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Thursday 29 January 2026

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 6 February 2026**.

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 Aafaq Butt

Councillor Tanisha Bramwell

Councillor Hannah McKerchar

Councillor Ashleigh Robinson

Councillor Richard Smith

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 - 8

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on the 11th December 2025.

3: Declaration of Interests

9 - 10

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: Kirklees Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report 2024 -2025

11 - 34

The Panel will consider a report and presentation on the Kirklees Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report 2024 -2025.

Contact: Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director
Emma Brayford, Head of Educational Outcomes
Mark Janes, Chair - Pennine Learning
Emma Salter, SACRE Advisor - Pennine Learning

8: 'The Big Plan' - Preparation for Adulthood (PFA)

35 - 44

The Panel will consider a report and presentation on 'The Big Plan' - Preparation for Adulthood (PfA).

Contact: Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director

9: Multi-agency developments around the Children's Social Care Reforms

The Panel will consider a verbal update on multi-agency developments around the Children's Social Care reforms.

Contact: Vicky Metheringham, Service Director

10: 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 the period ending 31st December 2025.

Contact: Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director
Vicky Metheringham, Service Director

11: 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)

12: Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 2025/26

45 - 70

The Panel will consider the proposed areas of focus and activity for the 2025/26 municipal year and discuss the method and means to be used to continue the Panel's work going forward.

Contact: Helen Kilroy, Assistant Democracy Manager

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Contact Officer: Helen Kilroy

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday 11th December 2025

Present: Councillor Itrat Ali (Chair)
Councillor Aafaq Butt
Councillor Tanisha Bramwell
Councillor Hannah McKerchar

In attendance:
Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director - Learning and Early Support
Vicky Metheringham, Service Director – Child Protection and Family Support
Theresa Racz, Head of Service for Contextual Safeguarding and Youth Justice
Councillor Jane Rylah, Cabinet Member for Education
Councillor Viv Kendrick, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

- 34 Membership of the Panel**
No apologies were received.
- 35 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
RESOLVED –
That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th October 2025 be approved as a correct record.
- 36 Declaration of Interests**
No interests were declared.
- 37 Admission of the Public**
All agenda items were considered in public session.
- 38 Deputations/Petitions**
No deputations or petitions were received
- 39 Public Question Time**
No public questions were received.
- 40 Update on the anticipated 'Schools White Paper' in relation to national reforms to the SEND system**
The Panel considered a report and presentation regarding an update on the anticipated 'Schools White Paper' in relation to national reforms to the SEND

Children's Scrutiny Panel - 11 December 2025

system, which was presented by name Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director for Learning and Early Support.

Jo-Anne Sanders gave context to the report and highlighted the following key points:

- A White Paper had been expected in Autumn 2025, however this had been delayed and was expected in early 2026 after an extended period of co-creation with families, teachers and other experts.
- In a letter to the Chair of the Education Select Committee, the Secretary of State for Education had outlined the five principles on which SEND reform should be based.
- These five principles aligned with those in Kirklees; that support should be provided early, locally, fairly, effectively and delivered by partnerships through shared working.
- Early help was being enabled through the cluster working, new Additional Resourced Provisions (ARPs) and additional specialist provision were in the process of being developed and built to enable children to attend school closer to home, and the recent Inspecting Local Authorities Children's Services (ILACS) inspection highlighted strength in partnership working.
- Plans were underway to provide opportunities for partners to discuss the White Paper which would allow partners to reflect on how the White Paper complemented strengths within the service offered in Kirklees and how it could underpin areas for improvement.
- The Children's Scrutiny Panel were invited to participate in these engagement sessions.

In response to questions, the Panel was informed that:

- The whole partnership would be involved in discussions when the White Paper was published, to include young people's and their families' voices. A DfE advisor would be available to support during the process.
- The co-creation that had been underway included webinars hosted by the DfE. Kirklees representatives had attended a session about Additional Resourced Provisions (ARPs) and more events, some of them in-person, were planned.
- Events were available to book on EventBrite and the suggestion of these being signposted on the Local Offer site was welcomed.
- Changes and improvements within the next 12 months would include those set out in the Big Plan 3, which include improvements to Preparation for Adulthood, Communication and Education, Health and Care Plans. Sufficiency of learning places, waiting lists and the healthy child programme would be a priority, and Best Start Hubs would provide new opportunities.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted and officers thanked for their contributions.
2. That the engagement events could be signposted on the Local Offer site.
3. That the Children's Scrutiny Panel be invited to participate in future engagement sessions with Partners to discuss the White Paper.

41 Education Health and Care Plans - Compliance, Mediation, Tribunals and Complaints and Compliments

The Panel considered a report and presentation on Education Health and Care Plans - Compliance, Mediation, Tribunals and Complaints and Compliments, which was presented by Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director for Learning and Early Support.

The Panel were informed that the report referenced statistical information from the 2024 SEND2 return (a person centred census around special educational needs and disabilities) which was completed by all local authorities to allow for performance benchmarking. Data was being collected now for 2025. Jo-Anne Sanders acknowledged that the system was complicated, causing challenges for many families and that reform was welcomed.

Jo-Anne Sanders highlighted the following key points:

- Last year the number of EHCP needs assessments completed outside the 20 weeks statutory timescale was significant.
- There had been sustained month-on-month improvement to a current cumulative figure of 58% compliance, which was above previous years' national averages.
- At the end of 2022 the number of EHCPs maintained by the local authority was 4,125, at the end of 2023 there were 4,475 and latest figures indicated there would be in excess of 5,030 by the end of 2025.
- The EHCP team had worked hard to ensure that they were operating in line with the SEND Code of Practice and the Children and Families Act, to ensure that children's statutory rights were being met.
- Shared understanding of the sections in EHCPs had been promoted.
- The quality of plans was important, as well as compliance with timescales, and investment in an audit tool had been made to evaluate each section.
- Colleagues in the NHS and the DfE advisor were supporting work with practitioners where necessary to improve EHCP quality.
- At the end of October there were 35 live complaints, less than 1% of the 5,000+ EHCPs held by the Authority.
- Each complaint was important and the service strove to look into each case and provide timely responses.
- Learning from complaints was actively incorporated into improvements in practice, and compliments were received from the many families whose needs were being met across the education, health and care system.
- Wherever possible the Authority tried to find resolution of complaints, however where this was not possible mediation took place.

The Panel was advised on the latest information around mediation and tribunals. Jo-Anne Sanders informed the Panel that local authority input into the mediation process had required some improvement, therefore feedback had been taken and

Children's Scrutiny Panel - 11 December 2025

analysis carried out to determine how the mediation process could be better supported. The Panel was advised that wherever possible, issues were resolved outside of a legal process but parents had the right to exercise a mediation and a tribunal route. The report presented set out expectations around mediation and some of the reasons why mediation was requested. Some mediations involved challenges to decisions not to assess for an EHCP, which were sometimes resolved at mediation due to additional information becoming available. Other reasons for mediation included challenges over the decision not to issue a plan, to cease a plan, or around the content of a plan.

The Panel was informed there was a wait of 12 to 15 months for a tribunal to be heard, and this was of great concern. Once the tribunal process had started work could continue with the family to seek a resolution, however once the formal process had begun there were procedures to follow. Nationally there was a rise in tribunals and mediations and this was also the case in Kirklees, with 2% of EHCPs being subject to mediation or tribunal.

In answer to questions from the Panel, Jo-Anne Sanders advised that:

- A request for an EHCP did not automatically translate into a plan, parents could challenge this and exercise their right to mediation. Information from EHC Needs Assessments was reviewed and if there was not enough information the Panel could take the decision not to undertake an assessment. Where the decision was taken to assess, professionals including Educational Psychologists, Therapy Services and Social Care were asked for advice depending on specific needs. A Panel met weekly to decide whether to issue a plan. If need could be met by a graduated approach, the plan may not be issued but each request was looked at in detail and decisions were based on evidence. If additional information was brought forward, there was scope for the decision to assess or issue to be changed.
- The data on the percentage of children in Kirklees who had an EHCP was not available to provide a benchmark with other authorities, but this would be explored.
- The upward trajectory of plans being issued within statutory timescales was being continued, and the cumulative performance was already better than last year's national average of 45.9%, at just under 58%. The ambition was to reach 100% of plans being issued within the 20 weeks, but it was a complex system and dealing with spikes in numbers of requests was challenging.
- Where tribunal appeals could be reduced, by timely response to complaints, attendance at mediation and increasing sufficiency of specialist places was underway. Where possible, resolution was always sought, however, it was recognised that where agreement was not reached, it was a parent's right to go to tribunal.
- There had been challenges in accessing Educational Psychologist (EP) support, so capacity had been bolstered by using locum EPs to ensure quality and compliance. Health Partners were also involved in the improvement journey as a vital part of the EHCP process.
- Mediation was offered to every family prior to tribunal, through Global Mediation. Capacity issues had resulted in mediation not always being

Children's Scrutiny Panel - 11 December 2025

attended in previous years, however this had improved and positive results were being reported back through PCAN and from the Panel.

- Whilst the tribunal process was ongoing, there were opportunities for resolution outside that process which could minimise the scope of the tribunal.
- The proportion of cases overturned by tribunal were not currently published but would be in future for transparency. Sometimes tribunals were partially overturned, so it was not always straightforward.
- The cost of tribunals was difficult to quantify as each case was different in terms of staffing required. The small, experienced team that focused on complaints, mediations and tribunals had made improvements to the process and was able to call on other legal and senior colleagues where necessary.

During questions, the Panel expressed confidence in the teams involved in this work, and acknowledged the efforts of the service to improve, specifically noting improvements in compliance figures, commitment to mediation, improved communication and responsiveness, and the development of a focused and effective team.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted and officers thanked for their contributions.
2. That officers explore whether data showing the percentage of children in Kirklees who had an EHCP could be provided to give a benchmark with other Local Authorities.
3. That Officers inform teams of the feedback from the Panel who had expressed confidence in the teams involved in this work and acknowledged the efforts of the service to improve.

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

Vicky Metheringham, Service Director – Child Protection & Family Support gave an update on performance data in response to questions from the Panel:

- Child Protection Review (CPR) Conferences - There had been a decline of 5% in performance from August to October around timescales for CPR Conferences, with October's data showing 92% compliance. The service conducted 75 CPR Conferences in July 2025, as some were brought forward from August to ensure that enough agencies attended, and that meetings would be quorate. 18 CPR Conferences were held in August 2025, and 54 in October 2025. 4 of the 54 cases were out of timescales in October 2025. These were rescheduled either due to the lack of availability of partners, an interpreter or because parents needed an alternative date. CPR reviews were scheduled at initial or repeat Child Protection Conferences to maximise the possibility of attendance but on rare occasions availability of participants caused delays in timeliness.
- Care Leavers – 56% of Care Leavers were engaged in education, training and employment (rising to 63% if those not engaging due to illness or caring responsibilities were not included in the figures). These percentages were above national averages and statistical neighbours but ambitions remained high for care leavers in Kirklees. Opportunities were being maximised

Children's Scrutiny Panel - 11 December 2025

through apprenticeships, high rates of keeping in touch (96.8%) and the support being provided at Number 11 and Number 12.

- Children at Risk of Exploitation – 142 children were at risk of sexual or criminal exploitation, down from 159 the previous month, and 8 assessments were overdue. The average length of overdue assessments was 25 days, with the longest being overdue by two months. All the children at risk had an allocated worker who saw them regularly and frequently and there was good oversight of all the children through weekly performance meetings with service managers and heads of service, daily risk, exploitation and missing meetings, and a monthly exploitation screening panel.

Jo-Anne Sanders presented highlights on November data and answered questions from the Panel:

- EHCP compliance - At the end of October this was 57.4% and last year's national average was 45.9%. There were spikes in requests to assess in June and July again this year, just before the summer holidays for schools and ways of managing this next year were being considered, as it was likely to impact on timeliness compliance in early 2026.
- There were issues with the data regarding information on exclusions, elective home education, and part-time timetables as a result of glitches in the system, however they were all being monitored closely.
- Exclusions - these were monitored on a fortnightly basis by SLT and work was ongoing in putting support around excluded young people. At the end of November there had been 46 notifications of permanent exclusions, of which five were withdrawn, so the total number of excluded youngsters was 41, an increase compared to the same period last year.
- Analysis was being undertaken to see what could be put in place, particularly with regard to day six provision, to ensure that children had their educational needs met from the 6th day of exclusion. Work would be undertaken with headteachers across Yorkshire and the Humber on sector led improvement in association with the University of Oxford to look at a range of solution-focused strategies for inclusion in schools.
- Elective Home Education - The number of children electively home-educated at some point in the academic year 2024/2025 was 1320. On 10th December there were 920, as many had returned to education or moved out of the area. Some children and families were being supported by the Child Missing in Education team to try and secure a school place, this was actively monitored in line with statutory duties.
- Part-time Timetables/Reduced Timetables – These were used by schools to facilitate the reintegration of pupils after a period of absence, and schools were now required to record these, allowing benchmarking locally and nationally. 171 notifications were received in October 2025, compared to 175 in October 2024, so there had been no large increases and checks were made with schools to ensure these were put in place appropriately.
- When electively home educated students moved area they were followed up by the Child Missing in Education team at Kirklees to ensure that they were handed across appropriately. There were reciprocal arrangements with other local authorities.

Children's Scrutiny Panel - 11 December 2025

RESOLVED –

That the verbal reports be noted and officers thanked for their contributions.

43 Pre-decision scrutiny - Cabinet decisions on the horizon

Councillor Rylah, Cabinet Member for Education, advised the Panel that the forthcoming Schools White Paper would be a major focus over the coming months.

44 Feedback from Panel Members on issues considered by Kirklees Parenting Board

Councillor Viv Kendrick, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, informed the Panel that a meeting of the Kirklees Parenting Board had taken place on the 26th November 2025. It had been a "take-over" event planned and delivered by care leavers and looked after young people. The timing of the meeting had been altered to later in the day, so that young people who attended college, school or work could attend. An ice-breaker facilitated discussion between attendees and the young people gave presentations about their involvement in activities, and on training that they were developing for the benefit of members of the Council. Attendees worked in groups to discuss what more could be done, what could be offered, how challenges could be addressed and changes made. The meeting finished with the attendees being asking for pledges. It was a very vibrant and useful session.

The Panel were advised that Board Minutes were no longer publicly available on the website it had been agreed at Annual Council on 22nd May 2024 that the Board would be a closed partnership meeting and that the terms of reference would be revised.

RESOLVED:

That the updates from the Kirklees Parenting Board be noted.

45 Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 2025/26

Three visits were being organised for the New Year, dates and times were in the process of being arranged and the Panel would be updated on these.

RESOLVED –

That the Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 2025/26 be noted.

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| KIRKLEES COUNCIL | | | |
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| 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.



Report title: Kirklees SACRE Annual Report 2024 -2025

| | |
|--|---|
| Meeting | Children Scrutiny Panel |
| Date | 6th February 2026 |
| Cabinet Member (if applicable) | Cllr J Rylah, Education |
| Key Decision Eligible for Call In | No No – this is a cross party outside body |

Purpose of Report

This report provides Scrutiny with an overview of SACRE’s performance against statutory duties in 2024–25, key findings, risks, and actions required from the Local Authority.

A report detailing SACRE’s work must be produced for each academic year and published no later than 31 December. This is a retrospective report looking at the last academic year. The report is sent to the Secretary of State and other public bodies e.g. National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE) and it is shared for transparency with Kirklees Scrutiny today. See appendix 1 SACRE’s Annual Report 2024-25.

To add context to the content within the report the following information has been provided: - Since 1988 local authorities have had a duty to establish a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). The Kirklees SACRE advises the Local Authority on matters relating to collective worship in all schools in the Borough and on Religious Education (RE) given in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The SACRE monitors the effectiveness and appropriateness of the agreed syllabus, which is formally reviewed every five years. SACRE is made up of four committees including representatives from the Church of England, Councillors, teachers and faith representatives.

In brief, these are the statutory duties of SACRE:

1. To monitor RE provision and produce an annual report for the secretary of state.
2. To monitor and support collective worship.
3. To agree determinations from collective worship.
4. To produce an Agreed Syllabus for RE in community schools and to revise this every five years.
5. To support RE in schools through training and resources.

Recommendations

SACRE has identified the following recommendations for their work in 2025 – 2026. These are provided for Scrutiny’s information. Scrutiny is asked to note these recommendations and may choose to comment to inform SACRE’s 2026 planning. No action is required.

These recommendations are drawn from SACRE’s routine work and its 2024-25 self-evaluation. Please refer to **SACRE’s Annual Report 2024-25** (appendix 1) and the main body of this **2024-25 Scrutiny Report** for details underpinning the listed recommendations.

1. SACRE recommends that funding continues to be aligned with national expectations.
2. Councillor involvement remains valued, and SACRE encourages sustained engagement.
3. Continued collaboration with LA teams supporting community cohesion is advised.
4. Membership diversity should continue to reflect the Borough's communities and school structures.
5. SACRE's CPD and support offer to schools should continue to be recognised and valued.
6. Feedback from schools and leaders should continue to shape SACRE's support.
7. Termly liaison with the Local Authority to identify schools needing targeted support is advised.
8. Schools should continue to be informed of statutory requirements for RE and Collective Worship.
9. SACRE highlights the importance of RE pathways at Key Stage 4 for pupils not taking GCSE RE.
10. SACRE will monitor national curriculum reform and advises the LA to do likewise.

Reasons for Recommendations:

These recommendations reflect the actions SACRE considers necessary to sustain compliance with its statutory duties, including provision of an agreed syllabus, support for RE and Collective Worship, and appropriate monitoring.

They are offered to Scrutiny to support assurance of the Local Authority's responsibilities under the Education Act 1988.

No action is required by Scrutiny, although comment is welcomed.

Resource Implication:

The DfE recommends that Local Authorities allocate approximately 2% of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) to support the statutory work of SACRE, including delivery of Religious Education and Collective Worship. Kirklees Council currently meets this expectation, and this level of resource enables SACRE to carry out the full range of statutory activities set out in the report and reflected in the recommendations.

Date signed off by Executive Director & name

Tom Brailsford 21/01/2026

Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?

Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: Members of SACRE

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes. This report does not contain personal data.

1. Executive Summary

Since the Education Act 1988 it has been a legal requirement for local authorities to establish a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) with responsibility to support schools in meeting their statutory duties for Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship, and to recommend to their Local Authority ways in which such support can be actioned and sustained.

The current report is the **Kirklees SACRE Scrutiny Report 2024-2025**. It explains how SACRE has fulfilled its responsibilities.

The attached SACRE report begins with ten recommendations by which the Local Authority can support SACRE to continue its work supporting schools and teachers to meet and exceed their statutory duties relating to RE and Collective Worship.

Funding for SACRE is provided by the Local Authority at the nationally recommended level of approximately 2% of the Central Schools Services Block. This allocation supports SACRE's statutory responsibilities for Religious Education and Collective Worship. The report outlines the risks associated with any reduction in funding, including constraints on SACRE's capacity to fulfil its statutory functions and the potential impact on schools' legislative compliance.

The report explains how SACRE's work corresponds with key aspects of the wider Council Plan, especially with respect to pupils' access to excellent education and to community wellbeing within the context of Kirklees' profile of diverse communities. It explains SACRE's collegial associations with national professional RE organisations, and with local groups aligned with SACRE's values of education and community wellbeing. Schools, teachers and pupils are SACRE's key stakeholders. The report explains some of the different ways in which SACRE supports these key stakeholders including through teachers' CPD, provision of a locally agreed syllabus for RE and provision of innovative, high quality teaching resources. Ongoing consultation with teachers is an important aspect of SACRE's work.

The report concludes by summarising SACRE's annual cycle of general tasks. These include four meetings, a structured self-evaluation to inform future strategic planning, and writing an annual report for submission to the DfE and NASACRE (National Association of SACREs). See appendix 1 for **Kirklees SACRE Annual Report 2024-2025** which evidences different ways in which SACRE has supported schools and teachers to deliver high-quality RE and Collective Worship across the Borough, including:

- authoring and publishing the Local Authority's RE syllabus *Believing and Belonging* along with supporting teaching resources and training for teachers
- providing continuing professional development for teachers through training courses, subject enhancement webinars and professional network meetings
- offering schools bespoke support for RE and Collective Worship
- enhancing pupils' RE experiences through pedagogically informed, structured engagement with faith representatives and communities, eg through visiting speakers and visits to faith centres, and through the production of high-quality films about local religious communities.

SACRE's work emphasises young people's cultivation of positive understanding and respect for themselves and others. It supports schools to meet their statutory duties for RE and Collective Worship. It promotes sound RE pedagogy and subject knowledge, pupils' developing personal awareness, and wholesome, respectful community relations.

2. Information required to take a decision

The report is provided for information and transparency regarding SACRE's statutory work. It is not classed as a decision item for Scrutiny.

For more detailed accounts of SACRE's work and achievements please refer to **SACRE's annual report 2024-25** (appendix 1). SACRE reports are submitted to DfE and to NASACRE.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Council Plan

SACRE's work corresponds with the Council Plan especially with the Inclusive Communities Framework, Aspire and Achieve, and Safe and Cohesive Frameworks. SACRE contributes to the Our Kirklees Futures Implementation Plan. It enables schools and teachers access to regular CPD to support delivery of high quality RE and Collective Worship. Pupils encounter and learn about cultural diversity through the locally agreed RE syllabus *Believing and Belonging*, supporting teaching materials, and activities such as visiting speakers and visits to community faith centres. Development in pupils' own cultural literacy contributes towards safe and healthy communities. RE and Collective Worship contribute to schools' social, moral, spiritual, and cultural values.

The work of SACRE continues to support schools. Year 11 students being entered for RE GCSE (full and short courses) rose to 44% in 2024-25 from 29.88% in 2023-24. 69% of pupils entered for GCSE in 2024-25 achieved a 4-9 pass grade compared with the national average of 73.2%. See appendix 1, p12 for a more detailed explanation of examinations data.

3.2 Financial Implications

National recommendations suggest that 2% of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) should be allocated to SACRE. In 2024 – 2025 the council reviewed the allocation to SACRE. The new amount was used as a benchmark for the most recent tender process to commission services of an external advisor to support the functions of SACRE including the school improvement aspect for RE. The current allocation covers fees expected for the contract for these services for the remaining 2 (+1) years. Should the amount of the CSSB change in value, there may be the necessity to review the funding allocated to SACRE in advance of the next procurement exercise in Summer 2027. Thus the recommendation to continue reflecting on the value of funds allocated to SACRE.

3.3 Legal Implications

The work of SACRE supports the Local Authority legislative requirements empowered by the 1988 Education Reform Act; namely to produce an agreed syllabus for RE and to advise the Local Authority on RE and Collective Worship.

SACRE is a legal, statutory body that is a requirement of all councils in England. It is comprised of elected members (4 delegates for Kirklees) and representatives from Kirklees teachers and Head Teachers, the Diocese of Leeds (Church of England), other Christian denominations, and other faith and belief communities representative of the Borough.

3.4 **Climate Change and Air Quality**

Environmental sustainability, protecting bio-diversity and awareness about climate change are essential for community well-being and in tune with RE's underpinning value of respect. *Believing and Belonging*, the RE syllabus produced by SACRE for the Local Authority, incorporates elements of environmental sustainability education across its units of work.

3.5 **Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) or Human Resources**

Potential risks posed by inadequate financial and / or other necessary resources provision for SACRE include:

- Failure to meet statutory duty to provide the authority with a locally agreed RE syllabus.
- Failure or limitations to support schools in meeting their statutory duties for RE and Collective Worship.
- Failure or limitations in supporting schools to enhance their RE delivery beyond statutory minimum requirements.

Specific areas of SACRE work may require Integrated Impact Assessments to be undertaken to ensure avoidance of potentially unforeseen or accidental adverse implications and that opportunities are in view; for example when considering the new Agreed Syllabus and curriculum guidance.

4 **Consultation**

The creation of the new Agreed Syllabus had co-production and engagement with stakeholders from Kirklees schools and settings as well as regional collaboration. Co-production was a core value and approach. Faith, community and school partners have been integral to creating and reviewing the new 5 year Agreed Syllabus. No additional consultation has taken place in 2024 – 2025.

5 **Engagement**

SACRE engages with national RE organisations in order to keep abreast of the national picture of RE and how Kirklees fits into this. Such organisations include the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisors and Consultants (AREIAC), Culham St Gabriel's Trust, NASACRE, the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) and RE Hubs. SACRE members are invited to AREIAC's webinar series about the different roles and responsibilities of the SACRE. A representative from RE Hubs attends one meeting annually to discuss the national picture of RE with membership and newsletters are circulated termly.

SACRE has a close association with Pennine Learning an education consultancy that supports schools, teachers and SACREs across West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester with RE. This facilitates a strong understanding and exchange of knowledge pertaining to our regional contexts. Pennine Learning issues a termly newsletter with local updates. Kirklees pupils benefit from shared resources produced and managed by Pennine Learning, for example a series of high-quality films about local religious communities kick-started by a Westhill Award Grant won by Leeds' SACRE.

Schools, teachers and pupils are SACRE's key stakeholders. Supporting teachers to deliver quality RE to pupils is a priority and actioned through a range of CPD opportunities offered to teachers, including subject knowledge-enhancement webinars, RE Coordinator Training and termly Primary and Secondary professional network meetings. Professional Network meetings are offered to schools free of charge. They

enable teachers to enhance their knowledge of RE policy and pedagogy, and to engage in collegiate exchange of best practice and professional expertise.

SACRE is currently working towards forging sustained collegiate relationships with Kirklees Communities and Access Services Team and Kirklees Interfaith (North and South) to acknowledge shared values of community wellbeing within the context of culturally diverse communities.

6 Options

6.1 Options Considered

National and local collaboration is considered and taken into account by the SACRE advisor when compiling the annual report. The report is agreed and signed off by SACRE membership including the cross section of elected members before being shared with NASACRE and the DfE.

6.2 Reasons for recommended Option

NA

7 Next steps and timelines

SACRE meets four times annually. A self-evaluation exercise is completed in June the outcomes of which feed into strategic planning for the following year. SACRE's annual report is drafted in November and ratified by SACRE membership in December before being submitted to NASACRE and DfE. SACRE's annual report informs this Scrutiny Report, which is submitted to Scrutiny in February each year.

SACRE will keep up to date with developments arising from the DfE's Curriculum and Assessment Review Report that may impact RE. This will be achieved through SACRE's associations with national Religious Education organisations including the AREIAC, Culham St Gabriel's Trust, NASACRE, NATRE and RE Hubs.

8 Contact officer

Emma Brayford – Head of Service – Educational Outcomes

Emma.brayford@kirklees.gov.uk

SACRE advisor Emma Salter

Emma@penninelearning.com

9 Background Papers and History of Decisions

N/A.

10 Appendices

Appendix (1) – The **Kirklees SACRE Annual Report 2024-2025**

11 Service Director responsible

Jo-Anne Sanders Service Director – Learning and Inclusion. [Jo-](mailto:Jo-Anne.Sanders@kirklees.gov.uk)

[Anne.Sanders@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:Jo-Anne.Sanders@kirklees.gov.uk)



**Standing Advisory Council
on Religious Education
(SACRE)**

Annual Report 2024-25

Table of contents

Section One: Introduction and the Work of SACRE

- Words from the Chair
- Overview
- Dates and content of meetings
- Priorities and actions for 2024-25
- Self-evaluation
- Priorities for 2025 -26
- Dates for 2025-26

Section Two: Statutory Responsibilities: Religious Education

- Local agreed syllabus
- Standards and monitoring
- Professional development and support
- Other information

Section Three: Statutory Responsibilities: Collective Worship

- Standards and monitoring
- Complaints and determinations
- Professional development and support
- Other information

Section Four: Links with other organisations

Section Five: Other areas of SACRE involvement

Section Six: Kirklees SACRE arrangements

Section Seven: Advice to the Local Authority

Section One: Introduction and the Work of SACRE

Words from the Chair of Kirklees SACRE

I am pleased to present the annual report of Kirklees SACRE and celebrate the great learning that happens in our schools when they embrace the opportunity to deliver high quality RE that opens the doors of children's imagination, increases their capacity to live with difference and develop the skills necessary to investigate different faith traditions.

During 2024/5 we have continued to work in partnership with Pennine Learning I want to express my appreciation of their professionalism and commitment to the teachers and children in our schools, enabling them to get the best from our agreed syllabus and the big questions that inform it.

We are confident that the RE network days for teachers and other resources that we offered in partnership with Pennine Learning really make a difference. In some schools there is only one RE specialist and when there is pressure on the curriculum RE may be squeezed. Helping teachers stay connected and valuing what they do is essential, in particular through our RE awards to schools.

Every year our RE advisor and the chair of SACRE present our report to Kirklees Council's scrutiny panel and we really value that opportunity to engage with councillors and explore the work of SACRE in our borough. We are very grateful to Kirklees for their continuing support of SACRE and to the officers of the council for their sympathetic and constructive engagement with what we do.

Members of SACRE bring their intelligence and coal-face experience to our meetings I want to express my appreciation of their lively engagement with the challenges and opportunities set before us. A good SACRE embraces a breadth of people of different convictions and world-views in a forum where people listen well and recognise our common humanity. At a time when we are experiencing increasing polarisation this is especially important. We have actively recruited new members of SACRE over the last year and will continue to do this.

Good RE helps children navigate a complex and sometimes confusing world with confidence and curiosity, understanding difference and disarming fears through discovering our common humanity. With that in mind I am pleased to commend our annual report to you.

Mark Janes Chair Of Kirklees SACRE 2024-5

Overview

This annual report is prepared by Kirklees SACRE. SACRE is required to advise the Local Authority on Religious Education and Collective Worship. This report summarises SACRE's support for Religious Education and Collective Worship during 2024-25. The report is a public document which is sent to the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) and the Department for Education.

For further information on the report or on RE and Collective Worship in Kirklees, contact Emma Salter at emma@penninelearning.com

For information on SACRE please contact the clerk, Anna Twist on annatwist@yahoo.com

June 2024 saw Mark Janes and Hannah Mc Kerchar re-elected as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. SACRE membership has increased. SACRE is conscious of the continuing need for diversity and representativeness in its membership. This includes belief, faith and different categories of school, including LA schools, Academies and MATs.

Dates and content of meetings 2024-25

Kirklees SACRE held four meetings during 2024-25. Meetings are open to the public and minutes are available on-line.

- 10th October 2024; work plan and syllabus review
- 3rd December 2024; response to the NC call for evidence, agreeing the Annual Report
- 12th March 2025; RE future visions, working with RE Hubs
- 16th June 2025; AGM, working with the LA, Collective Worship Award.

SACRE meetings consider the general position of RE and collective worship in the borough. During 2024-25 the following topics were also discussed:

- The Local Agreed syllabus, which was revised and launched in April 2024
- Providing evidence for the National Curriculum review on the future of RE
- Clarification of funding for Kirklees SACRE responsibilities and activities
- Review of secondary provision for RE, including time allocation
- Progress on two sets of locally made films that support RE subject knowledge
- A Faith and Education project that encourages engagement between faith communities and schools
- Enhancing representation on SACRE from currently under-represented groups
- Completion of SACRE self-evaluation
- National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) – items of interest or action, including information from NASACRE conference on the future of SACREs.

2024 – 25 Priorities and Actions

Continue to embed the new Local Agreed Syllabus.

The local agreed syllabus – Believing and Belonging in West Yorkshire 24 – 29 - was reviewed. This review included working with SACREs from Bradford, Kirklees, Calderdale and Leeds. Teacher networks focussed on long term planning, provision mapping and understanding the syllabus conceptual pathways, and how these are shared in school. A review of the units of work for the syllabus took place to ensure close links with the conceptual pathways. A series of webinars have been held for subject leaders to discuss applying the syllabus and units of work in their settings. Throughout the year 2024 – 2025 93 schools purchased the detailed planning resources for the syllabus. This is about 50% of the schools that would statutorily use the local agreed syllabus. In addition to this we are aware that 77 schools including a secondary school have purchased detailed classroom resources to support quality RE.

Continue working with the Kirklees Learning Service to identify schools for support and professional conversations

Half termly professional meetings with senior learning partners in Kirklees Learning Services ensures schools that require support are identified and RE consultants deployed effectively. A work plan to support secondary schools and SEN settings has been set up on a two-year plan. Schools working towards the SACRE RE Award have had the opportunity to share good practice at network meetings. All notes of visits for the support given to schools are recorded in the Local Authority Nexus system. We have analysed the attendance register of activities that have taken place e.g. networks, courses and interfaith events and compiled a list of hard to reach schools. We have written to all schools with a universal offer of support and School Improvement Partners have been briefed to encourage schools to take up this offer.

Continue developing links with Kirklees Interfaith Councils to plan for joint projects e.g. school visits.

Schools have participated in faith walks during which pupils visit numerous different places of worship in a single outing. School evaluations report a positive impact on pupils' learning. Twenty-three schools booked onto the Autumn Interfaith activity and online conference and this averaged out as 2000 pupils taking part in the activities and online questions with faith representatives.

Identify ways of supporting subject leader networks through SACRE funding

Through professional discussions with the Senior Learning Partner and Finance officers funding has been secured for SACRE funded places for CPD in subject leader networks and middle leader training. Throughout the year an average of 30 delegates attended the subject leader networks for primary and 6 delegates for the secondary subject network. These numbers should increase with free places being offered on the networks.

2024 – 25 SACRE Self-evaluation

Kirklees SACRE completed a self-evaluation based on the NASACRE template, which contributes to SACRE's strategic planning. Outcomes are listed below; selected outcomes are built into the development plan for the next two years.

SACRE

- Establish channel of communication and working relationship with Kirklees Interfaith
- Establish channel of communication and working relationship with Kirklees Communities and Access team
- Engage with RE leaders/subject managers to understand their perspectives of how SACRE can support RE
- Capture teacher feedback about RE including LA syllabus and SACRE RE award
- Keep SACRE membership informed about policy and legislation relevant to RE
- Continue to strive to establish and maintain SACRE membership that represents religions and worldviews across Kirklees
- Continue to strive to establish and maintain SACRE membership that represents school types across Kirklees

Religious Education

- Consider ways to increase delegate attendance at network meetings, potentially through offering networks at a reduced cost
- Continue to liaise with the local authority to identify schools needing additional support

Collective Worship

- Provide CPD for SACRE members
- Continue to monitor and support the school in Kirklees with a determination

Community Cohesion

- Review and reflect on census information on faith. Work with the local authority to identify information about diversity and ethnicity in different local areas
- Develop new links with the Communities team and Kirklees Interfaith groups to ensure SACRE is fully engaged with wider borough issues

Further details of the self-evaluation or the development plan can be obtained via the clerk to SACRE.

2025-26; meeting plans and priorities

Meetings and themes for 2025-2026 are provisionally arranged as:

- 22nd September; connect with Kirklees Communities team and Kirklees interfaith groups
- 3rd December; connect with RE teachers and leaders; agree annual report; consider Curriculum and Assessment Review final report
- 18th March 2026; Collective Worship Monitoring, review SACRE constitution
- 15th June 2026; AGM, Self Evaluation review.

For more information contact the clerk, annatwist@yahoo.com

Priorities for 2025– 26 include:

- Continue to support schools to embed the Local Agreed Syllabus
- Continue to liaise with Kirklees Learning Services to identify schools for support and professional conversations
- Write to schools to inform them about legislation and importance of RE at KS4, including pupils not on RE examination route
- Establish channel of communication and working relationship with Kirklees Interfaith
- Engage with RE leaders to understand their perspectives of how SACRE can support RE
- Capture teacher feedback about RE including LA syllabus and SACRE RE award
- Keep SACRE membership informed about policy and legislation relevant to RE.

Section Two: Statutory Responsibilities: Religious Education

The Local Agreed Syllabus

The Local Agreed Syllabus, 'Believing and Belonging', is the statutory curriculum for all maintained schools in the borough. This syllabus is shared with Bradford, Kirklees, Calderdale and Leeds. Other academies and free schools must teach RE according to the requirements of their trust deed or funding agreement. Although SACREs and local authorities do not have any responsibility or authority for their curriculum, it welcomes use of these resources by all local schools. Results from the recent SACRE survey of all schools in Kirklees demonstrated that the majority of academies have adopted the local agreed syllabus.

The Syllabus was agreed by a Local Agreed Syllabus Conference in March 2024 and a series of launch and training events took place over the summer term in each local authority area. This syllabus is based on the work of the Big Ideas team from Exeter University and follows six key concepts (pathways) that are taught progressively in all years from EYFS to KS5. In addition to the syllabus a series of core and focus units of work have been developed. These are detailed schemes of work to enable teachers to teach RE well in schools. Each phase of school will teach six core units of work over two or three years and will also be able to choose focus units to dig deeper into a particular faith/ belief. The syllabus units were reviewed in 2024 – 2025 to ensure they matched the conceptual pathways effectively.

Standards and Monitoring

Analysis of school website research

Analysis of secondary school websites shows a largely positive experience at KS3 with schools using and adapting the local agreed syllabus. However, some schools appear not to offer a comprehensive RE programme at KS4 for those students not taking a RE an examined route. Some schools combine core RE with other subjects such as citizenship and PSHE. This means students are not receiving their full entitlement to RE in their curriculum. SACRE will write to schools to remind them of their statutory duty of RE provision from age 5 to 18 and of the benefits of meaningful RE for pupils' personal development.

Ofsted Reports Analysis

Recent Ofsted reports are being reviewed to identify schools in potential need of additional support, and schools to encourage to apply for an RE Award.

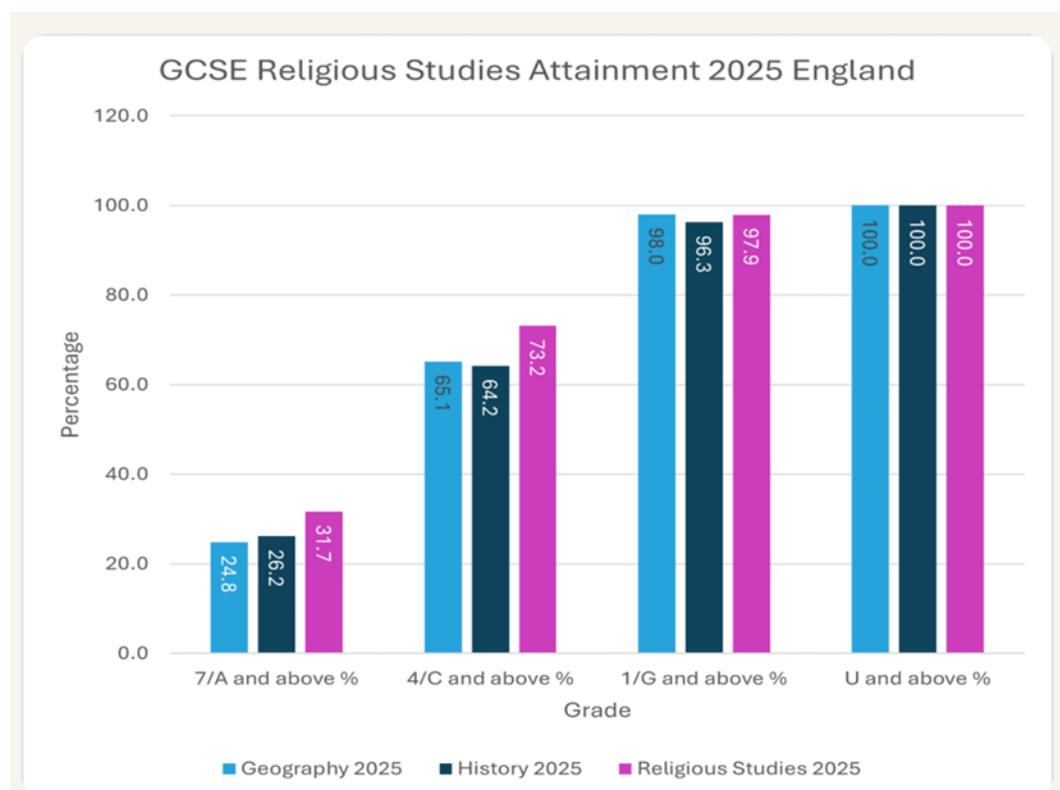
Examination results

National Picture

A data report produced by NATRE in September 2025 explains that nationally RS continues to demonstrate high attainment and is especially strong for girls.

Attainment in RS shows stronger outcomes than History and Geography, particularly at higher grades. In England, 31.7% of RS candidates achieved grade 7/A+, compared to 26.2% in History and 24.8% in Geography.

Entries in England shows RS entries are stable at around 240,000 annually, showing resilience compared to other optional subjects, despite curriculum pressures.



NATRE Report on GCSE Results 2025 September 17, 2025

Local Analysis

| | 2023 -2024 | 2024 -2025 |
|---|------------|------------|
| National Average Grades 9 -4 | 70.59% | 73.2% |
| Kirklees Average Grades 9 – 4 | 82.6 % | 69% |
| Kirklees Y11 cohort entries for GCSE (FC and SC) | 29.88% | 44% |
| Kirklees Y11 cohort no entry percent | 70.11% | 56% |
| Kirklees Number of schools entering Full or Short Course | 19 | 17 |
| Kirklees Number of schools entering full or nearly full cohort (including 3 RC Schools) | 5 | 6 |

SACRE would like to congratulate the students who have worked so hard to achieve a GCSE in Religious Studies. We are pleased to see that a higher percentage of cohorts are being entered for GCSE RS. We are still concerned that it appears that 56% percent of pupils are not entered for a formal examination and that this then raises the question of how much core/ non examined RE is taught in KS4. We have noted which schools have not entered any students for examined RS or have very small percentage entries and our team of consultants will be contacting these schools direct to offer support.

RE Quality Mark

Kirklees schools have the opportunity for their RE provision to be reviewed based on the REQM bronze award criteria. This is intended as a gateway to the national quality mark. SACRE is proud of Headlands CofE Infant + Junior School who achieved the Kirklees SACRE award in 2024 - 2025.

Professional development and support for schools

General support

Professional support continued through Pennine Learning, a local company specialising in RE and community cohesion. Pennine Learning provides a total of eighty days support per year. This is arranged flexibly to facilitate effective working with schools and relevant others. Pennine Learning also supports SACREs and RE in Leeds and Calderdale enabling appropriate collaboration and partnership.

Through Kirklees Learning Services and RE consultants, schools and teachers have been able to access support, including in the following ways:

- Development of the syllabus and its schemes of work, including prompt responses to queries or difficulties
- Consultancy over specific or general RE issues, including advice about pupils' withdrawal from RE
- Availability of support by phone, email or virtual meetings
- Support for schools wishing to develop and improve RE following Ofsted inspections.

Training

- One day course for new RE coordinators.
- Termly Primary RE network meetings attracting up to 40 delegates each session.
- Termly Secondary network meetings organised in partnership with Calderdale and Leeds.
- Subject-knowledge webinars for teachers on different religious and non-religious traditions hosted by a subject specialist and faith representative; and held in cooperation with partner local authorities.

In the coming year a full range of CPD and consultancy will be available through the Kirklees Strategic Improvement Plan.

RE Reviews and SACRE RE Award



The RE review and SACRE award are available online and face to face. A small number of schools have worked with a consultant to review their RE provision using the award framework.

A 'Deep Dive' in RE is also offered to schools. This half-day session focuses on reviewing the scope, rigour and sequencing of RE curriculum provision.

These opportunities are promoted via RE networks and a half termly newsletter.

Further information

A range of guidance continues to be available to Kirklees schools on a wide range of related areas, including:

- RE Policy
- Withdrawal from RE
- Collective Worship
- Celebrating Diversity
- Engaging with faith communities
- Sensitivity to Faith in Schools (Sharing the Journey)

A half termly newsletter and index of resources is distributed to all schools, together with a directory of potential RE visits and visitors.

Section Three: Statutory Responsibilities:

Collective Worship

Standards and Monitoring of Collective Worship

Guidance and support are offered to schools for them to fulfil their statutory duty to facilitate collective worship.

Ofsted reports are scrutinised to identify issues or concerns.

Complaints and determinations

No complaints were made to SACRE about Collective Worship during 2024-25.

One determination request to vary statutory requirements in a maintained school has been reviewed this year.

Responsibility for determinations in English academies and free schools rest with the Schools Funding Agency.

Professional development and support for schools

Through the consultant, Pennine Learning, SACRE advises and supports schools on request.

SACRE members are well-placed to support collective worship in schools.

To help SACRE members support collective worship in schools the following framework is drawn on:

1. Collective: How does the assembly celebrate and promote a sense of community within the whole school (or group)?
2. Educational: Is there a clear aim and focus, with appropriate learning? Does it engage and interest pupils and staff?
3. Spiritual: How does the assembly nurture pupils' awareness of their beliefs and values - and those of others (including non-religious beliefs)? How does it develop a sense of meaning, purpose and value in their lives?
4. Reflective: Is there space and opportunity for thoughtful reflection, in the assembly or as a follow up? If prayers are used do these allow for different approaches and responses?
5. Inclusive: How does the assembly programme develop understanding of different perspectives and cultures? How does it promote values of respect, inclusion and equality?
6. Responsive: How did pupils respond and participate?

Further information

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw their children from collective worship. Guidance on good practice and protocols for withdrawal is available to schools; consultants are available if further support is needed. Guidance is also provided to schools in fulfilling statutory obligations over collective worship and promoting good SMSC development.

Section Four: Links with other organisations

SACRE has active links with the following organisations:

- National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)
- West Yorkshire SACREs (WYSACRE)
- The Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC)
- Local faith organisations and interfaith groups
- Kirklees Learning Services
- RE Today Services
- National RE Hubs
- Other local organisations and charities such as Equilibria

Section Five: Other areas of involvement

Welcoming Schools

Visits to local places of worship and links with faith communities are facilitated to fulfil SACRE's obligation to broaden pupils' experiences and perspectives and promote their understanding and respect towards different faith communities.

Schools have access to an up-to-date directory of locations for faith visits, faith representatives suitable for school visits, and general information about RE relevant places and organisations. SACRE has worked with the Communities' team and the Kirklees Interfaith Councils to support school visits and visitors in Kirklees.

It is likely that virtual online visits will continue to be offered and promoted alongside in-person visits and events.



Through the Schools Welcome project free training is offered to faith communities to inform them of the requirements of the Kirklees RE Syllabus and to support them in hosting visits from schools. Training was offered in-person at venues in Leeds and Kirklees. Some SACRE members have participated in training. The project continues to build up worthwhile links between schools and faith communities. Kirklees SACRE prioritises working closely with Kirklees Interfaith Council to support publicity and participation in training events.

An audit tool and consultancy support for promoting understanding and respect of different faiths are available to schools. This has been promoted via the Pennine Learning website and at RE network meetings.

As part of the Education and Faith project faith trails have been created in Huddersfield and Dewsbury. Three schools have trialled these in preparation for making the faith trails available to all schools. A series of online interfaith conferences and resources have been developed over the last few years. A recent interfaith conference on Autumn Festivals helped approximately 2400 pupils engage with people from a Jewish, Sikh, Christian and Druid background. Pupils took part in craft activities and generated questions for the faith representatives.

Faith Films

Kirklees SACRE has collaborated with Calderdale and Leeds SACREs in creating two professionally produced educational films; one about a synagogue and one about a gurudwara, both in Leeds. The films are part funded by a Westhill award won by Leeds SACRE. These films are freely available to schools with supporting materials and opportunity for live interaction with a faith representative, either online or in person. As of November 2025, the films had received 8000 views. To continue the series, production of films about

Hindu Dharma and Islam are underway both sponsored by their respective faith communities. Films about Humanism and Christianity are in the planning stage.

Faith sensitivities

Kirklees SACRE has worked with partners in Leeds, Calderdale, Oldham and Tameside to produce advice on sensitivity to issues relating to faith in schools. This is available to schools as a document called 'Sharing the Journey', and which offers practical information and support to school leaders. Sharing the Journey has been re-issued to all schools in the borough to ensure consistency in approach to areas such as religious dress, fasting and prayer.

Section Six: Kirklees SACRE arrangements

Kirklees MBC funds the operation of SACRE by contracting its consultants, providing a clerk and supporting its work through links with senior education officers.

SACRE membership includes representatives from all four constituent committees.

| | |
|---------|---|
| Group A | Faith and belief communities except for the Church of England |
| Group B | Anglican representatives |
| Group C | Teachers and schools |
| Group D | Kirklees MBC |

SACRE will ensure members' attendance continues to be consistent and will seek to increase its number of teacher representatives, including teachers from academies and MATs.

Training is provided by NASACRE and offered to SACRE members including an induction webinar.

Membership and attendance for 2024-5 was as follows:

| Name | Representing | Att March 24 | Att June 24 | Att Oct 24 | Att Dec 24 | Att Mar 25 | Att June 25 | Att Sep 25 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| Mark Janes | Chair / Baptist | P | N | N | P | P | P | P |
| Hannah Mckerchar | Vice Chair / Counciler | P | P | P | P | P | P | P |
| Anna Twist | Clerk | P | P | N | P | P | P | P |
| Suzanne Bridges | Methodist | N | P | P | P | N | N | N |
| Mashuda Shaikh | Islam | N | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Abdul Majeed | Islam | N | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Yousaf Baig | Islam | | P | P | N | N | N | N |
| Prashant Kumar | Hindu Community in Huddersfield | P | N | N | N | P | N | P |
| Kuljindar Shokar | Sikhi | P | P | N | P | P | P | P |
| Tushari Richards | Baha'i | | | | | | P | P |
| Jon Crooke | Baha'i | | | | | | P | P |
| Ed Marks | Jewish | | | | | P | N | N |
| Rupert Madely | Church of England | N | N | N | N | N | N | P |
| Alex Burbidge | Church of England | | | | P | P | N | P |
| Karen Atkinson | Church of England | P | N | N | P | P | N | P |
| Amanda Ogilvie-Berry | Church of England | N | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Anna Twist | Secondary Teachers | P | P | N | P | | | |
| Rafaqat Mohammed | Secondary Teachers | | P | P | N | N | N | N |
| Janice Leam | Teaching Unions | P | P | P | P | P | P | P |
| Emma Salter | Huddersfield University | | | P | P | P | P | P |
| Geoff Billing | Primary Head | | | | P | P | N | P |
| Councillor Andrew Marchington | LA | N | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Councillor Darren O' Donovan | LA | N | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Councillor Joshua Sheard Birsta | LA | N | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Councillor Hannah Mckerchar | LA/Humanist | P | | P | P | P | P | P |
| Emma Brayford | | P | | P | | | N | P |

Section Seven: Advice to the Local authority

The following advice is given by SACRE to the local authority:

- To review SACRE 's funding to ensure it is in line with national recommendations and good practice.
- To review SACRE's membership to ensure it reflects the breadth and diversity of the borough in terms of faiths and beliefs, and teacher representation.
- To ensure SACRE's annual report is considered carefully by the Scrutiny Panel of the Council and any of its content noted including how the work of SACRE can support Religious Education and community cohesion.
- To investigate the provision of RE for non-examined students at KS4 in all schools.

No appendices are attached to this report; all the relevant information is contained within the main body. However, any further information can be requested via the clerk.

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REPORT TITLE: 'The Big Plan' – Preparation for Adulthood

| | |
|---|---|
| Meeting: | Children's Scrutiny |
| Date: | 6th February 2026 |
| Cabinet Member (if applicable) | Cllr Viv Kendrick – Children's Services Cllr Jane Rylah - Education |
| Key Decision Eligible for Call In | No No |
| Purpose of Report : To outline what Preparation for Adulthood is, as set out in the SEND Code of Practise (2015) and provide an overview of the work the Local Area Partnership is undertaking to improve our approach as part of our SEND transformation. | |
| <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note the progress made so far and the planned next steps. <p>Reasons for Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Area Partnership have in place our co-produced 'Big Plan', the SEND Transformation Strategy and in addition, as Preparation for Adulthood was identified as an Area for Improvement in the Area SEND and AP inspection in June 2025, Big Plan 3 sets out the detailed work that is being undertaken this year. As part of Big Plan 3, we arranged for a Peer Review to take place in January 2026, the outcomes of which will inform the actions moving forwards. | |
| Resource Implications: Not Applicable | |
| Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> & name | Tom Brailsford – Executive Director for Children and Families – 23 rd January 2026 |
| Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance? | N/A |
| Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)? | N/A |

Electoral wards affected: ALL

Ward councillors consulted: N/A

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes, there is no individual data included in the report.

1. Executive Summary

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) sets out a clear expectation that preparation for adulthood (PfA) begins in the earliest years, not solely at secondary school transition points. Early planning supports better long-term outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.

The Code identifies four Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) outcomes, which should shape planning from early childhood onwards:

- **Higher Education and/or Employment** – Developing aspirations and exploring future pathways, including supported employment, apprenticeships and opportunities for self-employment.
- **Independent Living** – Enabling young people to have choice and control over their support, accommodation and day-to-day decision-making, including access to supported living options.
- **Participation in Society** – Supporting the development of friendships, positive relationships and active engagement in community life.
- **Health** – Ensuring young people can achieve the best possible adult health outcomes through early support, health literacy and effective transitions into adult health services.

Although these outcomes are often associated with older children, the Code emphasises that the foundations for successful adulthood are established early. A planned, intentional approach to teaching and learning in early years and school settings should:

- Build children's decision-making skills
- Involve them meaningfully in shaping their learning experiences
- Develop early independence
- Embed PfA outcomes within the curriculum across all age phases

Embedding PfA from the earliest years ensures that education, health and social care systems work together to support long-term aspirations and seamless transitions into adulthood.

This report will provide an overview of the work in progress to develop the Local Area Partnership's approach to Preparation for Adulthood as part of the SEND Strategy 'The Big Plan'.

2. Information required to take a decision

Background

Preparing our children and young people for independence and supporting them into adulthood is important universally, and even more so for those who have a Special Educational Need and/or a Disability. We have good information available for young people, parents and carers on both the Council Website as well as the Local Offer (this includes videos, checklists, easy read guides, and co-production is evident), but also recognise the world changes quickly and there is more we can do across our partnership.

[What preparing for adulthood means | Kirklees Council](#)
[Transitions - moving between schools | Education | Kirklees SEND Local Offer](#)
[Preparing for Adulthood \(PFA\), Transitions and post 16 | Kirklees SEND Local Offer](#)

Our 'Inclusive Ambitions' co-developed across the partnership in a Workshop in 2020 includes a specific reference to supporting independence and preparing children into adult years;

'Children and young people are supported to have clear aspirations for the future, with a focus on independence and preparing for adulthood. Throughout a young person's journey, they are supported to achieve their aspirations through the support they receive. Ultimately, this will mean more young people enter education, employment and training as they progress into adulthood.'

Preparation for Adulthood has been a key focus, with strong representation from across the partnership, Adults and Childrens Social Care, Health, Public Health, Learning, Education across our SEND Transformation Programme.

To further develop opportunities, on 11th January 2024, the Executive Director for Adults and the Executive Director for Children's Services invited the Local Government Association to facilitate a PfA workshop for Service Directors and Heads of Service across Childrens and Adults. This informed a SEND Programme Board decision to refresh the approach to PfA in May 2024.

Our Parent Carer Forum (PCAN) told us they were planning a 'Preparing for the Future' event for parents and asked for a range of partners to attend in May 2024. The feedback from this event was shared with the SEND Transformation and Commissioning Group in June 2024 and we explained we intended to 'reset/refresh' the PfA workstream.

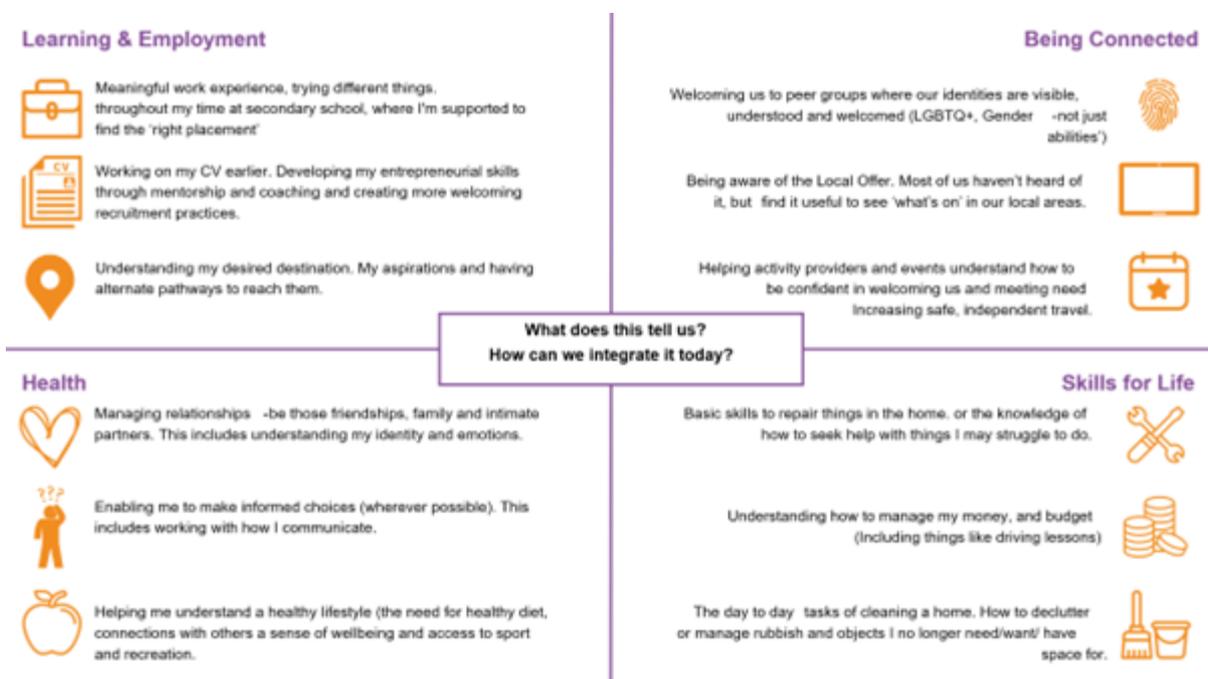
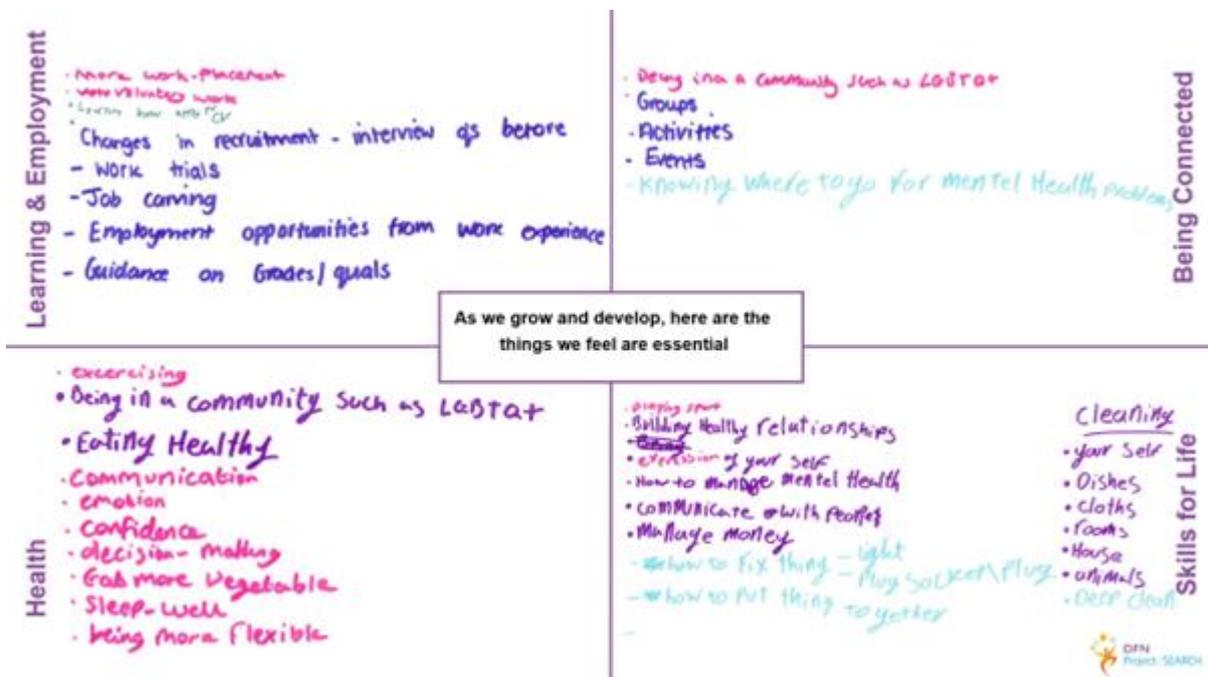
Our strategy for SEND improvement is set out in our Big Plan and is supported in the Big Plan 2, and since the recent Local Area Inspection, Big Plan 3.

Following the SEND Transformation and Commissioning Group we held a planning workshop with partners on 22nd July 2024 to begin to rescope the workstream. We asked C + K Careers to lead the PfA workstream and together created a project scope.

In August 2024 we received the RISE (Research in Special Educational Needs) prospectus from our DfE Advisor and in agreement with the DfE we were able to scope and secure support from National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTI) and the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) which was signed off in October 2024 (see Appendix A). Three sessions took place between November 2024 and March 2025 with representation from Children's Services, Adult Services, Education, Secondary Schools, Post-16 Sector, PCAN, Health Sector, DWP, Youth Voice representatives and young people.

Young people told us that the following were important to them: -

'When you get to 18 and you have SEND everyone says you are an ADULT, but I wasn't ready and didn't feel like an adult. This change should happen slowly.'



The additional outputs of the workshop were extensive and enabled a wider range of potential actions to be identified and from that established an action plan as well as putting in place our terms of reference.

Partnership Governance

The PfA project reports directly to the SEND Transformation programme board. The programme board reports through a number of channels. These include partnership boards such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Ambition Board and SEND Transformation and Commissioning Group.

A partnership PfA project board has been established. It is chaired by our partner – C+K Careers, and has wide membership including Children’s Services, Adult Services, Learning Services, Education, Secondary School, Post-16 Sector, PCAN, Health Sector, Communities and a Youth Voice representative.

Tranches of work / key activity within the project has, and will have, people involved from across the partnership. PCAN are integral to this approach to ensure parent / carer voice is central to change and there is full transparency.

The things young people have told us are being used as touchstones / key themes to inform all future work.

The combination of the above has led to 4 initial areas of action. The work focuses on supporting parents, carers and professionals through supporting information; cultural change via effective use of processes; training; and the development of the SEND Employment Forum.

Where are we now

The Local Area Partnership had a SEND and AP Area inspection in June 2025 and PfA was identified as an area for improvement.

In our 'Big Plan 3' we summarised what the feedback from Ofsted and CQC said we needed to do

Leaders across the partnership should improve how effectively children and young people are prepared for adulthood by ensuring that:

- *We make a clear, joint, big plan about preparing for adulthood in a way that everyone knows how well things are going.*
- *People who work in Education, Health (NHS including GPs / Locala) and social care, work together better and at an earlier age to help prepare the child or young people and their families for adulthood*
- *Annual reviews of EHCPs show how children and young people will achieve their goals and be supported to fully take part in adult life.*
- *There are enough choices for learning, jobs, and training after age 16, so children and young people with SEND can follow their dreams and interests.*

As part of the agreed actions, we said we would arrange for a Peer Review on how we approach Preparation for Adulthood by the Regional Sector Led Improvement Programme. Supported by the Executive Director for Children and Families, and the Executive Director for Adult Services, the peer review took place on the 12th and 13th January 2026, with the whole partnership participating.

Peer Review 12th and 13th January 2026

The agreed purpose of the review of the peer review was to;

Provide an objective, informed assessment of Kirklees' approach to Preparing for Adulthood, focusing on:

- The strength and impact of partnerships across education, health, social care, and the voluntary sector.
- The culture of aspiration, inclusion, and co-production.
- How well young adults' voices are heard, valued, and acted upon.
- The extent to which PFA is embedded from early years, including community inclusion.
- How well parents are prepared for their young person becoming an adult.
- The effectiveness of services in supporting early outcomes and enabling independence.

We are awaiting the formal outcome of the review which will inform the next stages of our work programme.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Council Plan

Our SEND Big Plan aligns with our Council Plan, it explains that together we've strive to make sure that every child has the best possible start in life and achieve their best. We know that there are always opportunities to improve how we do that - sometimes that's doing more, but often it's about doing things differently.

We're ambitious for children, young people and parents and carers in Kirklees. We want to make sure we support children and families at the earliest opportunity; our young people go to school in Kirklees with positive results; there's a consistent and inclusive offer; and whatever our young people are interested in, we want them to excel.

3.2 Financial Implications

3.3 Legal Implications

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

N/A

3.5 Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) or Human Resources

N/A

4. Consultation

We have been working across our partnership and have an established workstream for Preparation for Adulthood, as well as, ensuring we have this in view across all aspects of our Transformation programme. In 2024 and 2025, we took feedback from the session that our Parent Carer Forum held, and, had good participation from the whole partnership in the support we received from NDTI and CDC as part of the RISE partnership. This has helped us to shape priorities and our workplan.

5. Engagement

We have worked across the partnership to develop the plan including engaging with our parents and carers and including messages we know our children and young people want us to hear. We have also work closely with NHS England and the Department for Education in developing our plan and take opportunities for example, through the RISE partnership and Yorkshire and Humber Sector Led Improvement offers to help us to improve.

6. Options

6.1 Options considered

N/A

6.2 Reasons for recommended option

N/A

7. Next steps and timelines

We will continue to follow the planning we set out in Big Plan 3, and, once we have had the report from the Peer Review we will consider how to take forward any recommendations made.

8. Contact officer

Jo-Anne Sanders – Service Director – Learning and Inclusion

9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

N/A

10. Appendices

Appendix A – RISE agreed support 2024/25

11. Service Director responsible

Jo-Anne Sanders – Service Director – Learning and Inclusion

Appendix A – Support received from RISE

| Local Authority | Delivery Partner |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| Kirklees | The Rise Partnership |

Overview of deliverables

| Themes | Deliverables | Days | Expected outcomes and evidence |
|---|--|------|---|
| Scoping Call | Scoping call between the delivery partner and the LA | 0.5 | By completion of Phase 1, training session attendees have an increased understanding of their role in PfA, and how this intersects with others. By completion of Phase 1, training session attendees have an increased understanding of what PfA is and the statutory framework behind it. |
| Liaison with Local Leaders | Liaison with local leaders | 0.75 | |
| Planning for PfA Training 1 (Introducing PfA) | This online 2-hour workshop is aimed at introducing PfA, what it is, statutory requirements from the SEND Code of Practice and the evidence base for success. It will cover writing PfA outcomes in EHCPs, including working together across the sector and should act as a refresher for partners who wish to increase their understanding of the power and purpose of Preparation for Adulthood. | 0.5 | |
| Delivery of PfA Training 1 (Introducing PfA) | | 1 | By the completion of Phase 1, attendees will have a better understanding of how to embed young people's voices into PfA outcomes and reviews. |
| Follow up from PfA Training 1 (Introducing PfA) | | 0.5 | |
| Planning for PfA Mapping and Visioning in-person workshop | In-person workshop bringing together a group of local leaders across adult and children's social care, schools, health and parent carer representatives to map the current understanding of Preparing for Adulthood and discuss strengths and challenges. The | 0.5 | By completion of Phase 2, workshop attendees have an increased understanding of local strengths, opportunities and areas for development regarding PfA. By completion of Phase 2, workshop attendees have a shared vision for PfA locally as well as focused priorities. |
| Delivery of PfA Mapping and Visioning in-person workshop | | 4 | |
| Follow up from PfA Mapping and Visioning in-person workshop | | 0.5 | |

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| | workshop will begin to develop a vision for PfA in Kirklees and will also set out the opportunities in the area, as well as the role practitioners can play in supporting this for young people and their families. The workshop will encourage attendees to think about the role of varying agencies in the vision, where responsibility lies for embedding PfA and the data indicators for success as discussed in the scoping call. | | |
| Planning for 'Action Planning in PfA' | Online trainings for colleagues across the Kirklees local area. | 0.5 | By 3 months after completion of Phase 3, local leaders report increased confidence in the direction of travel for PfA locally. |
| Delivery of 'Action Planning in PfA' | This training will explore effective practice to embed PfA outcomes and what good looks like. | 1 | By 6 months after completion of Phase 3, members of the wider workforce report an increased understanding of the local PfA vision, and what this means for their role. |
| Follow up from 'Action Planning in PfA' | | 0.5 | By 12 months after completion of Phase 3, children, young people and parent carers report greater confidence in local approaches to PfA. By 6 months after completion of Phase 3, practitioners report improved embedding of Preparing for Adulthood processes. |

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CHILDREN’S SCRUTINY PANEL – WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26

MEMBERS: Cllr Itrat Ali, Cllr Richard Smith, Cllr Aafaq Butt, Cllr Ashleigh Robinson, Cllr Hannah McKerchar, Cllr Tanisha Bramwell

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

| THEME/ISSUE | Lead Officer | APPROACH/AREAS OF FOCUS | OUTCOMES/ACTIONS | Timescale |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <p><u>Standard items</u></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 Paul Caladine)</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 Children.</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 the minutes of the quarterly Ambition Board meetings for information.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Each meeting of the Panel</p> <p>Updates will be provided at Panel meetings when a meeting of the Board has taken place (meetings take place quarterly).</p> <p>Ongoing and when available</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Every meeting</p> <p>When available</p> <p>When available</p> |
| <p>Review of the Improvement Journey (Children and Families)</p> | <p>Tom Brailsford/Vicky Metheringham</p> | <p>The Panel will continue to review the Improvement Journey of the Children’s Service, have an oversight of the Ofsted improvement plan, attend appropriate</p> | <p>Multi-agency developments around the Children’s Social Care Reforms – Panel meeting on 6th February 2026</p> | <p>Panel on 6.2.26</p> |

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| | <p>YJS – Ian Mottershaw/ Teresa Racz Leaving Care Service – Joel Hanna Children’s Social Care Reforms – V Metheringham CQC and Ofsted Inspection – V Metheringham</p> | <p>meetings and undertake observation to see the key elements of the new arrangements on working together to safeguard children with a particular focus on the effective implementation of the service and good practice.</p> <p>The Children’s Service were looking to undertake a redesign of leaving care to make it more robust and the Panel will invite the Head of Corporate Parenting to Scrutiny to provide updates on progress.</p> <p>The Panel will visit the Leaving Care Service and monitor the work taking place to develop this area of practice.</p> <p>The Panel will scrutinise the following areas -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of the Ofsted Improvement Plan and planned Re-design of the Leaving Care Service which will include a visit to the Team • Multi-agency developments around the Children’s Social Care Reforms, the leaving care service and Front Door • Updates of future Ofsted Inspections • The Panel will visit Children’s Social Care Teams to continue their review of the improvement journey of the Children’s Service | <p>The Panel will consider a verbal report on the multi-agency developments around the Children’s Social Care Reforms.</p> <p>Care Leavers Month 2025 The Panel were invited to attend the Care Leavers Month events which took place during November 2025 to celebrate the achievements of care leavers and raised awareness of challenges that some might face. The national theme for Care Leavers Month was “Rising as me: overcoming challenges, transforming, and finding your identify”.</p> <p>Visit to activities organised by the Youth Justice Service (YJS) for young people The Panel have been invited to attend some of the activities being co-ordinated by the YJS Team with young people and will take place from May 2025 until December 2026. Activities are planned by staff who will take the lead and include activities such as playing pool, baking and playing games.</p> <p>Our Children’s Voice Team – Panel meeting on 19th March 2026 The Panel will consider an update from the Our Children’s Voice Team on the key aspects of their work and hear about the</p> | <p>Various dates in Nov 25</p> <p>Various dates</p> <p>Panel on 19th March 2026</p> |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Our Children’s Voice Team will visit the Panel to discuss the work undertaken on ‘What it feels like to be excluded as a child. • Joint Targeted Area Inspection of multi-agency response to child sexual abuse in the family environment – the Panel will consider information on the inspection – timescales to be confirmed • Visits to – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaving Care Service - Front Door Social Care Team - North service Area Children’s Social Care Team (Dewsbury and Batley) - Activities that the youth justice service coordinate with young people and the team | <p>work undertaken on “What it feels like to be excluded as a child”.</p> <p>Visit to Families First Partnership Programme staff and partner engagement session on 3rd February 2026 The Panel will attend and observe the partnership event which is a national initiative by the DfE and forms part of the Kirklees Families Together initiative.</p> <p>Visit to Children’s Social Care Conference on 17th March 2026 The Panel will attend and observe the Conference which will take place on International Social Worker Day. A number of speakers will present on the day, including a young person who will share her experiences of having a social worker as a child in Kirklees and the long-lasting impact this has had on her childhood.</p> <p>Oversight of the Ofsted Improvement Plan and planned Re-design of the Leaving Care Service – Panel meeting on 19th March 2026 The Panel will consider a report on the Oversight of the Ofsted Improvement Plan and planned Re-design of the Leaving Care</p> | <p>Visit on 3.2.26</p> <p>Visit on 17.3.26</p> <p>Panel on 19th March 2026</p> <p>Visit to Leaving Care</p> |
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| | | | Service, which will include a visit to the Leaving Care Service Team in 2026. | Service – to be arranged |
| <p>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Transformation Plan</p> | <p>Jo-Anne Sanders</p> <p>Clusters – Jayne Whitton</p> <p>Sufficiency Strategy – S Horn</p> <p>DfE White Paper – J Sanders</p> <p>EHCPs – Jenny Sneideris/ Michelle Lister</p> <p>Ofsted & CQC Inspection – Jo Sanders</p> <p>Adulthood PFA Board – Adrian Wisniewski/Donna Auty</p> <p>PCAN - Carol</p> <p>Thomas/Johanna Hull and Dawn Pitt</p> | <p>The Panel will scrutinise the SEND Transformation Plan and will focus on the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND Sufficiency Strategy for Kirklees (2025-2028) • Overview of SEND Tribunals and EHCP Compliance and timescales and the Complaints Process - which will include – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - observation of the decision-making process for EHCP; - a look at the volume processes/quality and compliance (including Annual Reviews) and the multi-agency approach - observation at the EHCP Quality Assurance Multi-Agency meetings - data on complaints/mediation/tribunals against the number of EHCPs - In order to raise the awareness of Panel Members an anonymised EHCP would be shared with the Panel/Vision 360/Self Evaluation and SEN2 publication data • SEND Ofsted and CQC Inspection of Kirklees Local Area Partnership’s provision for children and young people with special educational needs and | <p>Visit on 10th June 2025 to the Places Access and Inclusion Committee of the Education (PAIC)</p> <p>The Panel visited the Places, Access and Inclusion Meeting on the 10th June 2025 to observe the discussions around needs and capacity relating to the teacher workforce. Some of the issues discussed were around –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additionally Resourced Provision and support for New Mill Junior and Infant to develop 2 site provision within rural areas; - Analysis of sufficiency data and reducing PANs for Primary schools; - The Local Plan and the impact of new development on school sufficiency in certain areas; - Review of the Fair Access Protocol (FAP) which had see 14 schools join a task and finish group; - Capacity for the Committee was a risk, there were now equal levels of permanent exclusions and electively home educated cases and a pressure with the current secondary place bulge as although FAP could override PAN, | <p>Visit on 10.6.25</p> |

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| | | <p>disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision – Local Authority Action Plan (to include information on the Liquid Logic Parent Portal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DfE White Paper on proposals on SEND Changes (April 26 implementation) • Preparation to Adulthood (PFA) which will include a visit to the PFA Board (date to be confirmed) • Visits to – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEND Transformation Programme Event on 26th June 2025 - Satellite provision for the two new special schools and Alternative Resource Provisions at Woodley Moor, Overthorpe and New Mill sites - Mainstream schools to observe the practice of the new initiatives of schools working in clusters - Half yearly SEND Event (date to be confirmed) - PCAN (Parent Carer Forum) - Local Offer Live on 23.10.25 - EHCP Quality Assurance Multi-Agency meetings (dates to be confirmed) | <p>some schools were already oversubscribed.</p> <p>Visit to Cluster meeting at Holmfirth High School on 25th June 2025</p> <p>The Panel visited the cluster meeting at Holmfirth High School and fed back on the following key issues –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respectful relationships had been built through the year. - Shared training followed up with ideas on how to implement what they had learned. - Clusters had enabled consideration of all-staff training within settings as well as specialist training for staff from multiple settings. - Important to ensure the EHCP Team would accept whole school evidence for the Decision Panels not only specialist assessments. - It was seen as a priority that EHCP Leaders should attend cluster meetings. - Feedback from SENDCO’s was often that they were not clear why refusals had been given and could not get hold of an officer to discuss. - There was a wellbeing element to being able to share cases. - Schools were dealing with incontinence problems and concerns | <p>Visit on 25.6.25</p> |
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| | | | <p>were raised as to what was the most appropriate course to source funding for required adaptations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The benefit of having the secondary SENDCO was acknowledged by all. <p>Visit to Cluster meeting at Birkby Junior School on 26th June 2025 The Panel fed back that it a very collaborative approach was implemented in the meeting, and it was apparent why this cluster has been highlighted as a leading cluster in the north. Individual cases were discussed, and colleagues were supportive of each other with suggestions and signposting to services and resources. Budget was an issue with the need for more finance and often lack of money to provide the resource required for each individual child.</p> <p>Visit to the SEND Transformation Programme Event on 27th June 2025 The Panel visited the SEND Transformation Programme Event which had been organised to celebrate and share key aspects of the SEND Transformation Programme and also connect with staff about how the service can improve communication. Key points fed back from Panel Members were as follows –</p> | <p>Visit on 26.6.25</p> <p>Visit on 27.6.25</p> |
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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Services who attended seemed to value the chance to network and feel informed on progress. - Good collaborative atmosphere for teams to come together to gain a deeper understanding of each other’s roles and there were useful conversations between sessions. - Good to hear the progress on the 2 new build special schools at Woodley and Joseph Norton. - Progress made on compliance with issuing EHCPs within statutory timescales. - A suggestion was made that some of the training needs of officers and professionals could be met with bitesize options, eg short YouTube videos or TikTok’s; - A table discussion highlighted the need for communication styles tailored to the young people and better ways to engage. <p>Visits to observe the Decision-Making process for EHCPs</p> <p>The Panel observed the decision-making process for EHCPs which took place in 3 stages –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Decision to assess Panel on 22nd May</u> | <p>Visit on 22.5.25</p> |
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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multi-disciplinary approach worked well although not all services had been able to attend on the day; • a wide focus for discussion, not only on education but considering factors such as social service or CAMHS involvement • The panel had access to cross-boundary working such as the ability to access medical records from South Yorkshire. • Key Learning Partners can intervene if settings do not take the expected actions, and the Specialist Outreach team can look at the whole school picture as well as on an individual level. <p>2. <u>Decision to issue Panel on 19th June</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An example of positive multi-disciplinary working where everyone's voice was invited and valued; • Decisions were made by consensus and with discussion • Consideration was given to the family situation, risks such as adoption disruption and to parental and school recommendations and preferred outcomes | <p>Visit on 19.6.25</p> |
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| | | | <p>scrutiny focus on the SEND Transformation Plan. Key points discussed were –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Robust response on the need for an Accessibility Strategy• A forum had been formed for feedback on ways of working and questions were being asked early when planning engagement• Discussed EHCP Quality Assurance (QA) Framework - newer EHCPs were showing better quality and the QA process had highlighted gaps in health and social care advice• There was a monthly review with multi-agency membership that examined a sample of cases• The Service was considering how to build Quality Assurance into Annual Reviews and staff training to raise awareness• Good collaboration with external partners such as Bradford Research School on the Our Kirklees Futures• Early Years Development Board was relaunching and would include school readiness considerations• Survey on Fair Access Protocol had been undertaken and only 22 out of 170 schools responded, further work was taking place to try and understand | |
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| | | | <p>why schools did not engage and how to reach a wider cohort</p> <p>Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) SEND online event on 28th August 2025</p> <p>The Panel attended an online event organised by the CfGS designed for Local Authorities and stakeholders, the event considered the complexities of SEND Scrutiny from legal frameworks and funding models to the real-world impact on children and young people and families. A number of presentations were given by LA Officers, a representative of the National Network of Parent Carers Forum and Councillors involved in scrutiny of SEND.</p> <p>CQC and Ofsted SEND Inspection report – draft action plan – Informal Panel meeting on 29th August 2025</p> <p>The Panel considered a presentation giving an update on the draft action plan regarding the SEND Inspection Report which was published in August 2025.</p> <p>SEND Sufficiency Strategy for Kirklees (2025-2028) - Panel Meeting on 29th August 2025 -</p> <p>The Panel considered and supported the Kirklees SEND Sufficiency for Kirklees</p> | <p>Visit on 28.8.25</p> <p>Panel on 29.8.25</p> <p>Panel on 29.8.25</p> |
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| | | | <p>2025-28 and noted the actions undertaken to address some of the issues raised in the report. The Panel agreed to consider future reports when available on the SEND Sufficiency Strategy giving an update on progress and future plans, including an update on the work of the SEND Sufficiency Group.</p> <p>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Transformation Plan – Informal meeting on 16th September 2025 The Panel met to consider whether the agreed areas of focus needed to be widened and agreed further areas for consideration which have been discussed with Officers.</p> <p>SEND Ofsted and CQC Inspection of Kirklees – Local Authority Action Plan – Panel meeting on 17th October 2025 The Panel considered a report and presentation on the outcome of the Kirklees Local Area Partnership Inspection of SEND and Alternative Provision undertaken in June 2025 by Ofsted and CQC, and the post inspection Action Plan, which was presented by Ian Bennett, ICB Kirklees Place Director of Nursing and Quality.</p> | <p>Panel on 16.9.25</p> <p>Panel on 17.10.25</p> |
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| | | | <p>Preparation for Adulthood (PFA) – Panel Meeting on 6th February 2026 The Panel will consider a report on the Preparation for Adulthood (PFA) and will visit the PFA Board in February 2026.</p> <p>Visit to the Preparation for Adulthood (PFA) Board – 24th February 2026 The Panel will visit the PFA Board to observe the arrangements for preparing for adulthood.</p> | <p>Panel on 6.2.26</p> <p>Visit on 24.2.26</p> |
| <p>Educational Outcomes and Elective Home Education (EHE)</p> | <p>Jo-Anne Sanders/Emma Brayford (key lead)</p> <p>EHE – Christina Marsay and Louise Hallas</p> | <p>The Panel will scrutinise the educational outcomes of children and young people in Kirklees in the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elective Home Education – to include a visit to meet with Strategic Leads and the Team • Educational Attainment Outcomes -pre-decision scrutiny before considered by Cabinet in 25/26. | <p>Visit to meet with Elective Home Education (EHE) Strategic Leads and the Team – 9th September 2025</p> <p>The Panel received data provided by Jo-Anne Sanders in September 2024 on Elective Home Education (EHE), which had been shared with Ofsted during the inspection.</p> <p>The Panel met with Strategic EHE Leads in September 2025 and discussed a number of key areas relating to home educating, some of which are listed below -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why parents decided to home educate - Engagement between schools and families took place when possible before a decision was made to home educate | <p>Visit on 9.9.25</p> |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Workload in the team was a challenge but measures were being taken to put systems in place to assist- No current legal requirement for a parent to inform the Local Authority that they were going to home educate, but safeguarding procedures were in place and if a child was not on a school roll the team would liaise with School Admissions- Home schooling became common during the pandemic but parents seemed now more wary, the team worked with families to support them to get children back into school rather than use formal processes if appropriate- Some parents say they could teach a primary aged child but not secondary- Parents were encouraged to talk to the team before making a decision to home educate- Good working relationships were in place with Front Door and intelligence was shared- The team worked hard to build relationships with schools and families- The Panel suggested that feedback could be sought from parents when their children returned to school | |
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| | | | <p>Educational Attainment Outcomes – Informal Panel meeting on 17th October 2025</p> <p>The Panel considered an overview of the statutory outcomes achieved by learners in Kirklees during the academic year 2024-2025. 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 Panel noted that the results and national comparisons provided in this report were subject to validation and reflective of the data available in September 2025.</p> | <p>Panel on 17.10.25</p> |
| <p>Partnership Arrangements</p> | <p>Vicky Metherringham/Jo-Anne Sanders</p> | <p>The Panel will continue to scrutinise partnerships and boards during the 2025/26 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>Ongoing</p> <p>The Panel will visit the Families First Partnership Programme</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> |

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| 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. | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| Health Provision for Children and Young People | Emily Parry-Harries from Public Health Stewart Horn/Jackie Beaver to co-ordinate | The Panel will scrutinise the health provision for Children and Young People in Kirklees with a particular focus on the following – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional Wellbeing Provision for children in Kirklees and Mental Health in schools - to scrutinise the provision of service and seek feedback from service users and consider fluctuation in waiting lists and trends for children's emotional health and wellbeing to include an update on the implementation of the Keeping Kirklees in Mind service. | | Tbc |
| Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) | Jo-Anne Sanders/Emma Brayford/Mark Janes (Chair of SACRE rmijanes@aol.com) and Emma Salter, Pennine Learning (PL), Education Consultant and Jake Womack, PL Director | 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 and consider the Annual Report in February each year. | Annual Report on Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) – Panel meeting on 6th February 2026 The Panel will consider SACRE's Annual Report. | Panel on 6.2.26 |

Children's Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Plan 2025/26

| Date of Meeting | Issues for Consideration | Officer Contact |
|---|---|---|
| <p>13th June 2025</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 2025/26 municipal year which will include the Council's key priorities for the children's service.</p> | <p>Helen Kilroy</p> |
| <p>8th August 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: 25.07.2025</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Informal Items:-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Children's Service Data Performance Report</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public Items:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Minutes of meeting on 28.04.2025</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet Priorities 25/26</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 25/26</p> | <p>Service Directors to present</p> <p>H Kilroy</p> <p>Cllr Kendrick and Cllr Rylah</p> <p>Service Directors to present</p> <p>Senior Officers/Cabinet Members</p> <p>Panel Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p> |

| Date of Meeting | Issues for Consideration | Officer Contact |
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| <p>29th August 2025</p> <p>Informal meeting 9.30am-10.30am Public meeting 10.30am Hybrid meeting Council Chamber HTH</p> <p>Report deadline: 15.08.2025</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Informal Items:-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No data report due to timescales</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SEND Inspection report – draft action plan</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public Items:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SEND Sufficiency Strategy for Kirklees 2025-28</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 25/26</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">J Sanders</p> <p style="text-align: center;">J Sanders</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> |
| <p>16th September 2025</p> <p>Informal meeting 4pm Online on Teams</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Discussion on whether to widen Panel’s agreed areas of focus on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Transformation Plan</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">H Kilroy/C Gardiner</p> |
| <p>17th October 2025</p> <p>Informal meeting 9.30am-10.30am Public meeting 10.30am Hybrid meeting Council Chamber HTH</p> <p>Report deadline: 03.10.2025</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Informal Items:-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Educational Outcomes (unvalidated data)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ambition Board Minutes – 29.09.25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Children’s Service Data Performance Report</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public Items:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SEND Ofsted and CQC Inspection of Kirklees – Local Authority Action Plan</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">J Sanders</p> <p style="text-align: center;">W Harris to provide</p> <p style="text-align: center;">J Sanders/V Metheringham to present</p> <p style="text-align: center;">J Sanders, S Horn, A Wisniewski, & Ian Bennett (ICB), Vicky Dutchburn</p> |

| Date of Meeting | Issues for Consideration | Officer Contact |
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| | <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 25/26</p> | <p>J Sanders/V Metheringham</p> <p>Senior Officers/Cabinet Members</p> <p>Panel Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p> |
| <p>11th December 2025</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: 27.11.2025</p> | <p>Informal Items:-</p> <p>Children’s Service Data Performance Report</p> <p>Public Items:</p> <p>Update on the forthcoming DfE White Paper (Proposals for SEND reforms)</p> <p>SEND Tribunals and EHCP Compliance (to include an overview of the complaints process)</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 25/26</p> | <p>J Sanders/V Metheringham</p> <p>J Sanders</p> <p>Jenny Sneideris/ Michelle Lister/ J Sanders</p> <p>J Sanders/V Metheringham</p> <p>Senior Officers/Cabinet Members</p> <p>Panel Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p> |
| <p>6th February 2026</p> <p>Informal meeting 9.30am-10.30am</p> <p>Public meeting 10.30am</p> <p>Hybrid meeting</p> | <p>Informal Items:-</p> <p>Ambition Board Minutes – 01.12.25</p> <p>Children’s Service Data Performance Report</p> | <p>W Harris to provide</p> <p>J Sanders/V Metheringham/ to present</p> |

| Date of Meeting | Issues for Consideration | Officer Contact |
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| <p>Council Chamber HTH</p> <p>Report deadline: 23.01.2026</p> | <p>Public Items:</p> <p>Annual report for Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)</p> <p>Preparation for Adulthood (PFA)</p> <p>Multi-agency developments around the Children’s Social Care Reforms (verbal)</p> <p>Performance Highlights (verbal)</p> <p>Pre-decision Scrutiny – Cabinet decisions on the horizon</p> <p>Work Programme and Agenda Plan for 25/26</p> | <p>E Brayford/J Sanders and Mark Janes (Chair) Pennine Learning/Emma Salter</p> <p>J Sanders</p> <p>R Fordyce/Ann Fransen/Carol/Ann Smith</p> <p>J Sanders/V Metheringham to present</p> <p>Senior Officers/Cabinet Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p> |
| <p>19th March 2026</p> <p>Informal meeting 9.30am-10.30am Public meeting 10.30am Hybrid meeting Council Chamber HTH</p> <p>Report deadline: 05.03.2026</p> <p>Pre-election period 13.3 to 7.5</p> | <p>Informal Items:-</p> <p>Children’s Service Data Performance Report</p> <p>Public items</p> <p>Visit by Our Children’s Voice Team to give an update on the work of the Team</p> <p>Oversight of the Ofsted Improvement Plan and planned Re-design of the Leaving Care Service</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 25/26</p> | <p>J Sanders/V Metheringham to present</p> <p>Anna Gledhill/Kay Parry (TomB)</p> <p>V Metheringham/J Hanna</p> <p>Senior Officers/Cabinet Members</p> <p>Panel Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p> |

| Date of Meeting | Issues for Consideration | Officer Contact |
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| | (progress and items to roll forward to 26/27) | |

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