations, involved Infection Control to offer their support. We have utilised staff from other services where they are unable to undertake their usual roles and have built a temporary bank of staff to be deployed to fill gaps. Twenty one staff from Kirklees Active Leisure have been working across the service to support vulnerable children; they have had an enhanced DBS check and have undertaken online induction training.

Additional placements have been created within inhouse provision which includes using Orchard View as a mainstream home with a variation to their statement of purpose. The application to register Crescentdale as a children's home has been submitted to Ofsted; there has been a delay with the Manager's DBS, but this should be processed shortly. We will be looking at other options for a further temporary residential home to broaden our sufficiency capacity once Crescentdale is returned to Adult Services on 24th July. We are also in the process of identifying a suitable house to buy to use as a children's home; this will be used for additional capacity and some temporary capacity in the first instance. A floating support manager will start on 3rd July; his role will include supporting Orchard View in the first instance and the set up of new homes as well as considering the set up of a solo provision for the child currently in Healds Road. We are in constant communication with Ofsted around the changes.

We reviewed our short breaks provision in line with social distancing and lockdown measures. We did this with infection control and took the decision to temporarily suspend the services. We risk assessed all the families receiving short breaks provision to identify which families were most at risk of breakdown and therefore in most need of support. The Young Persons Activity Team who normally deliver a service within a building for children with a disability have suspended their group work and are now offering support to families in other ways. KAL staff who can no longer undertake their usual roles have been offering regular support as have care agencies whose regular work cannot take place. The next step for respite services is to consider how they can reopen safely – a piece of work has commenced to consider this including having children in 'bubbles' which is how schools have managed their offer. An advocacy and participation officer is currently undertaking a piece of work with all families who access short breaks to find out more about the experiences of support during Covid-19 and how this can shape our future offer.

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

We are maintaining our approach to this group and supporting them in their placements. Visits are being continued and risk assessments updated. Careful consideration is given in relation their age and legal developments. We are adhering to the government's guidance in relation to the extension in timescales for completing an age assessment.

Care Leavers

Personal Advisors continue to undertake visits to Care Leavers. Each Team Manager/Leader, overseen by the Service Manager for the area, have RAG rated and risk assessed each individual young person to ensure those at most risk or vulnerability are given priority. We continue to deliver food parcels including toiletries to our Care Leavers. We are still making a number of extra financial payments to include young people who are waiting for their first universal credit payment, hardship payments to those who've had additional costs due to the extra food/ travel to shop/ keeping in touch costs. This has helped

to provide support to young people who have lost their jobs and been laid off or put on furlough but have still not received any monies.

Some young people have chosen to self-isolate and have expressed their wish not to have a direct visit in these situations we have been using social media in order to ensure that we have regular contact.

We are working with Young people in order to complete their housing applications and we are working closely with housing services with regards to being able to provide suitable accommodation when young people will be able to move into their own tenancies.

Foster Carers Support

In the initial stages of lockdown, the importance of the foster carers' role and their professional judgement has been recognised with specifically tailored advice for the carers and other professionals. Regular communication and joint meetings have been maintained between senior managers and KFN ensuring that issues arising from the COVID-19 situation are addressed in a prompt and timely fashion. Advice has also been provided to Foster Carers individually and through the Kirklees Foster Carers Network in relation to COVID related matter.

Work was also accelerated in relation to a wider foster carer offer to help with stability, retention and recruitment. We have increased in line with inflation both allowances and skills payments. The service is also considering additional one-off payments reflecting additional costs faced by foster carers and their households during this time.

We have accelerated the supply of laptop/devices to Foster Carers to help with better and more appropriate communication. We have also ensured that children in foster placements have access to laptops to support their learning.

A number of additional steps have been taken to support carers and increase capacity:

Emergency foster placements

To address rapid placement breakdown in a Covid-19 period, emergency foster places are required in order to place children quickly in a secure home environment until a long-term solution can be found. In recognition of the skills required, the have introduced an enhanced payment structure for emergency placements at £100 per night, in addition to the regular payments. Emergency foster carers may already be caring for other foster children, but they may have a spare room, or they might be dedicated solely to emergency placements.

Increasing Foster Carer Capacity

To make the most of existing carer capacity, carers who are registered for a higher number of children than they currently can take on extra placements, where it is safe and appropriate to do so. They will automatically receive the additional child allowance and the amount of fostering allowance for a child of that age. This can be paid as an emergency placement payment, which would pay a higher rate for older children (8 years plus).

The Fostering Service has also taken advantage of some relaxation in Fostering Regulations to help speed up recruitment by recreating carers through the Connected Person regulations ensuring all the relevant checks and approvals remain in place.

Council and school staff as Foster Carers

The engagement of Council and school staff as emergency foster carers has been explored. These employees in appropriate Council and School roles will already be DBS checked and are willing to be fast tracked into the service. These has seen a number of additional Foster Carers and identified and recruited.

There are other services developments which will support foster carers such as the development of an Out of Hours service which will help with potential placement breakdown. We have also ensured additional, more frequent contact to foster carers with support from Supervising Social Workers, in the form of additional video /telephone calls.

Managing the needs of children with complex needs during the restrictions can be more challenging and the fostering team and the wider support network have reviewed and broaden all the support they can provide to carers, during this period.

Adoption Services

We are working with the Regional Adoption agency in line with government advice to maintain services as much as practical in the current situation. There had been potential issues with partners in relation to medicals for prospective adopters and this has now been addressed. The adoption service are working with transition plans that are in line with the government guidelines in relation to contact.

2. Information required to take a decision

No decision is required, this report is submitted at the request of the Board to monitor the number of children in care. This report is also shared with the Children's Scrutiny Panel on a monthly basis.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

Not applicable

3.2 Working with Partners

Not applicable

3.3 Place Based Working

Not applicable

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Not applicable

3.5 Improving Outcomes for Children

This information is provided at the request of Corporate Parenting Board to monitor the number of children in care their age and location of placements.

3.6 Reducing demand of services

Not applicable

3.7 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

Not applicable

4. Consultees and their opinions

Not applicable

5. Next steps

A similar report will be presented to future meetings of the Corporate Parenting Board.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

That the report be noted.

7. **Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations**

Not applicable

8. **Contact officer**

Julie Bragg, Head of Corporate Parenting

9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Previous reports to the Children's Scrutiny on number and age of children in care.

10. **Service Director responsible**

Elaine McShane, Service Director (Child Protection and Family Support)

Tom Brailsford, Service Director (Resources Improvement Partnerships)

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Name of meeting: Children's Scrutiny Panel
Date: 2nd July 2020
Title of report: Impact of Lockdown and What has Been Done to Keep Vulnerable Children Safe.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report is to ensure that board members have a Service Update with regards to the provision of services to vulnerable Children, Young People, their families and their carers During COVID 19. It also provides a wider overview of the actions and steps taken to ensure that children in Kirklees are safe and contact is maintained during the current emergency.

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards? | NA |
| Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?) | NA |
| The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny? | NA |
| Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name | |
| Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance? | NA |
| Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning? | NA |
| Cabinet member portfolio | Cllr V Kendrick Children's Portfolio |

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public

(Have you considered GDPR?)

Yes GDPR has been considered. The information in this report does not identify any individuals.

1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Scrutiny with an update on the provision of safeguarding duties and responsibilities by Children's Services and updated Government guidance on Covid-19. It also provides a wider overview of the actions and steps taken to ensure that children in Kirklees are safe and contact is maintained during the current emergency.

Alignment to Government Principles

The new guidance outlines that "local authorities and local safeguarding partners will want to continue to meet their statutory duties as far as they can, but there will be times in the current circumstances when this is not possible."

In recognising that this is a challenging and complex situation decisions should be made in the spirit of the following principles:

- child-centred - promoting children's best interests
- risk-based - prioritising support and resources for children at greatest risk
- family focussed - harnessing the strengths in families and their communities
- evidence informed - ensuring decisions are proportionate and justified
- collaborative - working in partnership with parents and other professionals
- transparent - providing clarity and maintaining professional curiosity about a child's wellbeing

The guidance issued on 3rd April had already been largely implemented in Kirklees. Previous Safeguarding reports to Kirklees Executive Team from the Service Director Child Protection and Family Support strongly reinforced our approach, retaining an emphasis on the child's best interests and family focused approach whilst outlining the steps being taken to safeguard children and promote their welfare in a rapidly changing scenario.

All services have continued to refocus their efforts and staff have adapted to a dynamic, evolving situation. There is a clear understanding for the need to record and capture decisions made in relation to children and young people at this unprecedented time.

Supporting the Workforce

A range of measures are being taken to support the workforce across a range of services including managerial support, check-ins, prioritisation clarity and advice on dealing with Covid-19 presenting clients. Additional evidence has been provided to Covid-19 Corporate co-ordination team in relation staff rotas and establishment of staffed rotas. The rota is over a three-week period and covers four bases.

Social Workers who are working from home are updating records, care plans and assessments. They continue to contact children, parents, carers and professionals through use of technology such as skype, 'WhatsApp' trying innovative ways to maintain good relationships with their children and families and continue direct communication with children.

Team Managers, Service Managers and Heads of Service are maintaining visible leadership on each worksite, working on a rota basis to ensure Social Workers and Managers have direct access whilst in work to discuss cases where concerns may be escalating to ensure safe, swift and accountable decision making takes place in a timely manner.

Children's Social Care Service Areas

Front Door:

At the onset of the lock down The Front Door Duty and Advice and the Emergency Duty Service were working within their normal operating procedures albeit social workers were working from home. All the telephone systems are set to enable Social Workers to pick up calls and manage as appropriate.

Although initially having Social Workers and Early Support practitioners in the Front Door working from home worked well this has not continued to be the case. The Head of Service and Service Manager reviewed cases alongside Team Managers, and it was evident that the quality of work had declined. This is reflective of the nature of support that is not available at a distance from Team Manager in monitoring the quality of conversations and practice. Given the potential of a significant impact on the Front Door a decision was taken to introduce Social Workers and Early Support practitioners back into the workplace on a rota basis. This has enabled Team Managers to mentor and coach the team more effectively which should ensure consistency and quality of contacts and recommendations. In addition, timeliness of completion significantly dipped when social workers were working from home however further scrutiny and support from team managers has ensured timeliness of contacts is improving.

Having agreed to strengthen the early support offer from the front door this is still embedding. The Early Support Service are currently recruiting two new workers into the Front Door which will enable the 'one Front Door' model to function effectively ensuring contacts are responded to at an appropriate level.

The Team Managers continue to work closely with the police to ensure incidents of domestic abuse continue to be assessed and managed appropriately. In addition, we continue to make school notifications to inform schools and early years of incidents of domestic abuse (Operation Encompass) where children were present so they can provide support where necessary.

Assessment and Intervention Teams:

Social Workers continue to respond to immediate child protection investigations. Children and their families are seen, risk is identified, and plans put in place to ensure the child is safeguarded. Where required, legal proceedings are continuing. Key meetings at senior level continue to be held with multi-agency partners including Legal Gateway Panel, Permanency Panel and Children Access to Services Panel. This ensures timely decision making and care planning continues.

Ratification and endorsement of Education, Health and Social Care Plans are also continuing to ensure that packages of support for some of our most vulnerable children can be progressed.

Social Workers continue to undertake Statutory visits to children who are identified as 'at risk' (Children on a Child Protection Plan) or those who are 'in need' (Children in Need) and Children who are in the care of the Local Authority. Each Team Manager, overseen by the Service Manager for the area, have RAG rated and risk assessed each case to ensure those at most risk or vulnerability are given priority. Care Planning meetings are continuing regarding children where risk is increasing.

Individual Risk Assessments on all vulnerable children in relation to them being in education have been undertaken in the past month. There continue to be challenges to this in terms of

the balance between vulnerability and parental choice where we do not have a Legal Order. However as seen later in this document the attendance at school has improved and we continue to encourage parents and carers to support children and young people to attend school. The risk assessments on all children of school age have been completed the only one's outstanding relate to children and young people who are new to the Service and are prioritised for completion.

Clear guidance has been communicated to partner agencies about Child Protection conferences and being organised and held virtually, and families are actively participating virtually, via telephone or video conferencing

Risk and Vulnerability:

Within their capacity these workers have maintained their Exploitation cases however the contact has reduced, and the method of contact adjusted where appropriate. The remainder of the Risk and Vulnerabilities Team have pooled resources with the Youth Intervention Team to deliver management and intervention for young people identified as at risk of exploitation / Gang affiliation.

Youth Offending Service:

Team Managers have conducted a review of all open cases to YOT including Out of Court Disposals. A RAG rating has been applied to each young person. Risk Assessments have been reviewed to ensure they are current and provide a very live perspective of the Young Persons position.

All Intensive Surveillance and Supervision (ISS) cases have continued as per the programme with eye's on visits in accordance with Court / panel direction.

For those young people not known to Children's Social Work a Risk Assessment have been undertaken in respect of their attendance at school. There is a clear evidence based that state young people in education are more vulnerable to criminality and exploitation hence wherever possible we need to encourage and support this vulnerable group to attend school.

Youth Engagement Service:

This merger of the Risk and Vulnerabilities and Youth intervention Teams (as mentioned above) created to manage the current situation reflects the aims of the Youth Practice Model and the development of the Youth Engagement Service. This has created an opportunity to assess the joint working and effectively test the principles of our ambition.

Progress on the full development has continued during the Covid19 situation. An operational group (Risk and Vulnerability, Youth Intervention Team, Youth Offending Team, Early Support and Detached Youth Work) are developing process and procedure to ensure all concerns are captured and plans effectively identified and discharged. Reporting pathways and delivery processes were presented to service directors in May 2020. Business cases currently being prepared to formalise the request.

MST and STARS

The original Multisystemic Therapy (MST) team has continued to work with all existing families throughout lockdown, albeit since 16th March much of this work has been conducted remotely. MST usually follows a predominantly home-based treatment model. However, with some adaptations, including the use of endorsed multimedia applications, this has resulted in most cases observing comparable and, in some cases, improved engagement and

outcomes. Face-to-face clinical sessions have continued throughout the period where an assessment of need has supported this, for example risk (including exploitation and violence), engagement or communication barriers. These have incorporated individual family's preferences and circumstances and has followed wider Children's social work guidance on safety and PPE.

The new MST-E team (Enhanced - for children at risk of exploitation) launched on 6th April, 2 weeks into lockdown. All new staff including 4 Therapists, 2 Service Managers and a Business Support officer were inducted remotely. In the initial 5 weeks following lockdown due to induction, redeployment, and leave pressures, caseloads were held at 80% to ensure capacity to meet existing families' needs. However, after a period of intensive training, service capacity incrementally increased as planned through May. Capacity will further increase throughout June to meet the ongoing steady flow of eligible referrals. Since April, referrals into MST have been processed solely via the early support multiagency panel (ESMAP) to ensure families have timely access to other suitable services in the absence of immediate MST availability.

Alongside colleagues from the Youth Engagement Service and Early Support, MST has led on the development and funding bid to establish a new targeted service. The new "School Transitions and Reach Service" (STARS) aims to provide a whole family-based approach to support young people at risk of future involvement in violence and exploitation, due to disrupted school transitions. The STARS model, which will immediately focus on those particularly impacted by the restriction's resultant from COVID19 transitioning from year 6 to 7, is largely based on key principles of MST.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding processes have been adapted to the new environment to ensure that Child Protection Conferences and Children Looked After reviews take place in timescale and with partners, children (where appropriate) and their families participating.

Kirklees Childrens Safeguarding Partnership

The Partnership continues to meet and has assurance meetings chaired by the Independent Chair on a two-weekly basis. The meetings are attended by the three key Partners, Social Care, Health and West Yorkshire Police, enabling the Chair check and balance in relation to all safeguarding matters and that Partners are working together to ensure children and young people are safeguarded.

The KSCP has created a Covid19 webpage which is regularly updated and put training briefings and Practice Guidance presentations and briefings online. E learning opportunities continue.

Ofsted

We continue to liaise with Ofsted over a range of issues, seeking support particularly in the area of registering new Children's homes for a temporary period in response to sufficiency pressures. Work is being undertaken in relation to reviewing and strengthening our Sufficiency Strategy considering the Covid-19 challenges.

NSPCC

We have now received a number of referrals via this route and we plan to undertake an audit of the quality of those received and the outcomes for the child or young person.

Development and impact issues

We continue to be focused on the effectiveness of the actions we have taken and tracking of changes in demand and workloads.

We continue monitor performance to ensure that compliance around key indicators is maintained. This is necessary to identify and respond to any significant variation in trends in the key data, e.g., rise in DA referrals. This and other data do need to be compared to a “normal” period including holiday periods to determine if we are seeing an under reporting of referrals.

There is both innovation and resilience in how services are being delivered. Technology has enabled many activities to be carried out on a virtual basis and this has been developed appropriately. The principles of good Social Work, however, remain in place and there remains a focus on ensuring that the voice of the child is heard and that children remain safe. Where possible services ensure that a child is seen, and contact is maintained and reviewed.

2. Information required to take a decision

No decision is required, this report is submitted at the request of the Board to monitor the number of children in care. This report is also shared with the Children’s Scrutiny Panel on a monthly basis.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

Not applicable

3.2 Working with Partners

Not applicable

3.3 Place Based Working

Not applicable

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Not applicable

3.5 Improving Outcomes for Children

This information is provided at the request of Corporate Parenting Board to monitor the number of children in care their age and location of placements.

3.6 Reducing demand of services

Not applicable

3.7 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

Not applicable

4. Consultees and their opinions

Not applicable

5. Next steps

A similar report will be presented to future meetings of the Corporate Parenting Board.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

That the report be noted.

7. **Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations**
Not applicable
8. **Contact officer**
Julie Bragg, Head of Corporate Parenting
9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**
Previous reports to the Children's Scrutiny on number and age of children in care.
10. **Service Director responsible**
Elaine McShane, Service Director (Child Protection and Family Support)

Tom Brailsford, Service Director (Resources Improvement Partnerships)

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Name of meeting: Children’s Scrutiny Panel

Date: 02/07/20

Title of report: An update about the wider opening of schools and the planning for next academic year

Purpose of report: This report will provide an overview in relation to schools since the outbreak of Covid-19 and explain the engagement, collaboration and planning in place that has supported a wider opening for children and young people. Alongside this, and where there are specific characteristics in relation to the type of setting, work is also being undertaken for Special Schools, the Early Years and Childcare sector, Post 16 settings and Alternative Provision.

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?</p> | <p>Yes/ no or Not Applicable YES</p> <p>If yes give the reason why</p> |
| <p>Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council’s Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u></p> | <p>Key Decision NO</p> <p>Private Report/Private Appendix NO</p> |
| <p>The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?</p> | <p>Yes/No or Not Applicable N/A</p> <p>If no give the reason why not</p> |
| <p>Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name</p> <p>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</p> <p>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?</p> | <p>Mel Meggs – Director for Children’s Services 22/06/20</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>Cabinet member portfolio</p> | <p>Cllr Carole Pattison – Lead Member for Schools, Aspiration and Communities Cllr Viv Kendrick – Lead Member for Children’s Services</p> |

Electoral wards affected: ALL

Ward councillors consulted: An update was provided to all councillors by Cllr Carole Pattison w/c 18th May 2020

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Background

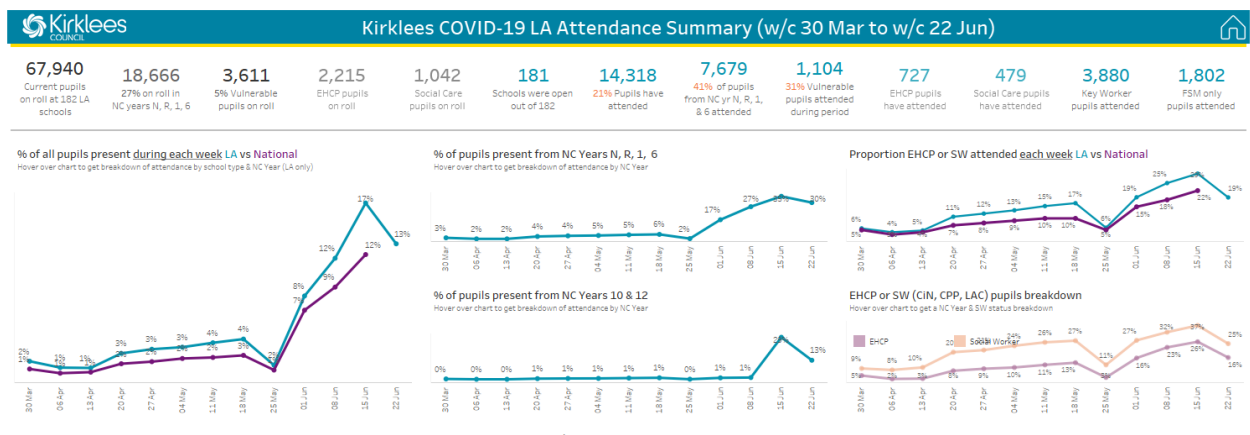
In response to the Covid-19 outbreak, on 20th March 2020 the Government announced that schools were to be closed schools to all pupils, other than those who are the children of Key Workers and those classed as vulnerable. The definition of vulnerable children from the government is defined as;

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, for the purposes of continued attendance at educational settings, vulnerable children and young people are defined as those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and it is determined, following risk assessment, that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment
- have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children’s social care services), and who are therefore in need of continued education provision - this might include children on the edge of receiving support from children’s social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET (‘not in employment, education or training’), those who are young carers and others at the provider and local authority’s discretion

Full Department for Education (DfE) guidance is available at; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

The attendance since that time has followed the pattern below (a larger version of the charts is available at Appendix A)



The Government stated on 11th May 2020 that it was the intention that schools, colleges and childcare settings (with a particular emphasis on Primary Schools) may be able to begin to open for a wider number of children from 1st June with the following year groups prioritised; Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, Year 10 and Year 12 but that this would be subject to ‘5 tests’ being met. The Department for Education guidance states;

‘We will only do this provided that the five key tests set by the government justify the changes at the time, including that the rate of infection is decreasing. As a result, we are asking schools, colleges and childcare providers to plan on this basis, ahead of confirmation that these tests are met.’

The 'five tests' as set out by the Government are;

- *Protect the NHS's ability to cope. We must be confident that we are able to provide sufficient critical care and specialist treatment right across the UK*
- *See a sustained and consistent fall in the daily death rates from COVID-19 so we are confident that we have moved beyond the peak*
- *Reliable data from SAGE¹ showing that the rate of infection is decreasing to manageable levels across the board*
- *Be confident that the range of operational challenges, including testing capacity and PPE, are in hand, with supply able to meet future demand*
- *Be confident that any adjustments to the current measures will not risk a second peak of infections that overwhelms the NHS*

Initial guidance was issued by the DfE on 14th May, which has been updated many times since (to include further detail and clarification).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june>

Additional DfE Guidance was issued about implementing 'protective measures' in schools and childcare, as well as supplementary guidance on premises, remote learning, travel, attendance, pupil wellbeing and staffing.

Over the Bank Holiday weekend (25th May), DfE Guidance was issued/updated for both Primary and Secondary settings to support their planning.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-secondary-schools>

The Guidance states that secondary pupils (Y10 and Y12) should not be invited back into school until w/c14th June, but that Primary Schools 'are still on track for the 1st June'.

On 24th May, the Prime Minister said (emphasis added);

"Schools, colleges and nurseries across England remain on track to open to more children from 1 June, the Prime Minister confirmed today (24 May 2020).

Primary schools will welcome back children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, while nurseries and other early years providers will begin welcoming back children of all ages.

Secondary schools, sixth forms and colleges will also provide face-to-face contact for Year 10, Year 12 and equivalent 16-19 further education students to help them prepare for exams next year. It is expected this will begin from 15 June, with around a quarter of these secondary students in at any point.

The Prime Minister today praised teachers, childcare workers and support staff for the brilliant work they have been doing throughout the pandemic.

This includes providing remote education for those not in school, as well as continuing to provide face-to-face education for the children of priority groups, including vulnerable children and children of critical workers.

*He also **acknowledged that some schools may not be able to reopen immediately**, and committed the government to continuing to work with the sector to ensure any schools experiencing difficulties are able to open as soon as possible.*

¹ SAGE – the Government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies

In line with our roadmap setting out how the UK will adjust its response to the virus, our approach to schools remains a cautious, phased one. It is also broadly in line with other European countries.

We continue to consider all the evidence, as we said we would, and will continue to work with schools, teachers and unions over the coming week before making a final decision.

It also remains the case that schools will only reopen to more children if the government's five tests are met by Thursday 28 May.

In the coming days, the Prime Minister will set out the government's progress in meeting these five tests...Today's announcement comes after a constructive period of consultation with schools, teachers and unions, led by the Education Secretary Gavin Williamson.

Clear, detailed guidance has been published by the Department for Education on how schools can open in a way which is safe for children, teachers and parents.

While we recognise that full social distancing may not be possible, our guidance sets out a range of measures to protect children and staff. This includes:

- *reducing the size of classes and keeping children in small groups without mixing with others*
- *staggered break and lunch times, as well as drop offs and pickups*
- *increasing the frequency of cleaning, reducing the used of shared items and utilising outdoor space*

All children and staff, and their families, will also have access to testing if they display symptoms. This will enable children and staff to get back to school if they test negative, and if they test positive a test and trace approach can be taken.

Children will also be encouraged not to travel on public transport where possible, in line with the advice to the wider population."

2. Planning in Kirklees

Since schools closed to the majority of pupils, regular engagement by the Lead Member for Schools, Aspiration and Communities, the Director for Children's Services and the Service Director for Learning and Early Support has been taking place with;

- School Headteachers representing the system from the Education and Learning Partnership Board (Secondary/Special/Primary) - originally daily, now twice a week.
- CEOs of Multi Academy Trusts – weekly
- Civil Servants from the DfE – originally daily, now twice a week.

In addition, in the first week of lockdown, ie from 23rd March 2020 the following bespoke arrangements were put into place;

- Kirklees Learning Partner 1:1 engagement with Headteachers
- Community Planning Hub strategic leads (building on the 17 Kirklees Community Hubs to support locally planned arrangements, plus 1 specific hub for Special Schools given the bespoke nature of their offer and cohort).
- TU liaison via corporate Business Continuity (as well as now a Schools specific weekly meeting led by the Service Director for Learning and Early Support)
- A schools Covid dedicated telephone line and email address to funnel in questions/queries.
- Regular comms/FAQs/Guidance issued to the system via 'Heads Up' our electronic communication system to schools from Learning Services (attendance, admissions etc. as well as all corporate services including Infection Prevention Control, Catering, Cleaning, Risk Assessments, HR, Emergency Planning as well as sign posting to the regularly updated Government Guidance. This has been particularly key in terms of supporting Free School Meals entitlements and challenges with the Government system/the Council's support for children and families over the holiday periods.
- Liaison and contribution to regional and national strategic groups via the Association of Directors of Children's Services.

The engagement has been significantly important to enable us to be responsive on a range of issues that our schools are facing and be able to feedback issues to the Department for Education to influence and shape next steps.

3. Kirklees position on 'the 1st of June' and our system led approach

Since the government ambition of returning a wider group of children back to schools there has been anxiety nationally particularly centred upon whether the 1st June is possible to undertake the planning required and whether the 5 'tests' have been met.

Our approach has been to work in partnership with our schools to undertake planning, led by the Education and Learning Partnership Board which is chaired by Cllr Carole Pattison, and focus upon a robust planning process, rather than be entirely fixated on an arbitrary date.

The Partnership Board met on 6th May to seek consensus on a planning approach. Three principles were agreed that would underpin our approach, and that a small number of workstreams would be convened so that, together, our schools and the Local Authority and our partners are ready to take forward key actions, as well as explore any barriers and opportunities. The principles are;

1. A partnership-based approach to securing a positive return, promoting the health, safety and positive outcomes of pupils, their families, staff and wider stakeholders.
2. Harnessing the collective capacity of a system-led approach to be proactive and supportive whilst enabling creative solutions and co-operation.
3. Sufficiently identify and deploy resources, funding, and expertise in a local, regional and national context.

To complement the collaboration that has been undertaken throughout the Covid-19 outbreak. The following workstreams were established and all met for the first time w/c 18th May and have continued to meet on a weekly basis in order that they can capture the key themes, tasks, risks and undertake the planning required to bring about a a system wide response and/or solution. The workstreams are;

- Governance and Workforce

Representation - Learning Partner, HR, Governor, Trade Union (Teaching and Support staff) Public Health, Head Teacher representation, Wellbeing, Community Planning lead

Key issues – risk assessment, class size and staff availability, staff workload and wellbeing, costs associated with opening for more children and young people

- Pupils and families

Representation - Learning Partner, Head Teacher representation, Governor, Public Health, Wellbeing, Community Planning lead

Key issues – wellbeing, attendance

- Physical environment, support and ancillary services

Representation- Learning Partner, Trade Unions, (Teaching and Support Staff), Operational services (catering, cleaning, caretaking), Transport, Policy, Public Health, Head Teacher representation, Community Planning lead

Key issues – protective measures in education and childcare settings, transport, food

- Learning and Education

Representation - Learning Partner, Trade Union (Teaching and Support Staff), Head Teacher representation, Governor, Data/Intelligence, Community Planning lead

Key issues – attendance, vulnerable children and young people, curriculum, priority groups, assessment and accountability

In addition, groups have been arranged and have taken place for the Early Years and Childcare sector and our Post 16 Colleges.

On the 15th May, the Director for Children's Services issued a letter for parents and carers via our schools to provide an update about the government announcements and the Kirklees approach;

"Dear parent/carer

I hope you and your family are keeping as well as possible at this very difficult time. I would like to update you on the work taking place between Kirklees Council and schools across the district after the recent government announcement about schools reopening. As you know, schools have been closed to most pupils since March as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the government have now stated that schools across England should prepare for pupils to start returning, possibly from June 1st 2020. This would begin with certain year groups and the government will base their final decision on infection rates around the country.

We are working very closely with schools and I can assure you that safety and wellbeing are the absolute priority. Schools and the local authority were already looking at how to reopen safely before the government made their announcement. This is continuing and, at every step, we are taking advice from experts in Public Health about how to minimise risk.

We are immensely grateful to Kirklees schools for the way they are supporting children, young people and families through the pandemic. At extremely short notice, they launched online learning platforms and began to teach and nurture children in a totally different way. Schools have met tough challenges and have also gone above and beyond in many other respects. Their work has been inspirational, we are proud of them and we value everything they do.

Our schools now face, perhaps, an even bigger challenge. The government's announcement means that, with the support of the council, they must plan to reopen to certain pupils in a way that keeps children, families and staff as safe as possible. The government have stated that, at first, primary schools would reopen for children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. Secondary schools and sixth form colleges would begin some face-to-face contact with pupils in Year 10 and Year 12, but this would supplement their current remote learning. Pupils in Year 10 and Year 12 are not expected to return on a full-time basis at this stage. Schools would also stay open for all children of key workers and children who are classed as vulnerable.

We absolutely understand that you may be very concerned. The government have said they will provide urgent guidance, which is regularly updated, and that each school will be able to manage this process in a way that best suits its needs.

Ultimately, schools will make their own decisions on how to start reopening, first for children in the eligible year groups and then in the future for all pupils. Every school is unique and every school will make its own plans, working alongside the council. The focus is on putting these arrangements in place and we know your school will contact you directly when they can share details. We are talking to schools about how they will support children who are returning, and also how they will support those who can't return at this time.

The government are encouraging children in the eligible year groups to attend school unless they are self-isolating or there are other reasons for absence (such as shielding due to health conditions). Siblings in other year groups will not be able to attend for the time being, unless they are classed as vulnerable or are the children of key workers.

The latest government advice to schools is to:

- Carry out a risk assessment before opening to more children - the assessment will directly address risks associated with Covid-19 so that sensible measures can be put in place to minimise risks for children and staff.
- Make sure pupils do not attend school if they, or a member of their household, have symptoms of Covid-19.
- Minimise contact by having smaller classes or group sizes and changing the layout of classrooms and other spaces.
- Reduce the possibility of mixing between groups, such as through staggered break and lunch times and by having staggered drop-off and collection times.
- Clean more often on frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, handrails, table tops and equipment.

- Promote regular hand washing for 20 seconds and always aim to ensure the highest possible standards of hygiene.

The government have also published guidance for parents and carers and we would encourage you to read this important information. You can click on this link to see the guidance or you can access it at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-forparents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

The Covid-19 pandemic is an unprecedented situation for all of us. Schools will need some time to respond to this latest challenge and, together, we are carefully considering every question, every concern and all of the government updates. This includes all aspects of school life. I can assure you that nothing is more important to us than the safety of our children and young people.”

On Wednesday 20th May, a position statement was released by Cllr Pandor and Cllr Pattison about the Kirklees approach;

We are working together with local schools to plan for them to reopen safely, but they will only do so when it is right for children and their families, teachers and school staff.

On Friday, we will host an online conference for schools across Kirklees to support them through the changes they need to make before opening safely for more pupils.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Shabir Pandor, said:

“The truth is that no one has yet decided that schools will reopen on 1 June. It’s a government ambition that depends on several factors. We need to know a lot more before we make a judgment that’s right for families, teachers and schools in Kirklees.

“Anyone who cares about the welfare of our children would be planning for their safe return to school. That’s exactly what we’re doing here in Kirklees.

“We are standing shoulder to shoulder with schools and colleges across Kirklees, working with trade unions and supporting families. We will do what’s in the best interests of all our children and families and make sure they have the best possible environment to return to school.

“It could mean some children return to school on 1 June, or it might be later. Either way, we will be guided by the evidence, not the politics.”

On Friday, Cabinet Member for Learning, Aspiration and Communities, Cllr Carole Pattison, will host an online meeting with schools to hear their views and concerns about the public health challenges tied to the government’s guidance on reopening.

Cllr Pattison said:

“We are talking to schools all the time to support them through the transition. We will continue to do that until they reopen, and beyond.

“In many ways, the government’s timetable and guidance has raised more questions than answers. We are helping schools to navigate the confusion.

“We are listening to their concerns and helping them overcome the barriers. The government is asking a lot of schools, but they have been doing a fantastic job. We will continue to support schools, listen to the unions and do the best for our children in these difficult circumstances.

“We will be guided by the evidence and by the individual circumstances of schools. Parents and schools will then be free to make their own choice.”

Schools Webinar

On Friday 22nd May, Kirklees ran a webinar, chaired by Cllr Pattison with senior managers from Children’s Services and Public Health so that we could talk about the pressing issues that schools are handling at a local level and explain the support, advice and guidance available to support planning.

Cllr Pattison opened the webinar by saying;

'Firstly I want to say a heartfelt thank you for the support you are giving our children, young people and families. Schools across Kirklees have truly gone above and beyond in helping our families in so many different ways. We are incredibly proud of your response to the Covid 19 crisis.

Together, we now face another huge challenge. We know that welcoming more children back into school comes with countless issues, and the planning of how to achieve it is very complex.

As a local authority, we are standing alongside our schools and we want to continue supporting you in every way we can. As you are very aware, the government's current target is that certain year groups will potentially start to return from June 1st – but this is a government aspiration which depends on many factors.

Like you, we are keenly awaiting further updates. We are here to help you navigate through the current uncertainty – and we are clear that schools in Kirklees should only open more widely when the time is right for their pupils, staff and families.

You all face your own unique circumstances and challenges in the context of your individual settings. Different approaches are being taken, which is only right, and we recognise the huge amount of hard work taking place at every school and we are committed to working alongside you to meet your challenges.

Of course, many children have been out of the physical school environment for two months and we must consider their needs, both in the short term and the long term.

Equally, the safety of children, families and staff is absolutely paramount – and this is underpinning everything we do.

Working with our schools, our commitment is to do what is best for our children and young people, based on scientific evidence. None of us have ever faced this situation before, but we will find our way through it in a measured way and with safety always as our first priority.

Today's session is part of our commitment to support you by giving guidance, leadership, advice and support. We know you are all dealing with a vast number of concerns and questions – from parents and others.

We truly value the work you are all doing and we will continue to be alongside you every step of the way.'

Wider reopening of Schools

Following the Government announcement on Thursday 28th May where it was assessed that the 'five tests' had been met, the Council and our schools and settings were able to respond promptly and issued a communication to our parents and carers on 12th June;

"Dear parent/carer

We hope you and your family are staying well at this challenging time.

We would like to update you on the local and national picture in relation to schools welcoming back more children.

As you may know, in line with the government guidance, many Kirklees primary schools have now started to bring back children in certain year groups (Nursery classes, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6). Every school is different and, with our support and advice, they are taking their own approaches.

Safety remains absolutely paramount in all decisions. We continue to work closely with our Kirklees schools so that they can open more widely, but we remain clear that schools should only do this when the time is right for their children, families and staff. Many schools have welcomed back more pupils, while others are working towards this goal.

Priority is still being given to vulnerable children and the children of key workers. We know that, in some cases, schools simply do not have enough space to have more pupils on site in the safest possible way. As you will appreciate, all schools are doing their very best for their local community.

This week, the government made a further announcement. It said that primary schools will not be expected to bring back pupils in the other year groups (Years 2, 3, 4 and 5) unless they are able to do so safely. This applies for the rest of the summer term and means that the government is giving schools flexibility to make their own decisions in the way that we, as a local authority, have been doing for several weeks.

We know that many families would like their child to return to school if possible. We can assure you that, with our support, Kirklees schools are doing everything they can to offer places to more children so that families have that choice.

We are grateful for the way our schools are giving tremendous support to children and young people, including those who are learning at home. Your school will continue contacting you directly about their own plans and their own approach.

Many schools have remained open throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and welcomed children into the classroom during both the Easter holidays and May half-term. Schools staff truly went above and beyond by supporting families in this way. The government is now looking at possible plans for the summer holidays, which start next month. There is no clear detail at the moment, but an announcement is expected soon and we will update you when we can.

We will continue advising local schools with the best interests of pupils, staff and families at the heart of everything we do together. We can assure you that safety will always be our first concern, and public health colleagues are an integral part of our team supporting schools. Thank you for supporting your local school.”

It should also be noted that the Education and Learning Partnership and our schools recognise and have a focus not only the groups of children that are to be invited back into school, but also those that will remain at home. Schools and settings have been supporting children and their families to access learning remotely using several methods, including providing online material and education packs, the opportunities to harness further opportunities will underpin our Learning Strategy.

On Friday 19th June, the Government announced that;

Children in England are set to benefit from a £1 billion Covid “catch-up” package to directly tackle the impact of lost teaching time, the Prime Minister and Education Secretary have confirmed.

As plans continue for a full return to education from September, the government has announced £650 million will be shared across state primary and secondary schools over the 2020/21 academic year.

Whilst head teachers will decide how the money is spent, the government expects this to be spent on small group tuition for whoever needs it.

This one-off grant to support pupils in state education recognises that all young people have lost time in education as a result of the pandemic, regardless of their income or background.

Separately, a National Tutoring Programme, worth £350 million, will increase access to high-quality tuition for the most disadvantaged young people over the 2020/21 academic year.

This will help accelerate their academic progress and prevent the gap between them and their more affluent peers widening.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/billion-pound-covid-catch-up-plan-to-tackle-impact-of-lost-teaching-time>

Further details are expected to be made available from the Government with including information about how the funding is to be allocated to schools. It is anticipated that Schools Forum will have the overview of allocation across Kirklees Schools as the detail emerges.

Further Government guidance is expected shortly for wider school planning from September.

4. Implications for the Council

- **Working with People**

The approach that Kirklees, and our schools and education settings are taking is to work together for our children and young people and their families. Whilst closed to those children other than the children of key workers and vulnerable groups since 23rd March, our schools have been exceptional in their support of the children who are on their role. Ensuring they have access to learning opportunities and continue to be safe has been at the forefront of their response. Our schools have continued to provide an offer across the Easter holidays and over the half term period and have worked carefully and diligently in support of their families.

- **Working with Partners**

The Education and Learning Partnership Board provides strategic system leadership. Representation is included from all phases and types of schools, Governors, MAT leaders, Trade Unions and Council Officers.

- **Place Based Working**

Kirklees as a place is made up of different communities and the diversity of its communities is one of its key strengths. The early set up of the localised planning coordination that builds upon the Kirklees Community Hubs has supported a more local response to engagement and detailed planning, as well as supporting parents to access places and schools to collaborate. The strategic hub planning coordinators will plan opportunities for summer activities, as well as undertake more localised planning with groups of schools in preparation for the next academic year.

- **Climate Change and Air Quality**

With most children staying at home since March 23rd there has been a reduced need for home to school transport. Planning for the access to school in relation to school travel is key in terms of wider opening. It will remain a key priority , particularly when considering public transport alongside staggered start and finish times.

- **Improving outcomes for children**

All the planning and activity that is being undertaken is with a key focus on outcomes for children and young people in terms of their educational, emotional and physical wellbeing and safety. It will be imperative to continue to plan and consider our children's outcomes alongside wider government guidance.

- **Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**

Do you need an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)?

Not currently applicable, but consideration will be given in terms of future planning.

5. Consultees and their opinions

The Education and Learning Partnership Board has representation from school headteachers, school governors, MAT leaders, Trade Union colleagues, and Senior Council officers and is chaired by the Lead Member for Schools, Aspiration and Communities. As is outlined above, there is very regular engagement with;

- School Headteachers representing the system from the Education and Learning Partnership Board (Secondary/Special/Primary) - originally daily, now twice a week.
- CEOs of Multi Academy Trusts – weekly
- Civil Servants from the DfE – originally daily, now twice a week.

All elected members were provided with an update from the Leader and Portfolio Lead about the Kirklees position. In addition, specific and individual engagement has been taking place upon request.

6. Next steps and timelines

- For the Education and Learning Partnership to continue to lead strategic planning for next academic year as part of a system wide approach, to enable and stand alongside our schools to make decisions that are appropriate for each setting.
- To consider the wider opportunities and implications for home/blended learning, the ‘catch up’ activity (details of which are anticipated shortly from the Government) and to think beyond the immediate situation, for example the opportunities that require consideration across the new academic year.
- To work across Children’s Services and the wider Council to ensure we are well prepared and can continue to be able to be responsive to the Covid-19 situation with a focus on enabling children to achieve their potential.
- To harness the innovation, research based opportunities that are emerging from wider partners and parents, for example, the University of Huddersfield and the Education Endowment Fund that will inform and underpin our Learning Strategy.

7. Officer recommendations and reasons

It is recommended that Scrutiny Panel members;

- Recognise and acknowledge the offer that our schools have continued to make for Kirklees children and young people and their families.
- Note the partnership approach that is being led by Cllr Carole Pattison through the Education and Learning Partnership Board. The Council is taking a collaborative approach to system leadership and working alongside our schools and settings.
- Note that as a system we are required to be able to work responsively and in a timely way as and when government guidance is issued. The strength has been in working together to put in place robust advice and guidance and share best practise.
- Note that further planning will be required as part of our strategic ‘recovery’ planning as part of our Learning Strategy moving forwards.

8. Cabinet Portfolio Holder’s recommendations

N/A

9. Contact officer

Jo-Anne Sanders – Service Director for Learning and Early Support
jo-anne.sanders@kirklees.gov.uk
 01484 221000

10. Background Papers and History of Decisions

SAGE evidence and modelling can be found at the link below
<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/scientific-advisory-group-for-emergencies-sage-coronavirus-covid-19-response>

11. Service Director responsible

Jo-Anne Sanders – Service Director for Learning and Early Support



67,940

Current pupils on roll at 182 LA schools

18,666

27% on roll in NC years N, R, 1, 6

3,611

5% Vulnerable pupils on roll

2,215

EHCP pupils on roll

1,042

Social Care pupils on roll

181

Schools were open out of 182

14,318

21% Pupils have attended

7,679

41% of pupils from NC yr N, R, 1, & 6 attended

1,104

31% Vulnerable pupils attended during period

727

EHCP pupils have attended

479

Social Care pupils have attended

3,880

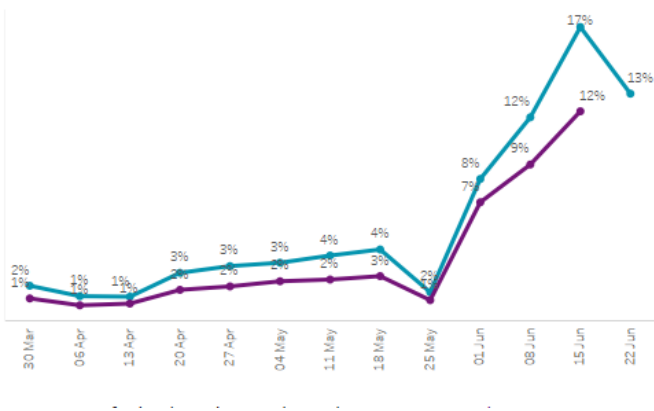
Key Worker pupils attended

1,802

FSM only pupils attended

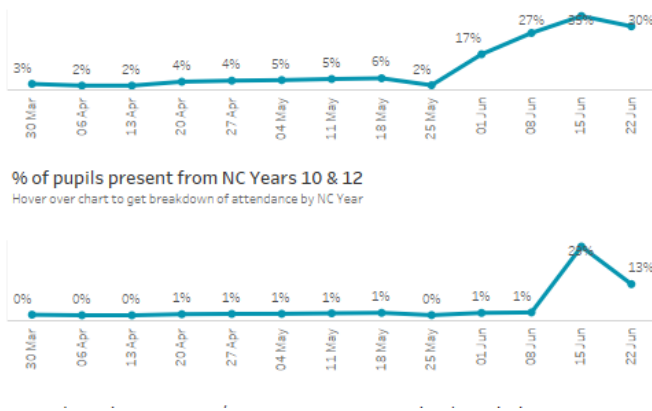
% of all pupils present during each week LA vs National

Hover over chart to get breakdown of attendance by school type & NC Year (LA only)



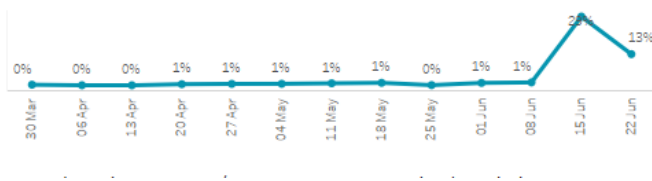
% of pupils present from NC Years N, R, 1, 6

Hover over chart to get breakdown of attendance by NC Year

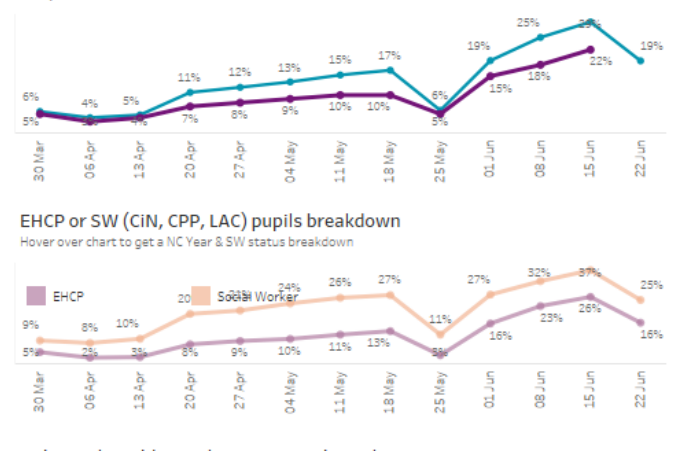


% of pupils present from NC Years 10 & 12

Hover over chart to get breakdown of attendance by NC Year

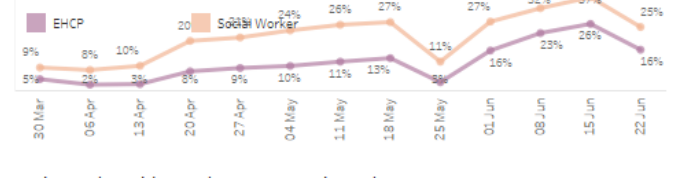


Proportion EHCP or SW attended each week LA vs National



EHCP or SW (CiN, CPP, LAC) pupils breakdown

Hover over chart to get a NC Year & SW status breakdown



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Name of meeting: Children’s Scrutiny Panel
Date: 2nd July 2020
Title of report: Almondbury Community School update

Purpose of report: To provide Children’s Scrutiny panel with an update on the implementation of the Council’s decision to change the age range of Almondbury Community School from the 1st September 2020.

| | |
|---|---|
| Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards? | n/a |
| Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council’s Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u> | Key Decision – n/a Private Report/Private Appendix – n/a |
| The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny? | Not Applicable |
| Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name | Jo-Anne Sanders (for Mel Meggs) |
| Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services? | n/a |
| Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support? | n/a |
| Cabinet member <u>portfolio</u> | Cllr Carole Pattison – Learning and Aspiration Cllr Viv Kendrick – Children’s Services |

Electoral wards affected: Almondbury

Ward councillors consulted: Ward members are receiving regular updates

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? GDPR has been considered. The information in this report does not identify any individuals.

1. Summary

To provide Children's Scrutiny panel with an update on the progress of the implementation of the decision to close the secondary phase of Almondbury Community School by September 2020.

2. Current position

The preparing for the transition of Almondbury Community School secondary pupils to schools they referenced has remained a key priority for the council despite the current Covid-19 crisis.

Working in partnership with Almondbury Community School, King James's School, Netherhall High School and Newsome High School

Strong partnership work has continued between Kirklees, Almondbury Community School, King James's School, Netherhall High School and Newsome High School. All parties have remained committed to achieving the best outcomes for children affected by the closure and have continued to work together to achieve this.

Despite the challenges faced due to Covid-19 significant progress has continued to be made and planned pupil transitions are still on track for September 2020.

Schools have been communicating directly with families in the lead up to September. Although parent information evenings had to be cancelled alternative arrangement have been put in place to support transition such as making available virtual tours, videos from staff and the publication of frequently asked questions.

Academy Conversion

Close collaboration has continued with Impact Education Trust who were appointed by the Regional Schools Commissioner as the academy sponsor for the primary school. The Trust have been engaging stakeholders about a new identity for the school and as a result have announced their intention to change the name to Hill View Academy.

Progress is being made towards the target conversion date of 1st September however contingency plans will be in place should this date need to be reviewed. Such risks are common with all academy conversions.

Uniform support

It was agreed some time ago that vouchers would be issues to parents of pupils currently at Almondbury Community School to allow them to purchase branded items of uniform required for their new school in September.

Uniform suppliers have been closed due to Covid-19. However, we will be working with the suppliers over the coming days to co-ordinate the timing of when the vouchers can be issued.

Staffing/HR

Primary phase

The Interim Executive Board of Almondbury Community School approved a new fit for purpose staffing structure to be implemented from 1st September 2020. The staffing review has been completed in consultation with staff and their trade union representatives. There have been no compulsory redundancies as a result of this process.

A consultation for the required TUPE process associated with the academy conversion has now commenced.

Secondary phase

Staff who were aligned to the secondary phase all now have an exit strategy for 31st August. Some staff have secured roles in other schools including the local partnership of schools and others have chosen to take voluntary severance. Again, there have been no compulsory redundancies.

We would like to place on record our gratitude to the staff at Almondbury Community School for their professionalism and dedication to the pupils of the school in challenging circumstances.

Capital development

On 16th June Cabinet approved the invest of £6.5million in high quality education facilities of which a large proportion will support Almondbury Community School (primary), King James's School and Netherhall Learning Campus High School.

Planning permission has been granted to move the temporary classrooms on the St Helen's Gate site to the front and the full planning application is expected to be submitted shortly for the new block of classrooms and associated facilities.

Plans are in place for works at the Greenside building to be completed over the summer holidays to ensure that facilities are ready for September. There are also minor works to the Fernside building and site to support the continued use on a temporary basis by King James's School.

Letters have been sent to parents keeping them informed of this progress.

Marking the closure

The Interim Executive Board of Almondbury Community School are planning an event to mark a good end to the school in its current form. Arrangements will take account the current Covid situation and more information will be available soon.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1. Working with People

We are continuing to work with the partnership of local schools to ensure that all children and young people enjoy the best possible standards of care and education in a school which is sustainable for the long term.

3.2. Working with Partners

Regular meetings engagement continues with staff, school leaders and trade unions.

We are continuing to work in collaboration with Impact Multi Academy Trust for the long term benefit of Almondbury Community School pupils now and into the long term future.

3.3. Place Based Working

We continue to work with the local partnership of schools to ensure that all local children have access to high quality educational opportunities.

3.4. Improving outcomes for children

Throughout programme of works involved, improving outcomes for children is at the heart of everything. In addition to ensuring that there are sufficient secondary places in the local area we continue to aim to maximise opportunities to:

- Offer high quality and inclusive education and diversity of provision to all
- Provide a breadth of curriculum offer that enables young people to have access to the widest opportunities to fulfil their aspirations and ambitions
- Be financially viable and therefore have future security
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Strengthen community cohesion
- Use sustainable travel and transport for school

3.5. Other (e.g. Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

Work has continues on the academy conversion and the TUPE process.

4. Consultees and their opinions

Communication and keeping all stakeholder updated has remained a priority.

In order to reassure parents and answer any questions we have been working with the partnership of local schools to keep parents updated.

Consultation will take place as part of the planning process for the development of facilities at King James's School, St. Helen's Gate.

5. Next steps and timelines

- Continue to work with local schools and parents on high quality transition arrangements for all ACS pupils
- Staff consultation on TUPE process (primary)
- Issue school uniform vouchers in advance of planned transitions
- Submit a planning application for the development of facilities at King James's School, St. Helen's Gate
- Finalise temporary transport arrangements for King James's School pupils attending the Fernside site from September

6. Contact officer

Jo-Anne Sanders – Service Director Learning and Early Support

Jo-anne.sanders@kirklees.gov.uk

Martin Wilby – Senior Strategic Manager – Learning Places and Access

Martin.wilby@kirklees.gov.uk

7. Background Papers and History of Decisions

[Future Options for ACS - Cabinet Report - 19 March 2019 \(agenda item no 20\)](#)

(Background and seeking permission to consult)

[Future Options for ACS - Outcome Report for Cabinet 29 May 2019 \(agenda item no 9\)](#)

(Outcomes of the consultation and next steps including publication of statutory notices)

[Future Options for ACS - Final Decision report for Cabinet - 16 July 2019 \(agenda item no 8\)](#)

(Final decision)

[Call-in of Cabinet decision in relation to Almondbury Community School](#)

(Cal-in in relation to the decision taken by Cabinet)

8. Service Director responsible

Jo-Anne Sanders – Service Director Learning and Early Support

Jo-anne.sanders@kirklees.gov.uk

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CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY PANEL – WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

MEMBERS: Cllr Andrew Marchington (Chair), Cllr Paul White, Cllr Amanda Pinnock, Cllr Aafaq Butt, Cllr Richard Smith, Cllr Paul Davies, Linda Summers (Education Co-Optee), Dale O'Neill (Co-Optee), Toni Bromley (Co-Optee)

SUPPORT: Helen Kilroy, Principal Governance & Democratic Engagement Officer

| FULL PANEL DISCUSSION | | |
|--|---|---|
| ISSUE | APPROACH/AREAS OF FOCUS | OUTCOMES |
| 1. Review of the Improvement Journey | The Panel will continue to review the Improvement Journey of Children's Services. | (Lead Officer: Elaine McShane) |
| 2. Special Educational Needs and High Needs | 6 monthly reports to be considered by the Panel and visits to be arranged to some of the SEN Teams to corroborate the information in the presentations provided to Panel Meetings. Arrangements to be made for virtual visits, where appropriate, during the current pandemic. | (Lead Officer: Ronnie Hartley/Jo-Anne Sanders) |
| 3. Partnership arrangements | The Panel will continue to scrutinise partnerships and boards during the 2020/21 municipal year, for example, Corporate Parenting Board and Health and Wellbeing Board and the Panel will look at how data was collected and used to improve outcomes. * | (Lead Officers: Elaine McShane/Jo Sanders/Tom Brailsford) |
| 4. Educational Outcomes | <p>The Panel will consider the impact of children being out of school during the current pandemic and the measures in place to mitigate the impact, recognising the different experiences in respect of home schooling and digital inclusion/engagement. The Panel agreed to link in and scrutinise the work being undertaken by the Learning Partnership on this issue.</p> <p>The Lead Member agreed to keep a watching brief with regard to what the educational impact had been for the children who had transferred from Almondbury Community School to alternate schools and to ensure that the children were getting the right</p> | <p>(Lead Officer: Jo Sanders)</p> <p>(Lead Officer: Martin Wilby)</p> |

| FULL PANEL DISCUSSION | | |
|---|---|--|
| ISSUE | APPROACH/AREAS OF FOCUS | OUTCOMES |
| | amount of results and opportunities. | |
| 5. Youth Services and Initiatives | The Panel agreed to look at the Youth Practice Model, providing input into the development of the model with a view to scrutinising the effectiveness of the model following its introduction (based on data/evidence). | (Lead Officer: Elaine McShane) |
| 6. Number of children in care | A standing item for each meeting containing details of how many children are in care, and particularly how many are placed out of area. * | (Lead Officer: Julie Bragg) |
| 7. Performance Information (Children's Services) | The Panel will continue to monitor the performance of the Learning Early Support Service and Child Protection & Family Support in the Informal meetings. * | (Lead Officer: Steve Comb/Julie Bragg – reports produced by Sue Grigg and Andrew Wainwright from Performance Team) |
| Lead Member Briefings | | |
| (Bi-monthly LM Briefings to be arranged with Cabinet Members for Learning and Children's; and Mel Meggs/Elaine McShane and Jo-Anne Sanders during 20/21) – Actions from these meetings will be included within the Panel's Work Programme where appropriate | | |
| Exploitation Strategy | The Lead Member agreed to keep a watching brief to monitor the impact on children and young people in the borough. | (Lead Officer: Elaine McShane) |

*It is suggested that arrangements be made for representatives from the Panel to attend relevant meetings of Partnership bodies to ensure relevant scrutiny of performance data and information is being effectively scrutinised "upstream". This will not prevent onward referral the Panel where appropriate but will act as a means of avoiding un-necessary duplication.

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