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**Service Director – Legal, Governance and
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Thursday 14 November 2024

Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

Children's Scrutiny Panel

The **Children's Scrutiny Panel** will meet in the **Council Chamber - Town Hall, Huddersfield** at **10.30 am** on **Friday 22 November 2024**.

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 'S Lawton'.

Samantha Lawton

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 Itrat Ali (Chair)

Councillor Ashleigh Robinson

Councillor Jane Rylah

Councillor Hannah McKerchar

Councillor Richard Smith

Vacancy

Agenda

Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

Pages

1: Membership of the Panel

To receive apologies for absence from those Members who are unable to attend the meeting.

2: Minutes of the Previous Meeting

1 - 10

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on the 11th October 2024.

3: Declaration of Interests

11 - 12

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

4: Admission of the Public

Most agenda items take place in public. This only changes where there is a need to consider exempt information, as contained at Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. You will be informed at this point which items are to be recommended for exclusion and to be resolved by the Committee.

5: Deputations/Petitions

The Panel will receive any petitions and/or 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 submit a petition at the meeting relating to a matter on which the body has powers and responsibilities.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10, Members of the Public must submit a deputation in writing, at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting and shall subsequently be notified if the deputation shall be heard. A maximum of four deputations shall be heard at any one meeting.

6: Public Question Time

To receive any public questions.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, the period for the asking and answering of public questions shall not exceed 15 minutes.

Any questions must be submitted in writing at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

7: The Kirklees Safety Valve agreement

13 - 26

The Panel will consider a report providing an insight into the Council's 'Safety Valve' agreement with the Department for Education in relation to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Contact: Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director (Learning and Early Support)

8: Performance Data (Children's Services) - verbal update on highlights

The Panel will consider a verbal update on the performance highlights from the latest Children's Services data report covering period ending September 2024.

Contact: Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director
Pam Allen, Interim Service Director
Robert Fordyce for Vicky Metheringham (Service Director)

9: Pre-decision scrutiny - Cabinet decisions on the horizon

The Panel will consider any potential areas of pre-decision scrutiny in accordance with any cabinet decisions relating to children and young people which are on the horizon and receive updates from senior officers in Children's Services.

Contact: Service Directors (Children's Services)

10: Feedback from Panel Members on issues considered by Kirklees Parenting Board

Panel Members who attend the Kirklees Parenting Board, will feedback on key areas of focus considered by the Board, which will be of interest to the Panel.

11: Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 2024/25

27 - 44

The Panel will consider the agreed areas of focus and activity for the 2024/25 municipal year and discuss the progress achieved to date and the Panel's scrutiny going forward.

Contact: Helen Kilroy, Assistant Democracy Manager

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Contact Officer: Helen Kilroy

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY PANEL

Friday 11th October 2024

Present: Councillor Itrat Ali (Chair)
Councillor Jane Rylah
Councillor Richard Smith
Councillor Hannah McKerchar
Councillor Tanisha Bramwell
Councillor Ashleigh Robinson

In attendance: Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director - Learning and Early Support
Rob Fordyce, Principal Social Worker for Kirklees and Head of Service - Quality Assurance and Practice Development
Vicky Metheringham, Service Director – Child Protection & Family Support
Cllr Kendrick, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

1 Membership of the Panel

No apologies were received.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

That the minutes of the meetings held on the 30th August 2024 be approved as a correct record.

3 Declaration of 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 public questions were received.

7 Quality Assurance Annual Report

The Panel considered the Children's Services Annual Quality Assurance report which was presented by Robert Fordyce, Principal Social Worker for Kirklees and Head of Service - Quality Assurance and Practice Development. The report was for information purposes and provided an overview of audit and learning processes for the last 12 months for consideration and discussion.

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Rob Fordyce advised the Panel that Quality Assurance in Children's Social Care was conducted through a number of strands. These took the form of:

- **Learning Conversations** - between managers and practitioners and involved looking at a single child's file to understand the quality of the work within that file. Managers who did not have line management responsibility for the practitioner were matched with them to ensure an independent eye on the quality of work. The results of the conversation were then recorded on a standard form which would then be analysed monthly by Rob Fordyce on a qualitative and quantitative basis to establish areas of strength and areas for improvement.
- **Practice Learning Days** - a Team or Area would meet to conduct a deep dive into one area of practice, for example, the quality of work addressing domestic abuse. This involved an element of peer auditing and a learning element to promote improvement.
- **Deep Dive Audits** - issues or themes arising from Learning Conversations would be discussed and considered by Senior Management and a plan for improvement put in place, eg: Life Story Work as mentioned in the report.

Rob Fordyce, highlighted the following key points from the report -

- Engagement – Quality engagement had improved from 50% being good in December 2024 to 88%, as a result of training and team development sessions for practitioners. Improvements had been made to evidence good practice in children's files.
- Quality Assurance Board – As it had been noted that some Teams were doing better than others in certain areas, a Quality Assurance Board of Service Managers met once a month to share good practice across Services.
- Management Oversight and Supervision – This was a longstanding area of development, highlighted in the previous Ofsted report. At the start of the timeframe 38% of children's files showed evidence of supervision taking place and this had risen to 65%. A survey for managers and practitioners to discover areas for learning had led to a training course being developed and delivered to managers throughout 2024. The training would continue into 2025 so improvements should continue to be seen.
- Partnership working – This had dipped, from 81% of children's files showing good partnership working in December 2024 to 61% in August. This was a concern to the service, and it could be due to auditors having a more nuanced understanding of what good partnership working looked like due to the Learning Conversations that had taken place. Rob Fordyce advised the Panel that this was an area that would be looked at by the Service.
- Assessments and Planning – 80% of assessments reviewed were addressing the risks in August, which was good, however the Youth Engagement Service failed to be consistently good and the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Services could be better. To address this, the language used to describe the concerns around children would be a focus over the next 12 months, and this work would cumulate at the Annual Social Care Conference in March 2025 to coincide with World Social Work Day.
- Quotes from Families – these had been gathered during the process of the Learning Conversations and used throughout the report. Feedback from

Children's Scrutiny Panel – 30 August 2024

parents about the service they had received from their social worker had largely been positive, at least 80%.

The Chair added that she looked forward to attending some of the forthcoming Practice Learning Days, along with other Panel Members.

Vicky Metheringham, Service Director for Child Protection and Family Support, advised that a plethora of auditing activities were planned over the next 12 months, and that it was very difficult to achieve the volume of Learning Conversations, due to the conflicting demands on Manager time, however there remained a commitment to ensuring they were completed. The Panel recognised the time pressures on Teams to complete the Learning Conversations but agreed that they were a very useful tool.

Questions and comments were invited from Panel Members, with the following issues being covered:

- How were Managers and staff being paired up and was this to promote best practice? Rob Fordyce advised that Managers and practitioners were matched randomly to complete the Learning Conversations, ensuring that there was no line management responsibility involved in the process. The process was cross-service to ensure the dissemination of good practice.
- Would Partnership working involve grass root organisations? Robert Fordyce advised that this should involve all professionals involved with a family should be consulted and included. Schools and health colleagues were often at meetings, however there may be other professionals such as probation workers or community organisations who could or should be included and this was an area for development.
- What would the approach be to young people and how would they be engaged and included in the conversation? Robert Fordyce advised that a key strand of the working group around the use of language was consultation with young people, by using the Children and Care Council, the Care Leaver's Forum and the Our Voice Team. The Panel was informed that there was currently a scoping exercise underway, to identify the jargon in assessments and any templates used. This language would then be shared with young people and their parents to gain their understanding. There was also a move towards removing acronyms wherever possible. Training would include the voice of young people about their responses to reading their own files.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report be noted and Officers be thanked for their contributions.
- (2) That Members of the Panel would attend some of the forthcoming Practice Learning Days with Teams across the Children's Service and report back with updates to future Panel Meetings.

8 Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services – outcome and recommendations

The Panel considered the overview of the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services presented by Vicky Metheringham, Service Director for Family Support and Child Protection, advised the Panel that the inspection had taken place over a three week period, and was the first full inspection since 2019 when Children's Services had

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been judged as 'Requires Improvement'. The outcome of the inspection was that Children's Services were now judged to be 'Good'.

Vicky Metheringham highlighted the most important issues raised within the Ofsted report –

- **Areas for development** - identified by Ofsted had already been identified by the Service and plans for improvement were already in place and being addressed.
- **Leadership Team and staff** - The report noted that the leadership team were established and confident and staff were committed. Improvement was said to have been driven by strong corporate and political support. A range of effective bespoke services were meeting local need and making a tangible difference to children's experiences.
- **Areas judged to be good** were:
 - the impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families; the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection; the experiences and progress of children in care; and
 - overall Effectiveness
- **The experiences and progress of care leavers** was judged to be 'requires improvement to be good', and this was an area the Service had been focussing on for the last year to make the necessary improvements.
- **Areas of strength identified** were that –
 - children were seen quickly and listened to, and kept within the family network where possible;
 - children at risk of exploitation were helped by a strong multi-agency response;
 - disabled children received comprehensive packages of support;
 - the Virtual School provided a focus on the academic and developmental needs of children;
 - social workers knew their children and families well;
 - stable foster placements were meeting children's needs;
 - care leavers spoke with warmth about their relationships with personal advisors;
 - there was a strong offer to newly qualified social workers; and
 - staff morale was high and staff felt valued.
- **Areas for improvement** – there were three areas for improvement, which the Service were already aware of -
 - to provide more choice and availability of homes for children and care leavers;
 - to improve the quality of written records, plans and minutes for the minority of children in care and care leavers where these documents were weak; and
 - to improve the effectiveness of practice with every child experiencing harm from neglect and/or domestic abuse.
- The National Director for Regulation of Social Care, Yvette Stanley, had written to the Director of Children's Services to personally congratulate the Service on the outcome of the inspection, recognising the significance of the achievement.
- **Kirklees Parenting Strategy** had been relaunched to improve services to care leavers, and the Care Leaver's Forum had co-authored and were co-

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delivering Kirklees Parenting Training to support this. Suitable accommodation continued to be a pressure within the authority and was a key priority of the Kirklees Parenting Strategy; work was taking place to build a broader collaboration with social housing providers.

- After the inspection, children in care and young care leavers had been written to with a summary of the key strands of the report's findings in a child-friendly language.

Questions and comments were invited from Panel Members, with the following issues being covered:

- A question was asked around the plan to improve the effectiveness of the practice of children experiencing harm from domestic abuse and whether it contained anything to focus on the preventative measures around engaging with children who had been affected, Vicky Metheringham advised the Panel that there was a plan that had been formulated with Ofsted based on detailed conversations with them throughout the inspection, and this included a focus on prevention of domestic abuse and early intervention.
- A question was asked regarding children and care leaves regarding sufficiency of homes and how long it would take to provide the accommodation that was needed, Vicky Metheringham advised that work was ongoing to recruit additional foster carers, and that this issue was on the agenda for consideration by the Panel in January. Nationally, local authorities, including Kirklees, were having to house children in semi-supported accommodation for emergency foster care as there were not always places available in foster homes. The Panel were advised that this accommodation was registered, and suitable staff were in place.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report be noted and Officers be thanked for their contributions.
- (2) The Panel agreed that the Ofsted report was very positive and that it was encouraging to see the significant improvements that had been made since the last Ofsted report in 2019. The Panel asked that their thanks and congratulations be passed onto the Teams within Children's Services for their hard work and commitment to improving the delivery of services and support to children and young people in Kirklees.

9 Performance Data (Children's Services) – verbal update on highlights

The Panel considered a verbal update on the performance highlights from the latest Children's Services data report covering period ending 31st August 2024 presented by the Service Directors. The Panel were informed that due to the data referring to August, some school information was not available.

Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director for Learning and Early Support, highlighted the following key points –

- **Review of Permanent Exclusions 2023/24** – As part of the Kirklees Futures, Our Learning Strategy, there was an ambition is to have no permanent exclusions. In 2023/24 there were 121 notifications of permanent exclusions, which converted to 88 permanent exclusions, with 4 to still be decided. 91 children were excluded the previous academic year. There were 20 primary school exclusions, compared to 72 high school exclusion. The most frequent reason given for exclusion was persistent disruptive behaviour, and exclusions were more likely to occur among boys and in Key Stage 3. The local authority was working collaboratively with schools to avoid permanent exclusions.
- **Statutory compliance in issuing Education Health and Care Plan (EHCPs)** - Progress was outlined as 99 new plans were issued in August, of which 35% were within the statutory 20 week compliance period. This brought the total number of plans being maintained to 4,453. A number were issued outside the statutory timeframe, but work was underway to complete both new and older plans. The year to date average was 25% compliance, which was an improvement on the SEN2 return data taken at the end of the year. The drive for increased compliance was being balanced with the need for quality, and significant activity for improvement was taking place across the partnership. The Panel would have the opportunity to look at the data in more depth in the forthcoming months.

The Panel asked what happened to excluded children, and Jo-Anne Sanders advised that from day 6 after exclusion the local authority had a statutory duty to make an offer of education. Children were supported to return to full time education as soon as practicably possible. Last academic year only two pupils were excluded for a second time, meaning that most pathways identified were successful. There were challenges in providing enough suitable provision, and there would be a report on sufficiency coming to the Panel later in the municipal year.

In answer to a question regarding school funding, Jo-Anne Sanders advised that schools were tackling funding challenges in a number of ways and that strong partnerships, especially those between home and school, were the factor making the biggest difference. The Panel were assured that schools were working hard to make children feel included and comfortable despite the challenges facing communities such as the pandemic and cost of living crisis. In answer to a question about trends in exclusions by ward, Jo-Anne Sanders advised that the statistics were based on such a small number, and therefore there was no clear pattern and there were no outliers in terms of permanent exclusions. This was being reviewed and schools were sharing good practise and supporting one another, with a focus on the children and their families.

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The Panel asked about the order in which the backlog of EHCP applications were being processed and were informed that it was only Looked After Children that may be prioritised. Jo-Anne Sanders advised that the process of working through the backlog was fair and equitable and the service had a forensic oversight of each stage of the process. Sometimes waiting times were influenced by a delay in receiving advice from professionals, but those waiting the longest were being processed as a priority.

In response to a question from the Panel about a possible correlation between children waiting for their EHCP, and school exclusion, Jo-Anne Sanders advised the Panel that analysis was undertaken of children on SEN support and suspensions, as suspensions for persistent disruptive behaviour were likely prior to exclusion. The Panel was offered an in-depth analysis of the data on suspensions at a further meeting if required.

Vicky Metheringham, Service Director for Family Support and Child Protection, highlighted the following key points -

- **Front Door** – There had been an increase in the timeliness of contacts being screened in one day, to 90%, which meant that families were receiving intervention as soon as concerns were raised.
- **Re-referrals** had reduced in August to 21%, indicating that children's cases were not being closed too soon. A deep dive had been carried out to understand previous data which showed a spike in the number of re-referrals.
- **Child Protection Plans** - The number of children on a Child Protection Plan had remained stable at 426.
- **Child Protection Conferences** - 86% of Children's Protection Conferences took place within 15 working days of the Strategy meeting; the reasons were known for those which had not and a multi-agency safety plan was in place for those children.
- **Children going missing** - There was a rise in Children Going Missing in August, with 84 episodes involving 56 young people. An independent interview was offered to all of them, with 74% take up, which helped provide strategies to prevent further missing episodes.
- **Children in Care** - The number of Children in Care peaked in July, reduced in August and continue to reduce. This indicates that the service was recognising when children need to come into care was but also making sure they left care in a planned and timely way. Children in care's health is a priority, indicators show that their health needs are being met.
- **Care Leavers** - The service was in touch with 96% of Care Leavers and 92% lived in suitable accommodation. Those not living in suitable accommodation had clear plans in place and there were increased visits to those young people.
- **Number of Contacts** - there was a concern about the number of contacts from other professionals not resulting in a referral. Only 19% of contacts had resulted in a referral, indicating that too many were coming through the front door that could be dealt with differently. Conversations with colleagues and partners about how to improve that were ongoing.
- **Performance around assessments** - There was decline in some areas of performance around assessments, with the time they were taking being too long despite putting in enhanced oversight of practice. Some of this could be

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due to August being a very busy period, and staff taking time back after the Ofsted inspection in July, but there was a clear plan in place for activity to drive improvement.

- **Foster placements** - The number of children living in a foster placements reduced to 69% from 74%. This was related to the age of the children but also because the right kind of placements for those young people were not available.
- **Pathway plans for Care Leavers** - It was recognised that pathway plans for our Care Leavers are not high quality in terms of the language used, so a new way of doing the plans had been introduced. This involved engaging the young people to assist in writing the plans so that they can be invested in them.
- **Accommodation for Care Leavers** - the service was also working hard to make sure that our Care Leavers were provided with the right accommodation at the right time.

The Panel asked about the reduction of contacts in August and Vicky Metheringham advised that August was significantly quieter due to school holidays, with schools being a major source of referrals. There was usually an influx before school holidays, this was a trend which could be seen in most LA data sets.

In answer to a question about the low rate of conversion of contacts to referrals, Vicky Metheringham advised that multi-agency training had taken place and the issue had been raised at weekly referral and review meetings, chaired by the Head of Service. The Panel was advised that a reduction in inappropriate referrals was necessary and that conversations were ongoing.

RESOLVED:

That the verbal updates on performance data be noted and Officers be thanked for their presentations.

- 8 Pre-decision scrutiny - Cabinet decisions on the horizon**
No items of pre-decision scrutiny on Cabinet decisions were discussed.

- 9 Feedback from Panel Members on issues considered by Kirklees Parenting Board**
The Panel noted that there had been no meetings of the Kirklees Parenting Board since the last meeting.

Viv Kendrick, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, advised the Panel that the issues and challenges of Care Leavers would be a future focus of the Board.

10 Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 2024/25

Panel Members gave updates on visits which had been recently attended and key points from the visits would be included in the work programme for 2024/25 and in future Scrutiny Annual Reports. The visits which had been undertaken were –

- Kirklees Fostering Network Support Group meeting at Mirfield Community Centre (26th September 2024)
- HomeStart AGM and 25 Year Celebration (26th September 2024)
- SEND Transformation and Commissioning Group (3rd October 2024)
- National Kinship Week, Connected Persons Support Team drop-in session at the Greenwood Centre (9th October 2024)

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the progress on the Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 2024-25 and the updates on recent visits be noted.

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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

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.

REPORT TITLE: The Kirklees Safety Valve agreement

Meeting:	Children s Scrutiny Panel
Date:	22/11/24
Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Cllr Amanda Pinnock & Cllr Viv Kendrick
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	No N/A
<p>Purpose of Report To provide insight into the Council’s ‘Safety Valve’ agreement with the Department for Education in relation to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.</p>	
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the report is noted. • Scrutiny support is requested moving forward on specific elements of the work e.g. Delivering cultural change – Clusters. <p>Reasons for Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ‘Big Plan’ our SEND Transformation programme is complex, extensive and has a range of projects at various stages of maturity to be delivered by 2030. This is in line with the timescales required to deliver capital builds and cultural change. Scrutiny support moving forward would provide added value. 	
<p>Resource Implications: Grant payments are dependent on delivery of agreed outputs. Capacity of officers / partners.</p>	
Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> & name	Jo-Anne Sanders (for Tom Brailsford) 11/11/24
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	Shared for info 12/11/24
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?	Shared for info 12/11/24

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: Portfolio Holders and Cabinet

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Executive Summary

High needs funding is funding for children and young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) who need extra support at school or college or in alternative provision settings. Support for children and young people with SEND is a national issue for every Local Authority with demand, complexity and increasing costs providing major challenges. Many Authorities, including Kirklees, have historically, and continue to experience significant annual overspends on their High Needs Block, which is part of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

In the financial year 2020/21, the Department for Education put in place an intervention programme for the Local Authorities with the highest Dedicated School Grant deficits, this is called a Safety Valve Agreement. In the first phase of this programme there were 5 Local Authorities.

Government introduced Safety Valve for Kirklees in the second phase in the financial year 2021/22 along with 8 other Local Authorities. Kirklees agreement now ceases in 2030. It is noted that the original agreement was until 2026/27, but after being in enhanced monitoring, the size of the challenge has been noted and the timescale has moved to 2030.

There have been a further 2 phases. In 2022/23 there were an additional 20 Local Authorities in the programme, and in 2023/24 a further 4.

A Safety Valve Agreement is a relationship with the Department for Education (DfE) which provides a Local Authority with additional funding to support the reduction of the historic deficit in exchange for meeting financial and transformational targets. Part of the agreement at this point is reaching a positive 'in-year' balance on its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) account by the end of 2026-27.

A quarterly monitoring regime is in place and monies are released once these returns are 'accepted'. Schools Forum is engaged in the reporting and trajectories against Safety Valve Targets.

Kirklees is ambitious for local children and families and has made sure that parallel to these targets, and in full view, is a focus on improving outcomes and making a difference for and with our communities.

To deliver both Safety Valve requirements and Kirklees ambition, a comprehensive SEND transformation strategy and plan has been formulated and commenced and this has been published as 'The Big Plan'. [SEND - The Big Plan! | How we plan for SEND | Kirklees SEND Local Offer \(kirkleeslocaloffer.org.uk\)](https://www.kirkleeslocaloffer.org.uk)

It should be noted that to achieve the changes required, a whole system approach is required and relies on each partner playing their part. To support this, strong system governance is in place supported by operational projects and task / finish groups,

Co-production with young people, Parent and Carer Network (PCAN), Schools and Health has been fundamental to the approach to strategy creation and delivery. This manifests itself in changing how we work together to improve timeliness of acting on SEND need, and potential need, to jointly make a difference for our communities.

2. Information required to take a decision

What is Safety Valve

Safety Valve is an agreement with the Government entered into by a range of Local Authorities. Its focus is on addressing and reducing the high deficits in local authorities' Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budgets, particularly those related to high needs funding for children and young people with SEND.

The DfE provides additional funding to these Local Authorities to help manage and reduce their deficits. In return, Local Authorities commit to implementing specific reforms and savings measures to assist in ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

Why are we in a Safety Valve agreement

Like many other Local Authorities, Kirklees has major challenges relating to demand, complexity and increasing costs. This has meant a significant annual overspend in 23/24 of £14.8m on the High Needs Block and this continues to rise. The cumulative deficit in 23/24 was £43.7m. The Safety Valve initiative offered the opportunity to receive additional income, both capital and revenue.

What does it mean for Kirklees

Kirklees agreement is currently from 2022 to 2030 and means receiving £33.5m in revenue and £8.2m in capital across the lifetime of the arrangement. Kirklees is also expected to contribute funding towards removing the deficit. It is noted that the original agreement was until 2026/27, but after being in enhanced monitoring, the size of the challenge has been noted and the timescale has moved to 2030.

The agreement was updated in 2023 and can be seen in full at Appendix 1. It focuses on the following key areas :-

- a. Ensure inclusive co-production and engagement is and will be central in approach to understand children's, young people's and family needs and how these are best met by a range of settings, services, local schools and at home;
- b. Implement joint commissioning and sufficiency strategies, re-balancing the range of placements, services and provision locally. These will include rebuilding and creating additional SEMH and Complex ASD special school places and increasing additionally resourced provision, to ensure a sufficient mix of flexible services and local placements for children and young people. Kirklees will have sufficient local education places that meet the needs of their population. This includes re-building 2 schools that will create an additional 100+ places.
- c. Ensure that children, young people and families have the right help and support, at the earliest possible opportunity, at a time that is right for them. This includes supporting children with SEND in mainstream schools by continuing to develop and implement the graduated approach, outreach support model and inclusion strategies, Kirklees will work with their schools in clusters that will further develop the skills, expertise and capacity of the workforce;

- d. Ensure that children and young people are being prepared for adulthood throughout their life course, promoting a focus on independence and transition as early as possible in a child's and family's journey;
- e. Continue to review assessment and decision-making processes to ensure decisions are made transparently, in a timely manner and in partnership with children, young people and families. This will include recruiting additional educational psychologists and the implementation of a range of holistic assessments tools engaging professionals and families and consolidating improvements and timeliness in our EHCP assessments and reviews. Kirklees as a local area, will increase and improve the timeliness and quality of responses to needs of children and young people with SEND.
- f. Develop and implement inclusion strategies as part of our approach to secure and develop Alternative Provision for children across all key stages and the creation of a new Alternative Provision Free School.

Monitoring implications

Money is released on a quarterly basis and is subject to monitoring and reporting to the DfE on progress and financial health. Kirklees must adhere to agreed-upon reforms and savings targets to continue receiving support. Part of the agreement at this point is reaching a balanced in-year balance on its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) account by the end of 2026-27.

Fulfilling monitoring requests involves Senior Officers Kirklees Chief Executive, Service Director for Finance as the S151 officer, the Executive Director for Children and Families and the Service Director for Learning and Early Support being involved along with operational staff.

What we are doing as a council to meet the requirements

Whilst the arrangement is between the Council and the Department for Education, a whole system approach is required to address the significant challenges faced. The SEND transformation programme's strategy to achieve this is set out in 'The Big Plan'.

Recognising the systemic change required, comprehensive SEND programme governance aims to ensure we have system wide ownership, involvement and awareness - Please see Appendix 2. This features leadership and connectivity from a political, strategic and operational viewpoint across the system. Scrutiny is a vital part of this, particularly as we move forward.

The focus of 'The Big Plan' is on early intervention and prevention via ensuring we have 'enough of the right stuff' (Sufficiency); ensuring 'are we getting it right (Quality & Compliance); and responding to 'Need' (Demand).

Within those 3 workstreams, the programme has 29 projects with a focus on task / finish and making a difference. Examples include :-

- a. The re-build of 2 special schools and the creation of more Additionally Resourced Provision which means more children can be educated locally in Kirklees.

- b. Commissioning and contract arrangements which means making sure services are good quality and value for money.
- c. Quality and compliance – this means making sure that we ‘get it right’. We know that there are many things that can be done to support children and young people with and without an Education & Health Care Plan.
- d. Driving cultural change – Clusters. This means schools and partners working together / sharing expertise at a local level to identify and meet need at its earliest opportunity.
- e. Preparing for adulthood. This work is currently being re-set with RISE (Research & Improvement for SEND Excellence) supported by The Council for Disabled Children. This is all about 4 areas between the ages 0 to 25 and covers Education or employment; Independent living and housing options; Participating in the local community / society and having positive relationships; and good health.

A raft of work has already been delivered, and the following examples provide an indicator of real impact for local people whilst at the same time addressing our financial challenges :-

Assistive Technology Example 1

R has autism, a learning disability and a sensory processing difficulty, he finds it very difficult to regulate himself. At times he finds travelling in the car difficult to manage and becomes increasingly heightened in presentation. R has attacked his mum while driving and he will often lean over and bang on the windows. More recently R had to be restrained in the car by his older brother to prevent R from hitting his mum while driving. R has attempted to climb out of the window whilst the car was moving previously and has no sense of danger.

Additionally, R struggles with sensory processing, he has an under responsive vestibular system which means he has to move more than others his age to gain an understanding of where his body is in space.

Solution: It was identified that R would benefit from using a harness to stabilise his core to help him feel calmer and alert when in the vehicle. The cost of this was just over £200.

Outcome: The provision has prevented the need for further carer support and reduced the risk of harm to R and his family.

Assistive Technology Example 2

B is Autistic and non-speaking but is very communicative. B has been trialling and using an Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC) device (iPad with a program called TD snap) successfully in Woodley School since December 2021. This device, used in school, is funded directly by school but stays in school so she does not have access to it in the home. AAC support has been provided by the Speech and Language Therapist and her class team. B is successfully using her communication device within the school setting to communicate her wants and needs. B has access to paper based AAC in the home however it is important for her to have the same device to help her communicate her needs at home.

Solution: TD Snap is a flexible software offering a choice of AAC solutions to help people with communication disabilities. Funding was provided for an iPad and TD snap. The cost of this intervention was £434.

Outcome:

Email received from dad stating: ‘Before there was very little communication between myself and B, she got very frustrated and upset with herself when she was trying to tell me something which would lead to meltdown. With TD snap there is now much better

communication between B and myself, less meltdowns because she can tell me what she wants to do or wants. This device has had such a positive impact on our lives and can only improve in the future. She can even communicate with other people who come to our house who are really impressed with the device. I would recommend anyone who has a similar condition to try this device. PS – she can even answer me back when I tell her to do something’.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Council Plan

The work described fully supports, and is featured in, the Council plan.

3.2 Financial Implications

Please see above and Appendix 1.

3.3 Legal Implications

The work supports our legislative requirements, including timeliness of response.

3.8 Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

Key risks include :-

- a. Sufficiency of SEND provision. Failure to meet the needs of the SEND and pre-SEND community, due to increases in demand and complexity of need, insufficient capacity within services / partnership and a lack of existing local provision leading to missing statutory deadlines and associated financial and reputational consequences.
- b. Safety valve commitments not delivered leading to negative impact on Service users, non-receipt of significant finances and reputational damage.
- c. System ownership and engagement within Services / partners is not achieved. Partners do not prioritise the project which means work not undertaken and outputs / outcomes not achieved.

Addressing inequalities is at the very heart of the programme and is a core ethic. Integrated Impact Assessments have been undertaken on specific elements of the programme to ensure opportunities are in view and there are no accidental adverse implications.

4. Consultation / Engagement

The SEND programme has co-production and engagement as a core value and approach. Young people, Parent and Carer Forum (PCAN), Health and Schools have been integral to creating and implementing strategic approaches. For example, schools and PCAN have been integral to creating the Kirklees ‘Cluster’ approach; and young people / partners including PCAN have coproduced our ‘Big Plan’.

The partnership approach is being further widened and C+K Careers are helping to drive our Preparing for Adulthood project.

In addition to the above and the governance already outlined, specific consultation has taken place e.g. on changes to SENDIF (SEND Inclusion Funding) to align with national approaches.

Engagement with our Schools is crucial, and to support this, Schools Forum and our Education and Learning Partnership Board are key partners to enable support and challenge regarding spend on our High Needs Block.

5. Options

5.1 Options considered

The SEND programme constantly scans the national picture for innovation and opportunities. It is involved in a range of groups, including but not limited to Local Government Association (LGA) Local Authorities Safety Valve group which involves Directors and Section 151 officers; Childrens Services Directors group; A Safety Valve group of circa 20 Local Authorities instigated by Kirklees that reaches wider than the region.

This intelligence is further supported by the DfE via the recently completed Written Statement of Action quarterly meetings.

It is noted the intelligence from the above sources, and the DfE via the Safety Valve agreement, has confirmed there are currently no areas of innovation that Kirklees has not considered or is not already implementing.

Kirklees has also been recognised as being leaders / a source of best practice e.g. receiving national recognition at awards and being invited to share with other Local Authorities our learning and approach. However, Kirklees will still continue to search for innovation opportunities to make a difference for the people of Kirklees.

5.2 Reasons for recommended option

The SEND programme is complex, extensive and has a range of projects at various stages of maturity. This is in line with the timescales required to deliver capital builds and cultural change. Scrutiny Panel have had the opportunity to observe the SEND Transformation and Commissioning Group, further oversight by scrutiny would provide added value.

The recommendation in the report is noted and Scrutiny support is requested moving forward on specific elements of the work, for example; delivering cultural change – Clusters and sufficiency of specialist learning places, as we secure the rebuilds for 2 of our Special Schools.

6. Next steps and timelines

Scrutiny feedback received and incorporated into planning.

7. Contact officer

Jo-Anne Sanders Service Director – Learning and Early Support
Jo-Anne.Sanders@kirklees.gov.uk

8. Background Papers and History of Decisions

[SEND - The Big Plan! | How we plan for SEND | Kirklees SEND Local Offer \(kirkleeslocaloffer.org.uk\)](http://kirkleeslocaloffer.org.uk)

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Safety Valve Agreement

Appendix 2 – SEND programme governance

10. Service Director responsible

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

Jo-Anne.Sanders@kirklees.gov.uk



Dedicated Schools Grant ‘Safety Valve’ Agreement: Kirklees

1. This agreement is between the Department for Education and Kirklees Council, and covers the financial years from 2021-22 to 2029-30.
2. The authority undertakes to reach a positive in-year balance on its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) account by the end of 2026-27 and in each subsequent year. The authority undertakes to control and reduce the cumulative deficit as follows, not including any contribution made by the department through this agreement:

Year	Forecast DSG Deficit Profile at year end¹ £m
2021-22	£35.8m
2022-23	£46.4m
2023-24	£56.1m
2024-25	£63.3m
2025-26	£63.6m
2026-27	£52.1m
2027-28	£48.0m
2028-29	£40.1m
2029-30	£33.0m

¹ This profile includes contributions that the council will make from its own resources to reduce the DSG deficit.

3. The authority agrees to implement the DSG management plan that it has set out. This includes action to:
- 3.1. Ensure inclusive co-production and engagement is and will be central in approach to understand children's, young people's and family needs and how these are best met by a range of settings, services, local schools and at home;
 - 3.2. Implement joint commissioning and sufficiency strategies, re-balancing the range of placements, services and provision locally. These will include rebuilding and creating additional SEMH and Complex ASD special school places and increasing additionally resourced provision, to ensure a sufficient mix of flexible services and local placements for children and young people. Kirklees will have sufficient local education places that meet the needs of their population. This includes re-building 2 schools that will create an additional 100+ places.
 - 3.3. Ensure that children, young people and families have the right help and support, at the earliest possible opportunity, at a time that is right for them. This includes supporting children with SEND in mainstream schools by continuing to develop and implement the graduated approach, outreach support model and inclusion strategies, Kirklees will work with their schools in clusters that will further develop the skills, expertise and capacity of the workforce;
 - 3.4. Ensure that children and young people are being prepared for adulthood throughout their life course, promoting a focus on independence and transition as early as possible in a child's and family's journey;
 - 3.5. Continue to review assessment and decision-making processes to ensure decisions are made transparently, in a timely manner and in partnership with children young people and families. This will include recruiting additional educational psychologists and the implementation of a range of holistic assessments tools engaging professionals and families and consolidating improvements and timeliness in our EHCP assessments and reviews. Kirklees as a local area, will increase and improve the timeliness and quality of responses to needs of children and young people with SEND.
 - 3.6. Develop and implement inclusion strategies as part of our approach to secure and develop Alternative Provision for children across all key stages and the creation of a new AP free school.

4. The authority also agrees to ongoing monitoring of its performance in fulfilling this agreement. The authority will:
- 4.1. Report tri-annually (as a minimum) in writing to the Department (Funding Policy Unit) on its progress towards implementing the plan as per the conditions set out in paragraphs 2 and 3;
- 4.2. The monitoring reports should include progress against the conditions of grant and a financial dashboard detailing various metrics relating to demand and cost. DfE will provide a template for this;
- 4.3. Inform the Department (Funding Policy Unit) of any unforeseen difficulties or impacts of carrying out the agreement, or any significant risks to reaching the agreed financial position as soon as they arise;
- 4.4. Meet with the Department at any time when the Department deems it necessary to discuss progress towards the agreement.
5. The Department agrees to pay to the authority an additional **£13.5 million** of DSG before the end of the financial year 2021-22. In subsequent financial years, subject to compliance with the conditions set out in paragraph 3, the Department will pay DSG sums as follows. This funding will be provided in instalments and subject to continued satisfactory progress. Subject to full compliance, Kirklees should therefore eliminate their cumulative deficit no later than 2029-30.

Year	The Department agrees to pay to the authority an additional £m of DSG by year end
2021-22	£13.5m
2022-23	£4.0m
2023-24	£2.2m
2024-25	£2.3m
2025-26	£2.3m
2026-27	£2.3m

2027-28	£2.3m
2028-29	£2.3m
2029-30	£2.3m

6. This agreement is subject to review at any time, for example as a result of the following events:

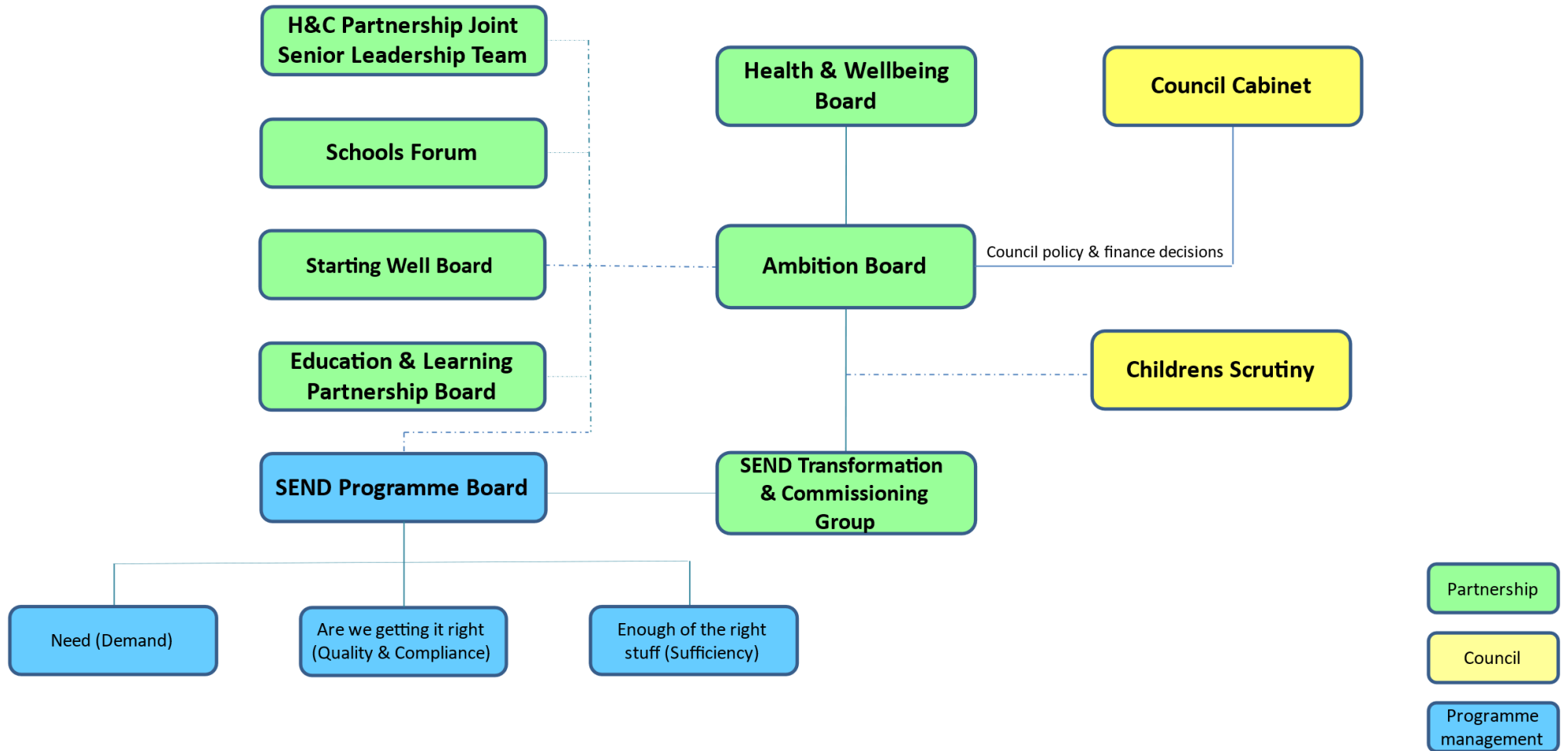
6.1 Higher or lower DSG formula funding levels for the authority in future financial years than those the authority has assumed;

6.2 Significant changes to national SEND policy, for example as a result of the government SEND Review, which impact on elements of the plan;

6.3 Insufficient progress being made towards the authority reaching and sustaining an in-year balance on its DSG account as set out in the plan.

The review process will include an assessment of the impact of the change in circumstances.

SEND Programme Governance



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CHILDREN’S SCRUTINY PANEL – WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

MEMBERS: Cllr Itrat Ali, Cllr Richard Smith, Cllr Jane Rylah, Cllr Ashleigh Robinson, Cllr Hannah McKerchar, Vacancy

SUPPORT: Helen Kilroy (Assistant Democracy Manager), Claire Gardiner (Democracy Officer)

Agenda item/area of focus	Lead Officer	Areas of Scrutiny carried forward from 24-25	Comments
<p>Standard items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-decision scrutiny (decisions by Cabinet) • Performance Information (Children’s Service) – Informal meeting • Feedback from Panel Members on issues considered by Kirklees Parenting Board • Ambition Board Minutes 	<p>Cabinet Members/Senior Officers (Children’s Service)</p> <p>Presented by Service Directors (produced by Lucy Tiffany)</p> <p>Panel Members who attend Kirklees Parenting Board</p> <p>Senior Officers and Cabinet Members</p>	<p>Panel will check at each meeting with Cabinet Members and Senior Officers from Children’s Service if there are any potential areas of pre-decision scrutiny they need to consider at future meetings.</p> <p>The Panel will continue to monitor the performance of the Learning Early Support Service and Child Protection & Family Support (written report in informal session and verbal update on key issues in public meeting). Panel will be asked for questions prior to the Panel meeting so that these can be shared with Senior Officers and Cabinet Members in advance of the Informal meeting.</p> <p>Members of the Panel who attend the Kirklees Parenting Board will feedback on key issues to the Scrutiny Panel as appropriate.</p> <p>The Panel will receive for information the minutes from the Ambition Board meetings which are held quarterly.</p>	<p>Every meeting</p> <p>Every meeting</p> <p>Every meeting</p> <p>Quarterly</p>
<p>Review of the Improvement Journey – Ofsted Inspection</p>	<p>Tom Brailsford/Vicky Metherringham</p>	<p>The Panel will continue to review the Improvement Journey of Children’s Services and receive regular updates following Ofsted Inspections.</p>	<p>Immediate and ongoing</p>

		<p>The Panel will visit Children’s Social Care Teams, Children with Disabilities Team and the Front Door during the 2024/25 municipal year.</p> <p>Training on Corporate Parenting The Panel received a training presentation on Corporate Parenting on the 30th August 2024 and will consider regular updates on issues considered by the Kirklees Parenting Board at each Panel meeting.</p> <p>Visit to No 11 and No 12 hubs The Panel will visit No 11 and No 12 hubs and observe the services on offer and being accessed by young people – to be arranged.</p> <p>Care Leavers Month – October 2024 The Panel will be invited to events taking place during Care Leavers Month (October 2024) and details have been shared with Members of the Panel.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 11th October 2024 The Panel considered the outcome and recommendations of the Children’s Services Ofsted Inspection report, which was published on the 27th August 2024 and highlighted the key areas of improvement for the Service. The Ofsted Inspection covered all areas of the Children’s Service but focussed on children in need, children in care and care leavers. The Panel agreed that the Ofsted report was very positive and that it was encouraging to see the significant improvements that had been made since the last Ofsted report in 2019. The Panel asked that their thanks and congratulations be passed onto the Teams within Children’s Services for their hard work and commitment to improving the delivery of services and support to children and young people in Kirklees.</p>	<p>11.10.24</p>
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<p>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Transformation Plan and Sufficiency of SEND and mainstream capacity</p>	<p>Jo-Anne Sanders Michelle Lister/Paul Calendine</p>	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the SEND Transformation Plan and will focus on the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety Valve - Oversight of the Government Safety Valve Agreement and the current profile of spend across the High Needs Blocks • Quality and Compliance - Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) Overview of volume processes – quality and compliance (including Annual Reviews) • Graduated Approach – Mainstream Schools organised in Clusters - New initiative of schools working in clusters • Specialist places (Sufficiency) - Special Schools – overview of provision and two new school rebuilds <p>To support this scrutiny, the Panel will do the following –</p> <p>Visit to SEND Transformation and Commissioning Group on 3rd October 2024</p> <p>The Panel attended and observed the SEND Transformation and Commissioning Group on the 3rd October 2024 to gain a better understanding of the SEND transformation work. A presentation was carried out sharing reflections, impacts and progress on the programme and clusters and explained the “why, approach and roles”. Break out groups were asked to discuss challenges to SEND, areas of strength, hopes and worries for cluster model.</p> <p>Visit to an Education and Learning Partnership Board (ELPB) meeting – date to be arranged</p>	<p>3.10.24</p> <p>To be arranged</p>
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		<p>Panel meeting on 22nd November 2024 The Panel will consider a report providing an insight into the Council’s ‘Safety Valve’ agreement with the Department for Education in relation to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 17th January 2025 The Panel will consider a report on the Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) giving an overview of volume process, quality and compliance, including Annual Reviews.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 14th March 2025 The Panel will consider a report on the new initiatives in schools that are working in clusters.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 28th April 2025 The Panel will consider a report on Special Schools giving an overview of provision and 2 new school rebuilds – Joseph Norton and Woodley.</p> <p>The Panel will consider sufficiency across Learning places and focus on the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decline of the cohort of children in primary schools in Kirklees - Needs and capacity around the teacher workforce - Opportunities for extensions to entitlements for wrap around care and childcare <p>To support this work, the Panel will take advantage of opportunities throughout the 24/25 municipal year to observe partnership meetings when these issues were discussed including –</p> <p>A Visit to the Places Access and Inclusion Committee of the Education and Learning Partnership Board (ELPB)</p>	<p>22.11.24</p> <p>17.1.25</p> <p>14.3.25</p> <p>28.4.25</p>
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		<p>The Panel will visit the Places, Access and Inclusion Meeting of the ELPB to observe the discussions around needs and capacity relating to the teacher workforce – date to be arranged.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 28th April 2025 The Panel will consider a report on the decline of the cohort of children in primary schools in Kirklees.</p>	28.4.25
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA)	<p>Pam Allen/Vicky Metheringham/Jo-Anne Sanders/Ian Mottershaw and Sara Miles</p> <p>Patrick Boosey (NHS)</p>	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the multi-agency partnership arrangements as part of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) and consider the changes which have been implemented.</p> <p>Visit to Starting Well Board The Panel will visit the Starting Well Board as part of their scrutiny on achieving outcomes for children across Kirklees– to be arranged.</p> <p>Visit to Kirklees Safeguarding Partnership Board (KSPB) on 10th February 2025 The Panel will visit the Kirklees Safeguarding Partnership Board meeting as part of their scrutiny on the working together action plan and achieving outcomes for the children across Kirklees.</p> <p>Panel Meeting on 14th March 2025 The Panel will consider the changes implemented in the Working Together Action Plan and the multi-agency partnership arrangements. Julie Sykes, the Independent Scrutineer of the Kirklees Safeguarding Children’s Partnerships (KSCP) had been invited to attend the Panel meeting in March for this discussion.</p>	<p>To be arranged early in 2025</p> <p>10.2.25</p> <p>14.3.25</p>
Quality Assurance – impact of auditing the Children’s Service	Vicky Metheringham/Robert Fordyce	The Panel will scrutinise the Quality Assurance impact of auditing the Children’s Service and what difference it was making to children’s lives.	

		<p>The Panel will be invited to observe appropriate forums on Quality Assurance, including the Practice Learning days and Quality Learning Events taking place within the Children’s Service.</p> <p>Panel Meeting on 11th October 2024 The Panel considered the Annual Report on Quality Assurance. The report provided an overview of audit and learning processes for the last 12 months for consideration and discussion. It was noted that Members of the Panel would attend some of the forthcoming Practice Learning Days with Teams across the Children’s Service and report back with updates to future Panel Meetings.</p>	<p>11.10.24</p>
<p>Educational Outcomes</p>	<p>Jo-Anne Sanders/Emma Brayford (key lead)</p>	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the educational outcomes of children and young people in Kirklees.</p> <p>Informal Panel Meeting on 11th October 2024 The Panel considered an overview of the statutory outcomes achieved (attainment and progress) by learners who took assessments in Kirklees during the academic year 2023-2024. The report covered outcomes at the end of the Foundation Stage, Phonics (Year 1), Key Stage 2 (Year 6), Key Stage 4 (GCSE) and Key Stage 5 (Post-16). The results and national comparisons provided in this report were subject to validation and the report aimed to offer preliminary insights into the educational outcomes in Kirklees, pending the release of the comprehensive Kirklees Annual Educational Outcomes report.</p> <p>Elective Home Education The Panel received data provided by Jo-Anne Sanders in September 2024 on Elective Home Education, which had been shared with Ofsted during the inspection.</p>	<p>11.10.24</p> <p>Jan/Feb 25 – to be arranged</p>

		The Panel will also meet with Strategic Leads early in 2025 when narrative was available for further consideration and scrutiny by the Panel.	
Partnership Arrangements	Vicky Metheringham/Jo-Anne Sanders/Pam Allen	<p>The Panel will continue to scrutinise partnerships and boards during the 2024/25 municipal year, for example, Kirklees Parenting Board and Health and Wellbeing Board, visits to internal teams and partners and the Panel can look at how data was collected and used to improve outcomes. The Panel can be represented at meetings, events and visits to internal teams and external providers and agree to focus on the following areas:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection • Partnership working • Is the voice of the young person being heard? (as below) • Good practice • Delivery of quality service <p>The Panel have been invited to attend the Home-Start Kirklees Annual General Meeting and 25th Anniversary celebration on the 26th September 2024 where there will be a showcase of work from families, volunteers and staff.</p>	
Voice of the Young Person	Tom Brailsford/Service Directors (Children’s Service)	The Panel will keep a watching brief on all areas of scrutiny by the Panel and explore whether the voice of the child was being heard, whether they are empowered to speak up and ensure that lessons have and are being learned.	
Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)	Jo-Anne Sanders/Mark Janes (Chair of SACRE)	The Panel will scrutinise the work of the Kirklees Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) which includes partnership working with other regional local authorities.	

		<p>Panel meeting 17th January 2025 The Panel will consider the Annual Report from the Kirklees Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).</p>	<p>17th January 2025</p>
<p>Health Provision for Children and Young People</p>	<p>Jane McDonnell (Head of Health Protection in Public Health)</p>	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the health provision for Children and Young People in Kirklees with a particular focus on dental care, babies and immunisations.</p> <p>Joint Informal meeting of the Children’s Scrutiny Panel and the Health and Adult Social Care Panel - 8th January 2025) – Children’s Immunisations The Panel will be invited to attend a Joint Informal meeting of the Children’s Scrutiny Panel and the Health and Adult Social Care Panel on the 16th January 2025 to receive an update and presentation on Children’s Immunisations, including the whooping cough maternal vaccination programme.</p> <p>Joint discussion at Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel on 22.1.25 - Dentistry The Panel has been invited to attend the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel on the 22nd January 2025 for a joint discussion on Dentistry. Representatives from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) will give a report on access to dentistry for Adults and Children.</p> <p>Joint discussion at Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel on 26th February 2025 – Healthy Child Programme The Panel has been invited to attend the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel on the 26th February 2025 for a joint discussion on the Healthy Child Programme as part of pre-decision scrutiny before the report is considered by Cabinet.</p>	<p>8th January 2025</p> <p>22nd January 2025</p> <p>26th February 2025</p>

		<p>Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccination Programme The Panel will have a Joint meeting with the Health and Adult Social Care Panel in 2025/26 to discuss the Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccination programme, aimed at adults over 75 and babies/pregnant women when data will be available for consideration.</p>	2025/26 municipal year
<p>Emotional Wellbeing Provision for children in Kirklees and Mental Health in Schools - Keep in mind</p>	Jo-Anne Sanders/Pam Allen Stewart Horn	<p>The Panel will scrutinise the experience verses the provision of service and seek feedback from service users on their perception on using the service. The Panel will also consider the fluctuation in the waiting times and trends for children’s emotional health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Emotional Wellbeing Provision in Kirklees – “Keep in Mind” The Panel will consider an update on the implementation of the new “Keep in Mind” Service, which was launched in April 2024. The Panel will particularly focus on how the service is working in practice and this may include a visit to the service or attendance at appropriate meetings to understand how it is being implemented.</p>	To be confirmed
<p>Review of the Provision of Short Breaks and Respite Care for Parents and Carers</p>	Jo-Anne Sanders/Pam Allen/Vicky Metherringham/ Stewart Horn	The Panel will consider the review of the provision of short breaks and respite care for parents and carers in Kirklees.	To be confirmed (Feb/March 25)
<p>Review of Children’s Residential Homes and Foster Care Placements</p>	Vicky Metherringham/Pam Allen/Anna Gledhill/Joel Hanna	<p>The Panel will consider an update on the Review of Children’s Residential Homes and Foster Care Placements in Kirklees to ensure that children were living in the right home and environment.</p> <p>Panel meeting on 17th January 2025 The Panel will consider an update on the Review of Children’s Residential Homes and foster care placements in Kirklees.</p>	17 th January 2025

		<p>Visits to Kirklees Fostering Network 26th September 2024</p> <p>Key issues discussed at the meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Collection – performance data available at the Kirklees Parenting board did not correspond with the paper. • Shortage of Foster Carers – numbers had halved, they cited the economic climate and families being put into poverty. • Older children needing foster care, and asylum-seeking children using the service. • Partnership working • Challenges of attending PPS meetings when children cannot attend with them. • Voice of the Young Person and how it was acted on. • Cllr Kendrick held in high esteem as a source of support. • Discrepancies between what the Personal Assistants do and the support that needs to start at 15 rather than 16. • The rewarding nature of Foster Care and the support between the Foster Carers and their families. <p>Visit to Mocking Bird and Special Guardianship Orders carers and representatives</p> <p>The Panel will meet with appropriate representatives from the Mocking Bird Support Meeting (date to be arranged) and the Special Guardianship Order Support Group meeting and Christmas party on the 18th December 2024.</p> <p>Visit to drop-in session to celebrate National Kinship Week</p> <p>The Panel were also invited to attend an informal drop-in session on Wednesday 9th October to celebrate National Kinship Week. The Connected Persons Support Team hosted the session, staff from the Connected Persons assessment team attended along with some of our carers from the constitution. The drop in session had been organised to improve knowledge of the Connected Persons Team (CSP). Special</p>	<p>9th October 2024</p>
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		<p>Guardianship Order (SGO) carers were invited, along with colleagues from other services. Feedback from the carers about the team was positive. SGO carers supported the move towards using different language, reporting how it was dehumanising to be referred to in meetings and on paper as “the Carer”. There was also a recurring theme of the discrepancy between financial support given to SGOs and Foster Carers. It was recognised by the Panel that the financial discrepancy was less than in other local authorities, but the Panel asked whether other ways of supporting these families could be looked at.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Lead Member Briefings (Bi-monthly LM Briefings with Cabinet Members for Learning and Children’s; and Strategic Director/Service Directors in Children’s Services during 24/25) – Actions from these meetings will be included within the Panel’s Work Programme where appropriate</p>			
<p>Manchester Road – Asylum Seekers</p>		<p>The Lead Member will review any impact on Children’s Service of the housing of asylum seekers on Manchester Road.</p>	

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Children's Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Plan 2024/25

Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact
<p>24th July 2024</p> <p>Workshop - Informal Meeting</p>	<p>(with Panel, Officers and Cabinet Members)</p> <p>To consider potential areas of focus for the Panel during 2024/25 municipal year which will include the Council's key priorities for the children's service.</p>	<p>Helen Kilroy</p>
<p>30th August 2024</p> <p>Informal meeting 9.30am-10.30am</p> <p>Public meeting 10.30am</p> <p>Hybrid meeting</p> <p>Council Chamber HTH</p> <p>Report deadline: 16.8.24</p> <p>(Apols: V Metheringham)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Informal items:-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ambition Board Minutes – 18.3.24 and 24.6.24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Performance Report</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public Items:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Minutes of meeting on 26.3.24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Performance Highlights (verbal)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pre-decision Scrutiny – Cabinet decisions on the horizon</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Feedback from Panel Members on issues considered by Kirklees Parenting Board</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 24/25</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">W Harris to provide</p> <p style="text-align: center;">J Sanders/A Gledhill/J Hanna to present</p> <p style="text-align: center;">H Kilroy</p> <p style="text-align: center;">J Sanders/A Gledhill/J Hanna to present</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Senior Officers/Cabinet Members</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Panel Members</p> <p style="text-align: center;">H Kilroy</p>

Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact
<p>11th October 2024</p> <p>Informal meeting 9.30am-10.30am</p> <p>Public meeting 10.30am</p> <p>Hybrid meeting Council Chamber HTH</p> <p>Report deadline: 27.9.24</p>	<p>Informal items:-</p> <p>Ambition Board Minutes – 16.9.24</p> <p>Performance Report</p> <p>2023-24 Kirklees Annual Education Quality and Standards Report</p> <p>Public Items:</p> <p>Quality Assurance Annual Report</p> <p>Ofsted Inspection of Children’s Services – outcome and recommendations</p> <p>Performance Highlights (verbal)</p> <p>Pre-decision Scrutiny – Cabinet decisions on the horizon</p> <p>Feedback from Panel Members on issues considered by Kirklees Parenting Board</p> <p>Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 24/25</p>	<p>W Harris to provide</p> <p>Service Directors to present</p> <p>Jo-Anne Sanders/Emma Brayford</p> <p>V Metheringham/R Fordyce</p> <p>V Metheringham</p> <p>J Sanders/V Metheringham to present</p> <p>Senior Officers/Cabinet Members</p> <p>Panel Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p>
<p>22nd November 2024</p> <p>Informal meeting 9.30am-10.30am</p> <p>Public meeting 10.30am</p> <p>Hybrid meeting Council Chamber HTH</p> <p>Report deadline:</p>	<p>Informal items:-</p> <p>Performance Report</p> <p>Public Items:</p> <p>SEND – Oversight of the Government Safety Valve Agreement and current profile of spend across High Needs Block</p>	<p>J Sanders/V Metheringham to present</p> <p>J Sanders</p>

Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact
8.11.24	<p>Performance Highlights (verbal)</p> <p>Pre-decision Scrutiny – Cabinet decisions on the horizon</p> <p>Feedback from Panel Members on issues considered by Kirklees Parenting Board</p> <p>Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 24/25</p>	<p>J Sanders/V Metheringham</p> <p>Senior Officers/Cabinet Members</p> <p>Panel Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p>
<p>17th January 2025</p> <p>Informal meeting 9.30am-10.30am</p> <p>Public meeting 10.30am</p> <p>Hybrid meeting</p> <p>Council Chamber HTH</p> <p>Report deadline: 3.1.25</p>	<p>Informal items:-</p> <p>Ambition Board Minutes – 19.12.24</p> <p>Performance Report</p> <p>Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Overview of volume process – quality and compliance</p> <p>Public Items:</p> <p>Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report</p> <p>Review of Children’s Residential Homes and Foster Care Placements <i>(to be confirmed)</i></p> <p>Performance Highlights (verbal)</p> <p>Pre-decision Scrutiny – Cabinet decisions on the horizon</p> <p>Feedback from Panel Members on issues considered by Kirklees Parenting Board</p> <p>Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 24/25</p>	<p>W Harris to provide</p> <p>J Sanders/V Metheringham</p> <p>J Sanders/Michelle Lister/Paul Calendine</p> <p>J Sanders/E Brayford/Pennine Learning</p> <p>V Metheringham/A Gledhill</p> <p>J Sanders/V Metheringham</p> <p>Senior Officers/Cabinet Members</p> <p>Panel Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p>

Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact
<p>14th March 2025</p> <p>10am-11am Informal meeting 11am-12.30pm Public meeting</p> <p>Hybrid Meeting Council Chamber, HTH</p> <p>Report deadline: 28.2.25</p>	<p>Informal items:-</p> <p>Performance Report</p> <p>Public Items:</p> <p>Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) Action Plan</p> <p>New initiatives of schools working in clusters</p> <p>Performance Highlights (verbal)</p> <p>Pre-decision Scrutiny – Cabinet decisions on the horizon</p> <p>Feedback from Panel Members on issues considered by Kirklees Parenting Board</p> <p>Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 24/25</p>	<p>J Sanders/V Metheringham to present</p> <p>V Metheringham/I Mottershaw/ S Miles/Julie Sykes</p> <p>J Sanders/M Lister/Jayne Whitton/A Wisniewski</p> <p>J Sanders/V Metheringham to present</p> <p>Senior Officers/Cabinet Members</p> <p>Panel Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p>
<p>28th April 2025</p> <p>10.30 am – 11 am Pre-meeting 11am – 1pm Public Meeting</p> <p>Hybrid Meeting Council Chamber, HTH</p> <p>Report deadline: 16.4.25</p>	<p>Pre-meeting items:-</p> <p>Panel Preparation for Public Meeting</p> <p>Public items:</p> <p>Special Schools – overview of provision and 2 new school rebuilds – Joseph Norton and Woodley</p> <p>Decline of the cohort of children in primary schools in Kirklees</p> <p>Pre-decision Scrutiny – Cabinet decisions on the horizon</p>	<p>Panel Members</p> <p>M Wilby/S Horn/J Sanders</p> <p>M Wilby/J Sanders</p> <p>Senior Officers/Cabinet Members</p>

Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact
	<p data-bbox="495 188 1657 225">Feedback from Panel Members on issues considered by Kirklees Parenting Board</p> <p data-bbox="757 264 1395 336">Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 24/25 (progress and items to roll forward to 25/26)</p>	<p data-bbox="1821 188 2047 225">Panel Members</p> <p data-bbox="1877 264 1991 301">H Kilroy</p>

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