

Meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 9th September, 2020 at 6.00pm

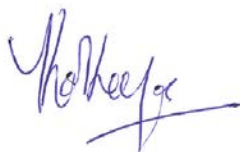
On Microsoft Teams

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Agenda - Public Session

(Meeting open to the public and press)

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To report the appointment of any substitute members serving for this meeting of the Committee.
3. To receive any declarations of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct.
4. [To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 29th June, 2020 as a correct record.](#)
5. [Children's Services Update – Acting Director of Children's Services.](#)
6. [Children's Services Complaints: Response Times Action Plan \(Pages 1 – 7\)](#)
7. [Early Years Transformation Academy \(Pages 8 – 25\)](#)
8. [Elective Home Education \(Pages 26 – 37\)](#)
9. [Summer Provision and September School Update \(Pages 38 – 81\)](#)
10. To consider any questions from Members to the Chair where two clear days notice has been given to the Monitoring Officer (Council Procedure Rule 11.8).



Chief Executive



Dated: 1st September, 2020

Distribution:

Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor A Millward (Chair)

Councillor P Sahota (Vice-Chair)

Councillors M Aston, J Baines, I Bevan, P Bradley, J Cooper, S Craigie, K Lewis, C Perks and S Ridney.

Cc Councillor R Buttery (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)

Parent Governor Representatives

Ms E Wilkes – Primary Schools

Vacancy – Secondary Schools

Vacancy – Special Schools

Church Representatives

Vacancy (Archdiocese of Birmingham)

Mr T Reid (Worcester Diocesan Board of Education)



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- This is a formal Council Committee and it will assist the conduct of business if participants speak only when invited by the Chair.
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Minutes of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee
Monday, 29th June, 2020 at 6.00 pm
Microsoft Teams Meeting

Present:

Councillor A Millward (Chair)
Councillor P Sahota (Vice-Chair)
Councillors M Aston, J Baines, I Bevan, P Bradley, S Craigie, K Lewis, C Perks and S Ridney.

Officers:

C Knowles (Interim Director of Children's Services), H Ellis (Interim Assistant Director - Early Help, Schools and SEND, S Lawrence (Interim Assistant Director - Childrens Social Care), D Nicklin (Complaints Manager) and S Griffiths – Democratic Services Manager.

Observer:

Councillor J Foster

Invitees

Representative of Dudley Youth Council.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

No Member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of any matter to be considered at the meeting.

2. **Minutes**

Resolved

- (1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 5th March, 2020, be approved as a correct record and signed.
- (2) That the Interim Head of Children in Care and Placement Resources provide the information to Members as referred to in Minute No. 48 (Fostering Service Annual Report) relating to details of the number of children that are placed with Agency Foster Carers within the Borough.



3. **Children's Services COVID-19 Update**

A report of the Interim Director of Children's Services was submitted on Children's Services COVID-19 update.

In presenting the report submitted, the Interim Director of Children's Services referred to the critical areas of Children's Services and how those had and were being managed during the pandemic.

It was stated that the Improvement Board had continued to hold virtual meetings and the schools update was referred to, including the expansion of Year 6 and Years 10 and 12 generally, the update on Special Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and that critical services had been maintained in the best possible methods under the circumstances.

Children's Services had immediately developed a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating for vulnerable children. These were the children with Child Need Plans and Looked After Children including those accessing early help services. Monitored visits had also been undertaken in order to determine which children needed to be in a school.

Social Workers continued home visits. Five Family Centres had been closed, however they still continued to function. Multi Agency meetings had continued, with the introduction of a new system entitled 'Director's Need to Know' which was a new notification system for the Interim Director of Children's Services, in order that critical issues could be responded to appropriately.

First Response Teams had amalgamated with the Council's Multi Agency Services Hubs, in order to conduct assessments in a more streamlined and effective manner, in order that children received a more timely response within that First Response Service, which strengthened processes around children.

The Domestic Abuse Response Team, (DART) were responsible for those children who had witnessed domestic abuse situations or suffered domestic abuse.

The Service continued to meet their statutory functions. There had been a reduction in contacts and the Service had not seen the spike in domestic abuse that followed the picture across the Black Country and the West Midlands. The main reason could be incidents of domestic abuse were only reported when a child was involved or present.

There had been positive work in the Youth Offending Services (YOS) that had strengthened some of the statistics which had been a credit to the team. First time entrants had reduced, with the Dudley Borough performing above their statistical neighbouring authorities. It was noted that the YOS were subject to an improvement plan, however this had resulted in the services being only a few points away from a good rating when inspected last year.

The Interim Director of Children's Services suggested, and the Chair agreed, that the Committee should receive a further report on the YOS in order to conduct detailed scrutiny of the service.



All of the schools within the Borough were praised by the Interim Director, who stated that all Head Teachers had met the needs of vulnerable and critical needs children. Daily telephone calls had been undertaken with the Borough's schools, and Head Teachers had helped consolidate and co-produce and work together when a steer on direction, in order to make informed decisions. This included a Local Authority steer. There had also been a good interface with Department for Education (DfE) colleagues, with some of the schools' concerns being shared with them. A much more settled state had now been moved into with schools.

The SEND agenda had achieved positive outcomes in Tribunals, with more parents willing to work with the service in order to achieve the right outcomes for their children.

The Virtual School had a good oversight and control, and were focusing on looked after children with a pragmatic view on foster children remaining in school. The Virtual School had also provided additional support bringing more looked after children into the school environment during the lockdown.

The improvement agenda for SEND and YOS had continued with the YOS Board continuing to meet.

The Interim Assistant Director Early Help, Schools and SEND, stated that she was extremely proud of the Borough's schools in that they had managed to get 650 to 1,000 children back into school, and they continued to work hard to return more children to their educational settings. Children continued to be supported on-line, with DfE guidance for education during the summer months and September currently being awaited. School staff had continued to work hard whilst reacting to COVID-19.

In responding to questions from the Chair, the Interim Director of Children's Services reported that a spreadsheet had been designed to capture information on the amount of children in a school setting, with schools completing data via the DfE and although at present no data on numbers had been received, there were indications that Dudley was performing well as compared with neighbouring authorities.

The Interim Assistant Director Early Help, Schools and SEND advised that the provision of devices to children had been a challenge, and there continued to be ongoing conversations with schools surrounding children who may be struggling, with a number of schools purchasing devices for children where concerns were evident.

In responding to a question from a Member in relation to the Regional Adoption Agency, the Interim Director for Children's Services advised that the Interim Head of Children in Care and Resources had a good grip on this, however the Courts were posing a problem in relation to progressing Orders, as they were currently prioritising safeguarding, however matching and introductions continued in relation to possible adoptions.

The Interim Assistant Director Children's Social Care advised that an additional six children had been placed in their forever homes, and four had been matched with their adopters and a report on family finding was expected to arrive the following day.



The Chair welcomed the work being undertaken in this area, in readiness for the Courts to re-open.

In responding to a question from the Vice-Chair, the Interim Director of Children's Services advised that abuse strategies were in place in relation to vulnerable children, in order to ensure that they returned to school and remained safe and well. Work was also being conducted with families.

The Interim Assistant Director Early Help, Schools and SEND stated that by the end of that week all laptops would either be with schools or the children who required them. Online work continued to be a priority for the Borough's schools and online monitoring continued. There were challenges, however schools were conducting school improvement work with those children who may be falling behind, and that work would continue during the summer.

Summer Schools were currently conducting mapping exercises to ascertain which schools were providing activities. The Local Authority was examining possibilities of providing activities in relation to mental health and wellbeing, to ensure that particularly Year 11 children had an intense programme of activity, as those children had been out of school for the longest period, and there was a need to ensure that those children had a destination pathway in September, 2020.

The DfE had not placed any onus on schools to provide work and monitoring during the summer months, stating that school staff required a break over those months, especially as September would provide further challenges, with DfE guidance awaited in relation to September.

The Vice Chair raised a question in relation to the SEND delivery date for actions, and it was noted that there was a robust improvement plan with tight deadlines. However, in view of COVID-19 some assessments that required face to face contact were not undertaken, and some deadlines had been reviewed, this reviewing process had been fully supported by the DfE advisor allocated to the Council.

The position in relation to the Court managing the volume of work and prioritising Emergency Protection Orders was expanded upon, and it was stated that there would be no detriment to children awaiting Special Guardianship Orders.

There were now seven permanent Case Officers recruited to the SEND Service, whereas prior to December there were six agency staff. Intense training and inductions had now been undertaken.

Councillor Ridney expressed her appreciation for the ICT Services briefing and updates and continuing work during the pandemic.

The Interim Assistant Director Early Help, Schools and SEND responded to a Member's question, stating that risk assessments were carried out in relation to SEND children, with all Special Schools remaining open during the pandemic, with families had been supported through Commissioning Teams and the Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group.



Special Schools had carried out welfare visits and where they had felt that families required support, risk assessments had been carried out and children were returned to school. In relation to play schemes during the summer there was the need to address replacing those, with alternative schemes due to health needs and shielding.

A Member raised issues in relation to the shortage of spaces at special schools and the Interim Assistance Director Early Help, Schools and SEND responded, stating that special schools continued to be a real challenge, as part of the improvement journey related to those children who were placed into special schools and should be in mainstream provision. Work continued with schools to ensure that support could be offered to children with disabilities, as currently special schools were not being managed as they should be, and the current system was not sustainable. In reality children should commence school in a mainstream setting before special school provision was explored.

It was noted that on occasions Tribunals directed the Local Authority to place children into special school settings and that pressure required focus on at the moment. This work was all linked to the Inclusion Strategy. It was noted that the Inclusion Strategy had not been working as some children had been placed into special schools whilst they could have been in mainstream education with support packages. Work was continuing on support packages and plans and pods in order to provide wrap around services in mainstream schools.

Should it be in the best interests of a child to be placed or remain in a special school setting this would continue, however if some children could be placed in mainstream schools with support and packages this would free up places in special schools. Developing Hub modelling would create extra places in special schools. The early intervention work that was being conducted, in order to develop skills and working with families would produce more timely responses for children, in order to ensure that they were ready for primary school rather than being assessed once entering education.

Following conducting work and the quality of Education Health Care Plans, four children were now happy to attend mainstream school, however further work was required.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee expressed her appreciation for all of the work conducted by the staff in Children's Services, during these extremely challenging times.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report submitted on Children's Services COVID-19 update and as reported on at the meeting, be noted.
- (2) That Members approve the continuing focus of work across the Directorate to improve the quality of practice.
- (3) That the continued work of all staff within the Directorate to ensure that children were supported through the Pandemic, subsequent lockdown restrictions and emerging recovery plan be noted.



- (4) That the ongoing challenges facing the service to achieve the continuous improvement to ensure good and outstanding services for all children be acknowledged.
- (5) That a report on the Youth Offending Services be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

4. **Children's Services Complaints, Comments and Compliments Annual Report – 1st April, 2019 to 31st March, 2020**

The Committee considered the report submitted, and the Children's Services Complaints Manager presented the report making particular reference to statutory and corporate complaints, advising that the data now included SEND complaints.

It was noted that compliments had increased to 108 as compared to 82 for the same similar period, and across the board those had been positive. Learning from complaints needed to be addressed further, however the development of new reports that identified learning from upheld and partially upheld complaints was now examined by the Centre for Good Practice in order that processes could be strengthened.

Identifying and implementing learning continued with a reporting process in place as far as complaints were concerned. In overall numbers there had been a slight decrease in complaints from 205 to 202 during the reporting period. There had been more corporate complaints and focus was taking place upon whether complaints were being dealt with in the correct area. The Ombudsman would be publishing a report later on in the year that may provide more assistance when identifying complaints, and ensuring they followed the correct route. Out of 10,850 contacts in Children's Services there were 205 complaints and that equated to less than 2% of contacts, with less than 0.6% being upheld. 32% of Statutory complaints were upheld and that equated to 9 cases which was a decrease on the previous year. 33% were partially upheld a slight reduction from the previous year, which provided a positive result.

The Team had worked hard to reach local resolutions, as stage 2 investigations were time consuming, costly and stressful for the complainant. One complainant for the first time in several years had proceeded to stage 3 following an independent investigation that had not reached a resolution. A stage 3 independent panel review meeting would need to be arranged, however this had not been possible due to social distancing.

One area that the service struggled in was complaint response time with 41% of complaints receiving a response within 20 working days, however there were complaint trackers in place and Managers were requested to feedback information on reasons for late responses. Some of the reasons were lack of co-operation from complainants and multi teams becoming involved with responses.

It was noted the 15% of Managers had provided details for late responses, and the Chair raised grave concerns in relation to this percentage and other Members echoed those concerns.



Councillor Ridney expressed the need for further information in order that elected members could inform their constituents the reasons for the length of time that responses were taking, advising that it was totally unacceptable that reasons were not forthcoming from more Managers.

The Interim Director of Children's Services undertook to work with the Intelligence, Performance and Policy Team, in order to put in place tracking in relation to response times for complaints and the reasons for delays and provided assurances that this would be addressed.

The Complaints Manager assured Members that his Team did everything in their power to prevent complaints escalating to Members.

The Vice-Chair fully endorsed the concerns raised in terms of performance management expressing the need for improved Officer accountability.

The Interim Director of Children's Services confirmed that work would be undertaken with the Complaints Manager, the Interim Assistant Director Early Help, Schools and SEND and the Interim Assistant Director Childrens Social Care, in order to compile an action plan to address the work required, confirming that this would be shared with Members.

The Vice Chair requested that areas where there were genuine staffing concerns should be highlighted, in order to address issues such as pressure points and training.

Councillor Ridney commented positively on the numbers of complaints that had been received in comparison to those contacting the service.

Councillor Perks welcomed the compliments and thanked staff in the Team for their work.

The Complaints Manager outlined the reasons for some of the complaints, advising that very few were upheld in relation to staff behaviour as the majority were due to difficult conversations with parents around child protection issues.

Resolved

- (1) That the Children's Services Complaints, Comments and Compliments Annual Report 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020, be noted and approved for publication in line with statutory requirements.
- (2) That the Interim Director of Children's Services be requested to devise an Action Plan regarding the concerns raised by Members in relation to the report submitted.
- (3) That the Action Plan be shared with Members and reported at the next meeting of the Committee.



5. **Annual Scrutiny Programme 2020/21**

A report of the Lead for Law and Governance was submitted on the Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report for 2019/20, and items to be included in the Annual Scrutiny Programme for detailed consideration during 2020/21.

A proposed calendar of meetings for the 2020/21 municipal year together with the Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report, would be considered by Council on 23rd July, 2020. Consultation would then be undertaken with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Officers to confirm the programme of scrutiny business for the remainder of the municipal year.

The Democratic Services Manager referred to the forthcoming scrutiny review of the response of the Council and partners to the COVID-19 pandemic. This would be co-ordinated by the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee and involve the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of all Scrutiny Committees.

Following concerns raised by the Chair in relation to the timing of the full scrutiny review, it was noted that this could be further discussed at a meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs.

Councillor Ridney referred to the possibility of an interim review, particularly in relation to issues around mental health and behaviour, including the work conducted with other agencies and the support provided for staff and pupils on that particular issue.

The Chair referred to the manifestation of further issues arising from the pandemic and the possibility of examining the emerging picture within the next 12 months.

The Interim Director of Children's Services envisaged a spike in relation to those children who had witnessed domestic abuse and potentially further children entering the care system, with a higher number of referrals. It was suggested that the support families had and were receiving within schools could be scrutinised.

Mention was made of whether there would be an increase in young people not in education, employment or training due to Year 11 pupils being left out of all sports and social activities. It was further envisaged that children isolating would also result in problems with the emerging picture of how they would adapt to changes, such as those within school setting in the future.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to any necessary amendments, the Annual Report, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be submitted to the Full Council on 23rd July, 2020.



- (2) That, following consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Officers, the Lead for Law and Governance be authorised to confirm the programme of scrutiny business for this Committee following the meeting of the Full Council on 23rd July, 2020.
- (3) That the arrangements for the scrutiny review of Dudley MBC and partner response to the Coronavirus Pandemic, as set out in paragraphs 9 to 13 in the report submitted, be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.30pm

CHAIR



Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – Wednesday 9th September 2020

Report of the Acting Director of Children's Services

Children's Services Complaints: Response Times Action Plan

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide details of the actions taken and processes put in place to improve complaint response times within Children's Services.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that:-
 - Members note and approve the revised processes and actions put in place to improve complaint response times.

Background

3. The annual report providing information relating to all statutory and corporate complaints for the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 showed poor performance in relation to how long it takes officers to respond to complaints raised.
4. Members requested that the Interim Director of Children's Services devise an Action Plan regarding the concerns raised by Members in relation to the poor response times highlighted in the annual report.
5. Extensive discussions with Senior Managers have taken place and the following key changes have been introduced in an attempt to improve performance / monitor the reasons for delays:
 - Managers are now made aware from the referral of the complaint that they will be required to provide an explanation as to the reason for any delayed responses.

- An additional earlier reminder has been introduced to the process.
 - Service Managers, Heads of Service and ultimately the Acting Director of Children's Services will be fully aware of and involved in responses that are approaching or have exceeded the response due date.
 - Heads of Service will include complaints as a standing item on their team meetings and review progress on outstanding cases.
 - Amendments to ICT systems have been made in order that the reasons for any late responses can be captured and reported on. A number of options are available to record this data in order that specific reasons can be identified including other urgent work pressures that are impacting on an officer's ability to respond on time.
 - Senior Managers will be expected to ensure that managers provide a reason for any delays that occur.
 - Managers have been reminded that individual training is available to them from the Complaints Team if they require this in relation to the complaints process / responses.
6. The above measures have recently been fully introduced. However, it is too early to ascertain if the above measures have had any impact on responses times. This will be reported to a future meeting.

Finance

7. There are no direct financial implications arising from the contents of this report.

Law

8. The procedures for Children's complaints, are determined by legislation, predominantly involving the: -
- Children Act 1989, Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.
 - The Children and Adoption Act 2002 and Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.
9. However, some complaints fall outside of the statutory process. This is where the complainant does not meet the requirements to be considered under the statutory process. In these cases, the complaint is dealt with under the corporate complaint process. All complaints received are included in this report.

Equality Impact

10. This report has no direct implications for the Council's commitment to equality and diversity. The complaints policy is applied fairly and equitably to all users.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

11. There are no organisational service transformation implications that require consideration.

Commercial/Procurement

12. There are no commercial or procurement implications that require consideration.

Health and Wellbeing and Safety

13. There are no health, wellbeing or safety implications that require consideration.



Helen Ellis
Acting Director of Children's Services

Contact Officers: Darren Nicklin/Tracey Curran: Complaints Manager / Senior
Complaints Officer - People
Telephone: 01384 816798 / 812417
Email: Darren.nicklin@dudley.gov.uk tracey.curran@dudley.gov.uk

Appendices

Revised Process to Monitor / Progress Chase Complaint Responses



REVISED CHASING
PROCESS FINAL JULY

Children's Complaints – Referral & Follow Up Action

SM = Service Manager
PA = Personal Assistant
HoS = Head of Service

ACTION	TIMNG	COPY IN
New Referral	N/A	SM / PA
1 ST Reminder	5 WDs before due date	SM / PA
2 ND Reminder	3 WDs days before due date	SM / PA / HoS
Due Date Reminder	Due date	SM / PA / HoS
1 ST Overdue Reminder	3 WDs days after due date	SM / PA / HoS
2 ND Overdue Reminder	6 WDs days after due date	SM / PA / HoS
3 RD Overdue Reminder	9 WDs days after due date	SM / PA / HoS
4 TH Overdue Reminder	12 WDs days after due date	SM / PA / HoS / Interim Director of Childrens Services

Children's Complaints – Referral & Follow UP Emails

ACTION	STANDARD EMAIL
New Referral	<p>Subject: Complaint Ref (number) re/from (name) – Due date (date)</p> <p>(Name),</p> <p><u>If this is not appropriate for you to respond please inform us as soon as possible</u></p> <p>Please see attached complaint from (name etc) regarding (details). Can you please investigate the issues raised and send your response by (date). Please send a copy of your response together with the completed Monitoring and Learning Form attached to the complaints mailbox – complaints.socialcare@dudley.gov.uk,</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: An explanation will be required if the response due date is exceeded. Data concerning response times is shared with senior managers and presented to Scrutiny Committee, Members have specifically requested information regarding overdue complaints and the reasons for this.</p>
1 ST & 2 ND Reminder	<p>((Name),</p> <p>Please note that the deadline for responding to this complaint is due on (date) Can you please advise us of your current progress and confirm if you will be able to complete response by the due date.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: An explanation will be required if the response due date is exceeded.</p>
Due Date Reminder	<p>(Name),</p> <p>Please note that the deadline for responding to this complaint is now due. Can you please send us a copy or your response or update us on your current progress.</p> <p><u>If more time is required you are advised to contact the complainant to agree a suitable timeframe for response.</u> Please inform the Complaints Team if a later response date has been agreed.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: An explanation will be required if the response due date is exceeded.</p>
1 ST Overdue Reminder	<p>(Name)</p> <p>Can you please update us on your current progress and when a response will be completed.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: As this response is now overdue you will be required to provide an explanation for the delay. Data concerning response times is shared with senior managers and presented to Scrutiny Committee, Members have specifically requested information regarding overdue complaints and the reasons for this.</p>
2 ND Overdue Reminder	
3 RD Overdue Reminder	
4 TH Overdue Reminder	

Children's Complaints – Action After Response

ACTION	STANDARD EMAIL
<p>Response Received: Reason for Delay Requested</p>	<p>(Name),</p> <p>Thank you for completing the response to this complaint,. As this response was completed after the due date / agreed extension you are required to provide an explanation for the delay.</p> <p>Please note that data concerning response times is shared with senior managers and presented to Scrutiny Committee, Members have specifically requested information regarding overdue complaints and the reasons for this.</p> <p>Please state the reason for delay, and additional information, under one or more of the following –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complex case. 2. Multiple Teams involved 3. Staff absence 4. Other urgent work 5. Other, specify <p>Reason number – Additional information about delay -</p> <p>Action Required On M3 Complaints Management System:</p> <p>Add Z045 Action Code with user COMP. When a response is received amend the Z045 to one of the following and enter any additional comments provided</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Z040 Complex case 2. Z041 Multiple Teams 3. Z042 Staff absence 4. Z043 Other urgent work 5. Z044 Other, specify
<p>No Reason for Delay Received: Email to Senior Manager</p>	<p>Details of these cases are obtained from the standard report devised that is run peridically.</p> <p>(Name),</p> <p>The above complaint has been completed but a reason for the delay has not been received.</p> <p>As this response was completed after the due date / agreed extension you are asked to investigate and provide an explanation for the delay.</p>

Please note that data concerning response times is shared with senior managers and presented to Scrutiny Committee, Members have specifically requested information regarding overdue complaints and the reasons for this.

Please state the reason for delay, and additional information, under one or more of the following –

1. Complex case.
2. Multiple Teams involved
3. Staff absence
4. Other urgent work
5. Other, specify

Reason number –

Additional information about delay -

Action Required On M3 Complaints Management System:

Add Z045 Action Code with user COMP.

When a response is received amend the Z045 to one of the following and enter any additional comments provided

- | | | |
|----|------|-------------------|
| 1. | Z040 | Complex case |
| 2. | Z041 | Multiple Teams |
| 3. | Z042 | Staff absence |
| 4. | Z043 | Other urgent work |
| 5. | Z044 | Other, specify |

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 9th September 2020

Report of the Acting Director of Children's Services

Early Years Transformation Academy in Dudley

Purpose

1. Provide Children's Services Scrutiny Committee with an update of the partnership progress through the Early Years Transformation Academy (EYTA) and our '*critical first 1001 days vision*'.
2. Share Dudley's Implementation Plan to support transformation of the maternity and early years system and contribution to maternity and early years outcomes

Recommendations

It is recommended that:-

3. Members note the content of the report
4. Members suggest and support any areas they may wish to scrutinise on the work being planned and implemented to improve maternity and early years outcomes through the '*critical first 1001 days*' vision.

Background

5. The Early Years Transformation Academy (EYTA) was an intensive guided learning programme, run nationally by the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) in partnership with The Staff College, Born in Bradford and Better Start Bradford.
6. Through the EYTA, multi-disciplinary leadership teams from selected local areas participated in a twelve-month programme to prepare a local system transformation plan for maternity and early years services. In 2019/20, EIF worked with five local areas: Barking and Dagenham, Dudley, Norfolk, Sandwell and Westminster / Kensington and Chelsea.
7. The EYTA supported local areas to bring together the people who are responsible for maternity and early years services, with a clear mandate to collaborate on

system improvements. Working with teams of six to eight local system and service leaders, the Academy enabled participants to use existing skills and expertise to build on system strengths and find solutions to local challenges.

8. The learning programme had four core modules, focusing on:
 - Preparing for change
 - Identifying vulnerable populations
 - System planning
 - Measuring impact.
9. Learning took place via online learning materials, a series of design workshops, and practical local application exercises.
10. Dudley's participation in the EYTA process has allowed senior managers across the maternity and early year system to come together, with protected time, to test assumptions, share priorities and barriers and provide challenge. As system leaders, Dudley system leaders have learnt that the quality of working relationships, similar to those between our communities and practitioners, are fundamental to the success of a system change.
11. Newly formed relationships, as a result of the EYTA, has facilitated community midwifery access in the Family Centres within weeks of the start of this journey. Something we had been struggling to implement prior to the Academy work.
12. The EYTA team consists of the following partners:
 - Children's Services
 - Clinical Commissioning Group
 - Dudley Community and Voluntary Sector
 - Health Visiting
 - Midwifery
 - Public Health
13. The personal commitment of these members, and the addition of a second-tier team has been fundamental to the development of the programme design and implementation.
14. The application stage of becoming an Early Years Transformation Academy (EYTA) area, highlighted that partners, although well connected, worked in silos and that Maternity services in particular were not included in high-level governance and were not as well connected as they should be.

Stakeholder and Partnership Engagement

15. From the outset, Dudley agreed that it was fundamental for the voice of our communities to be heard throughout the process. On the 19th July 2019 Dudley

held a community and stakeholder event. Here we asked pregnant women and new parents from Dudley what their experience had been, capturing both the positive and the negative, how supported they felt and by whom. We asked people what they considered were the five *ready for school* steps they felt most important to them for their child. Alongside this Dudley ran a variety of co-production activities, offered free baby massage, a variety of other activities and ran a professional's marketplace.

16. In addition to the enlightening feedback from our communities at this event, Dudley also learnt that frontline professionals were not as well connected as we thought or expected and some of the services actually became aware of each other for the first time. The impact of reduction in some resources has highlighted that gaps had emerged in the early years increasing mistrust between communities and services.
17. We shared the results of the community event with the Children's Alliance Board where senior leaders across the system acknowledged that investment in early years was limited and not a high priority. Furthermore, services were being forced to be reactive rather than proactive due to competing conflicting priorities. However, there was a commitment to build on strengths and opportunities identified by the EYTA team.

Strengths and opportunities included:

Communities and Voice of the child

18. Our Innovation Fund is a new way of investing in local community groups to boost services to residents. This means that local services are being developed, delivered and more importantly evaluated by local people. Our Participation Strategy for children and young people is led by the Dudley Community voluntary sector. Funded by the Local Maternity System (LMS) we are developing an inclusive approach to engaging with the community using participatory research methods. We have excellent peer-led approaches, for example in breastfeeding where we have a large community of breastfeeding buddies who have recently contributed to the breastfeeding pathway transformation.

Collaboration and partnership

19. Dudley has made a shift from working in silos towards more integrated approaches and responses to issues, for example tackling neglect and harmful sexual behaviours is led by a multiagency steering group and issues are not seen purely through a safeguarding lens. There is a strong partnership approach to developing the 0-18 early help system, which has been recognised by Ofsted. We have strong partnerships between Children's Services, Public Health, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) commissioners and Maternity Services e.g. working towards an integrated maternity contract that is outcomes based.

Workforce

20. Dudley has an excellent reputation for workforce retention and therefore a committed and stable workforce. We work in collaboration to develop workforce skills e.g. Family Nurse Partnership nurses deliver training to social workers, Graded Care Profile 2 tool training co-delivered. Dudley Council is one of six local authorities to be shortlisted in the Workplace Transformation category for The MJ Achievement awards 2019 and more recently, Dudley's early help system has been commended by the MJ Awards 2020 for *Innovation in Children's Services* linked to Family Centre based Multi-Agency Action Meetings.

Infrastructure

21. Our geographical co-terminosity reduces complexity. One borough council, one CCG, one hospital trust and one maternity service. We have the opportunity to shape and continue to build upon the infrastructure and processes shaping the Multi Community Provider (MCP). There is a robust data sharing agreement between the Council, Maternity and Health Visiting allowing for a seamless referral process to aid the maternity pathway. This however requires expansion to children's services to truly transform services. The effective partnership between Maternity, Health Visiting, Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) services and Social Care has bought about robust pathways resulting in timely referrals into FNP (evidenced by performance that is better than the national average). We continue to develop, review and implement an integrated health and education review for 2-year-old children informed and shaped by the workforce and family feedback.

Innovation and evidence

22. Dudley has utilised social marketing approaches to change the cultural norms for many areas, in particular our breastfeeding approach which was evaluated and showcased internationally and our breastfeeding peer support model has been tested and adapted. We are working with the NSPCC to develop a parenting tool based on the Graded Care Profile 2 and we are working with Learning Management Systems to use participative approaches to engage with service users and ensure the Maternity Voices Partnership is inclusive. The FNP in Dudley is part of the 'ADAPT' programme and the first phase 'stop smoking' was rolled out nationally. The programme is now testing and adapting the programme to improve breastfeeding outcomes. The Youth Offending Service review has identified important insight which is informing further development of the system, providing the evidence to support investment in the early years e.g. mothers of offenders did not breastfeed and smoked. With our Black Country partners we have recently been successful in applying for funding from the Early Outcome Fund.

Needs assessment

23. As it stands, the children and young person's section in the current Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) for Dudley (Understanding Dudley) is lacking information around maternal health. To support the work of the Early Years Transformation

Academy (EYTA), a maternity and early year's needs assessment is being undertaken.

24. This will aim to address the gaps in information around maternal health and provide more in-depth information around the Dudley EYTA group's four priority areas. This deep dive will aim to provide more in depth profiles of the localities within Dudley with regards to maternity and early years and identify health inequalities that exist between groups e.g. Deprivation/receiving Free School Meals, different ethnicities, looked after children, children in need and to describe the current utilisation of services relevant to maternity and the early years.

Theory of Change

25. The theory of change has helped Dudley focus on what some our challenges are and who we need to focus on. Initially we were too strategic in our development of a Theory of Change (TOC) and focused on the academy being the 'intervention' and how we would know that it would help us support a transformational system change.
26. However, with support from the EIF (Early Intervention Foundation) and an enhanced understanding of *targeted selective* and *targeted indicated* community profiles, we were able to move to a more realistic and outcome based TOC. By focusing on what our communities had told us, exploring the data to support the community thoughts and feelings, and engaging our front line practitioners to learn from their experience, we have been able to develop a shared consensus which has allowed all partners to realise their individual and combined role in school readiness, and where as a traditional focus has been on educational settings the Dudley EYTA Team are now committed to an antenatal and early years focus.

Intervention mapping

27. As part of the EYTA process Dudley partners completed a mapping exercise, where we detailed the projects, initiatives and services that we deliver around School Readiness, Healthy Weight and Infant Mortality. The exercise forced partners to focus on who the services were for and investigate whether this target audience was in fact being reached. It also challenged the evidence base, the reach, evaluation methods and forced us to assess whether outcomes were realistic. The EIF have provided Dudley with their analysis and conclusions based on the Intervention Mapping process.

Dudley Borough

28. Dudley compared to other areas in the Black Country has the highest Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index rank (is the least deprived) but is still ranked 72, the most deprived out of 317 local authorities.
29. Dudley is an authority that is less deprived than others across the West Midlands. However, there are pockets of deprivation that impact on outcomes including:



- Rates of school readiness at the end of reception are lower than the national and regional average (Good level of development 70.8% national, 70.1% West Midlands, 67.1% in Dudley). For those on free school meals the gap is even wider. We also rank lower than our statistical neighbours.
- Rates of overweight and obesity in school age children is higher than the national average (Reception age 22.6% nationally compared to 25.5% in Dudley)
- Smoking in pregnancy rates are higher in Dudley (12.8%) compared nationally (10.6%).
- The infant mortality rate in Dudley is 5.4, significantly higher than the England rate of 3.9 (per 1000).

Taken from *Understanding Dudley*

<https://www.allaboutdudley.info/home/key-topics/understandingdudley/>

Pregnancy outcomes

30.
 - In Dudley, 8.7% of term babies born in 2017 were low birth weight (less than 2500g). This is significantly higher than the English average (7.4%).
 - Dudley's average rate of pre-term births was 79.7 per 1000 from 2015 to 2017. It has been in keeping with the English average since 2006. Dudley has the second lowest rate of prematurity amongst its CIPFA nearest neighbours.
 - Dudley's crude infant mortality rate for 2015 to 2017 was 5.4 per 1000, which was significantly higher than the English national average (3.9 per 1000). Dudley has the third highest infant mortality rate amongst its CIPFA nearest neighbours.
 - In 2018/19 12.8% of women were smoking at the time of delivery. This is significantly worse than the English average (10.6%). Rates of smoking at delivery have decreased since 2010/11 but have not decreased significantly. This is despite smoking rates overall in Dudley being in keeping with the national averages.

School Readiness

31. Two thirds (67%) of 5 years olds in Dudley were at or above the good level of development (GLD) in 2019. This is below the national figure (71.8%).

Learning Goal	Percentage of children at or above the expected level in Dudley	Percentage of children at or above the expected level in England
Communication and Language	77.0%	82.2%
Physical Development	80.8%	87.1%
Personal Social and Emotional Development	80.0%	84.8%
Literacy	69.2%	73.4%
Maths	73.8%	78.5%
Good level of development	67.0%	71.8%

32. There are inequalities within Dudley in achievement of GLD.

- In 2019, 48.1% of children for free school meals (FSM) achieved a good level of development, compared to 67% of children not eligible for FSM.
- 54.5% of children living in the most deprived neighbourhoods (IDACI decile 1) achieve GLD compared to 80.5% of children living in the least deprived neighbourhood (IDACI decile 10)
- There is a documented attainment gap between boys and girls. In Dudley 59.4% of boys and 74.7% of girls. This is an attainment gap of 15.3%, which is wider than the gap seen nationally (12.8%).

(Collated in February 2020)

What communities and families tell us

33. Through Dudley's EYTA community engagement work, members of the public gave us very positive messages about their experiences of maternity and early years services. Families were particularly positive about the professionals supporting them, particularly when there was continuity of that professional over a period of time. This is clearly valued. However, some members of the public described issues around safety in their communities and having to rely on charities and food banks.
34. Through Dudley's EYTA community engagement work, communities and families told us that they find modern technology distracting when it comes to being focussed on communicating with their children.
35. Dudley has a well-developed parenting offer. However, some families (through the EYTA engagement) told us they needed additional support around parenting. This means we need to be even more effective in targeting the right support to families who are most likely to benefit.

What we know about our services

36. Maternity and early years tend to be provided on a universal basis and therefore the needs of some communities and families remain unmet. This is evident from the low uptake of a number of services by some of our most at-risk families.
- Healthy Start benefits
 - Health visitor antenatal checks
 - Antenatal classes for parents and grandparents
37. Dudley is well served with high quality (97% good/outstanding Ofsted judgements) early years and childcare provision. Dudley's take up (at August 2020) is better than the West Midlands and national uptake of the targeted 2-year-old entitlement to free early learning. This is also true nationally for 3 and 4 year olds and 1% point lower than the West Midlands average specifically relating to 4 year olds.

EY Entitlements	Dudley	West Midlands	England
2yr olds	72%	67%	69%
3yr olds	92%	92%	91%
4yr olds	95%	96%	94%

38. Dudley's most at-risk children and families needs can go unnoticed because they are masked by areas that have good outcomes. Others are transient therefore difficult for services to engage. Some agencies struggle to reach the seldom heard or those at most risk.
39. Children, young people, families and communities tell us that they lack confidence in some services. This varies with different services e.g. maternity, NHS and community, voluntary are more trusted. Communities rely on each other for support, peer support is working well and individuals prefer to turn to community or family for help. However, this is not recognised as a strength by everyone. Communities welcome co-produced approaches that provide guidance and support to develop their skills and confidence.

Vision – The critical first 1001 days

40. As a system, we know that good social emotional development, good language development and good nutrition can contribute to improving a range of outcomes for children and young people. We also know that we need to focus on prevention and early intervention and that current systems are weighted towards reactive activity. We want to develop an integrated, effective and sustainable early years system in Dudley, that enables every child to have the best start in life. We want Dudley to be a place where it is easy for services, providers and families to 'do the right thing'.

41. Our aspirations are:

- Every woman experiences a healthy pregnancy and is supported to give her child the best start in life by investing in the first 1001 critical days. We will change how services are commissioned and delivered, using more evidence based approaches, to target vulnerable families by delivering preventative interventions and connecting parents to support.
- To improve levels of school readiness for all Dudley children, but with the greatest improvement in the most disadvantaged families.
- To reduce the impact that poverty has on the health, wellbeing and development of young children by having an early years offer (including a range of services in different/appropriate settings), we know that works and meets the needs of our most vulnerable children and families.
- We commit to empowering families and hearing the child's voice.
- We commit to strengthen the trust and relationships between communities, families, practitioners and service providers.

42. Our outcome measures are:

- Our primary measure will be narrowing the gap in **School Readiness** amongst Dudley children, however we know that if we can work as a system we can improve the following outcomes:-
- Improve the number of children that are a healthy weight at reception age by halting the year upon year rise in unhealthy weight and align to national average.
- Reduce smoking in pregnancy and improve outcomes of children born to smoking parents.
- Reduction in infant mortality
- Increased initiation and continuation of breastfeeding
- Every child has a secure attachment to a primary carer and is ready to learn by the age of 2.

43. Community resilience is a further key outcome that we will be working to improve. We have listened to our communities about outcomes that matter to them. We will improve community and family resilience by;

- Increased sense of belonging and community
- Increased sense of social connection to others
- Increased sense of autonomy and control
- Increased opportunity to contribute and give back.
- Increased sense of purpose
- Increased opportunities to learn
- Increased numbers of people being active

44. Dudley will achieve the above by using a blend of approaches that will consist of locality and geographically targeted interventions, service transformation, complemented by a population wide approach.

The plan involves a number of phases:

45. **Midwifery** - The first to provide a targeted community-based midwifery service in a chosen locality, ensuring that midwives have smaller caseloads (we plan that by March 2021 40% of Dudley women will be on this pathway).
46. **Health Visiting** - This will be complemented by increasing contacts by health visiting teams. It will involve strengthening their antenatal contact and community development offer. This will result in better joined up existing pathways between maternity, health visiting and early years.
47. **Parenting** - A universal and targeted programme of work will be developed to increase messaging on positive responsive parenting, healthy family lifestyles and early year's provision (Messaging on first 1001 days and 5 to thrive)
48. **Two Year Take Up** - A plan in place to increase uptake of the targeted free early learning places for 2 year olds and is in place through Dudley's network of Family Centres
49. **Community Learning** - A plan in place to identify alternative and complementary opportunities (to early years and childcare provision) to help improve the community and home learning environment e.g. DfE 'Hungry Little Minds' Campaign, literacy projects, Play and Stay, Library-Bookcercise.
50. **A locality needs-led approach**

From Conception to 10 days

51. Dudley's ambition is to make Maternity services in Dudley safer, more personalised, kinder and professional and more family friendly, where every woman has access to information, to enable her to make decisions about her care. Where she and her baby can access support that is centred around their individual needs and circumstances.
52. We want all staff to be supported to deliver care which is family centred, working in high performing teams, in organisations which are well led and in cultures which promote innovation, continuous learning, and break down organisational and professional boundaries. Our transformation will start with a focus on one geographical area that we have identified from our needs assessment has our highest risk population.
53. A team of midwives will be based in the geographical area and will work with a cohort of 212 pregnant women to receive continuity of carer (CoC). This will mean that women in that locality will have a named midwife who will support her through

her pregnancy and birth. This will ensure safe care based on a relationship of mutual trust and respect in line with the woman's choices and decisions in line with the maternity services "Better Births" plan.

(Continuity of carer means there is consistency of the midwife or clinical team that provides hands on care for a woman and her baby throughout the three phases of her maternity journey: pregnancy, labour, and the postnatal period. This includes a named midwife taking responsibility for coordinating a woman's care, and for ensuring all the needs of the woman and her baby are met, at the right time and in the right place, throughout the antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal periods. Consequently the woman will develop an ongoing relationship of trust with her midwife, who cares for her over time)

Antenatal to 5 years

54. We want to reconfigure how our Health Visitor services currently work with our most vulnerable and seldom-heard families. Therefore, in the same geographical area as the midwifery pilot we will introduce a continuity of carer in Health Visiting and the introduction of named Family Support Workers to the small caseload of women and their families. We want to improve the reach of the antenatal contact to our most vulnerable mothers and this locality approach will help us to test this.
55. During the antenatal phase, families will be introduced to a complementary network of support in addition to the midwife. A Health Visitor, Family Support Worker and community peer support network will ensure that COC model continues once the midwifery team has stepped away. This will also mean that vital key contacts will be delivered in a timely manner, ensuring issues and support identified are put in place.
56. There is strong evidence (Cochrane Review; Sandall et al, 2016) along with many national drivers to support the use of CoC in maternity services as an operating service model and choice for women. Expected improvements are that women are:
- 16% less likely to lose their baby before and after 24 weeks plus neonatal death.
 - 19% less likely to lose their baby before 24 weeks.
 - 15% less likely to have an epidural (regional analgesia).
 - 24% less likely to experience preterm birth.
 - 16% less likely to have an episiotomy.
 - 10% less likely to have an instrumental birth.
57. There is limited evidence to support our plans to extend COC to health visiting and family support, however outcomes from our highly successful Family Nurse Partnership indicates that relationship building in the antenatal period and ongoing support from a trusted professional who has a rapport and respect from the families is vital.

58. When listening to Dudley families, we have been told that frequent changes in staff, lack of communication and inconsistency in approach has been their worst experience of maternal and early years services. This has led to a culture of reliance on family and friends which is only an asset, if the information being given is correct and up to date.

Delivery Plan

59. We plan to start with one area, but quickly roll out the model to areas where we know we have the greatest inequality outcomes. We planned to recruit the midwifery team and start to identify the 212 women cohort in March/April 2020. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the commencement of the programme. This is now likely to be in the Autumn but will be guided by local maternity responses to the pandemic.
60. Following the roll out in this area the plan is to phase in two further areas in the subsequent Winter and Spring notwithstanding the response to COVID19.
61. Table 1-NHS Delivery plan

Delivery Date	NHS Planning Guidance Trajectory Percentage of Women Placed on to a Continuity of Carer Pathway
March 2019	20% (Approx. 863* women based on estimated 4315 births per year). There are currently COC pathways in place.
March 2020	35% (Approx. 1510* women) To include the EYTA cohort
March 2021	Most Women i.e. >51% (Approx. 2200* women)
March 2024	75% of women from a Black/Black British and Asian/Asian British ethnic background and women from the 10 per cent of neighbourhoods that are most deprived nationally (according to the <u>Index of Multiple Deprivation</u>) will receive continuity of carer by 2024 (Approx. 1161* women)

(* These numbers include women who do not live in the Dudley Borough as approximately 29% of women choosing to give birth at Russells Hall Hospital live outside the Dudley Borough, but for NHS plans they all need to be included.)

Rationale for chosen locality – Netherton, Woodside & St. Andrews

62. The rationale for the chosen locality is based on the opportunity to maximise the potential improvement in outcomes for mothers and babies. As this is one of our

most deprived wards and with greater inequality statistically with regards to smoking in pregnancy, obesity, school readiness and infant mortality, however it has pockets where families are thriving so our plan to capitalise the assets within a community should also be achievable.

63. It also has some excellent facilities including a health practice and GP who is supportive of the transformation and has outstanding early years provision. These strengths were important factors in choosing the locality because it allows us to test the new universal offer, *targeted selective* and *targeted indicated* co-terminously. It also means that we can build upon strengths and assets in the community.

Workforce implications of changes to services

64. The immediate workforce implications will be on midwifery and health visiting services. It will also have implications for those working in early years including the voluntary community sector and in particular those in contact with families in the first 1001 days.

Midwifery

65. Each Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) midwife within each team will hold an individual caseload of 36 women (pro rata). Care will mainly be co-ordinated and provided by that named midwife, however all members of the team will meet the women prior to the onset of labour. Midwives will follow women as they require care, for example labour and birth, rather than traditional models where staff are in a building waiting for women who require care.
66. This model requires flexibility, autonomy and allows midwives to control their diaries and workload on a day to day basis. This model also requires trust from line managers and the organisation, as working patterns will be flexible with midwives requiring an agreed salary uplift to cover the uncertainty of the day and or time the women require their care. The agreed salary uplift will negate the need for prospective rostering and allow for the required flexibility without the midwife being financially disadvantaged. Similarly, the agreed percentage salary uplift should not be higher than the average annual enhanced hours payments expected for a midwife, to ensure financial stability of the service model without disadvantaging the Trust.
67. The plan is to make this available to a mixed risk geographical cohort of women beginning with areas of Dudley with higher areas of deprivation. The rationale for this choice is to maximise the potential improvement in outcomes for mothers and babies. One team of 6 to 8 midwives at a time will be introduced continuing until there are 10 teams in place to provide continuity for most women.

Health Visiting

68. There are already 2 WTE Health Visitors and a 0.6 WTE Nursery Nurse in post that are primarily responsible for all under 5's in the Netherton area. However, there will

be a requirement to reduce the caseload of the existing staff in order that they have the capacity to deliver continuity of care, ensure an antenatal contact is completed on all 212 women identified in the cohort and provide early support to the families in timely manner. This will require reallocation of resource from other areas. We plan to do this by changing the way some of our universal contacts are delivered to some families for example self-weigh clinics based in library settings, re-prioritising the antenatal contacts which currently are the highest in the most affluent wards.

69. The Health Visitors will also have the opportunity to learn from the success of the Family Nurse Partnership Programme (FNP) within Dudley. The programme delivers continuity of care over a period of over 2 years that builds positive trusting relationships, allowing parents to identify how they would like to improve the lives of their children.
70. Dudley has already reviewed the reach of the FNP service, as our teenage pregnancy rates are reducing. We have increased the criteria to include women that have been in the looked after system (up to age 25). We expect some of our cohort in this locality will be eligible for the FNP programme. Following the transfer of Health Visitors and MCP, the Health Visitors will be part of a wider 0 to 19 team service that will include School Nurses, allowing a seamless and personalised transition of care when the child enters full time education.

Family Support

71. Dudley has a 0-19 (25 with a disability) Early Help Model that delivers whole family working through five clusters, each with its own Family Centre. Expectant families and families with young children are underrepresented across current caseloads.
72. Families who are identified by the range of support services from across the sectors involved in the Early Years Transformation Academy will have access to experienced Family Support Workers and Intensive Family Support Workers who can act as Lead Practitioners, complete Early Help Assessments and Early Help Family Plans. There is potential for leaders and front-line staff to work closely with other professionals focussed on the first 1001 days to ensure every opportunity is maximised to promote the best possible outcomes. Each full-time worker can support a maximum of 20 families as Lead Practitioner.
73. Dudley uses the Triple P evidence-based parenting programme in a number of iterations, online, standard, teen and for families where special education needs and disabilities are a feature. This range of support would be promoted and available and maximised for families where there are support needs in the first 1001 days.
74. The take up of Time for Twos free early education is significantly lower in Dudley's most disadvantaged areas. There is potential for Dudley's Family Centres to use their resources to undertake a targeted programme to ensure parents and carers are clear about their opportunities, to utilise this entitlement and further maximise

school readiness outcomes. We anticipate that this will be exacerbated in September 2020 given the COVID-19 pandemic.

75. Dudley's Family Centres and Early Help system is well placed to work in partnership with maternity, health visiting, community and education partners to demonstrably improve outcomes for Dudley's youngest children and their families.

Community

76. Dudley has a vibrant and varied voluntary sector with over four hundred organisations actively supporting children, families and young people. Over time statutory and voluntary organisations have changed the way they work with citizens, putting their views and lived experience at the heart of decisions, services and activities.
77. Dudley prides itself in taking an asset-based approach where everyone has gifts and skills to offer. Greater citizen involvement has led to more communities being empowered and supported to develop and deliver peer to peer groups and citizen led projects to plug gaps with innovative solutions in the places they live, study and work.
78. Citizens have identified the importance in belonging and having a sense of purpose and together as partners we are all actively making this happen through collaboration, initiating community connections and developing more informal networks.
79. Dudley CVS through the investment provided by the LA, CCG and Public Health have grown the children's team from 1 – 6 officers in recognition of the work and reach they demonstrate, this has effectively led to greater synergy between sectors and has ultimately led to the ever increasing citizen led projects delivered in the heart of communities. There is no evidence to suggest we have exhausted the pool of dedicated volunteers but expect by re focusing our attention to school readiness through the involvement in the EYTA project we anticipate further growth in the coming years in the maternity and early years arena.

Evidence and evaluation

80. There is evidence to support Dudley's COC model, which includes FNP starting to map longer term outcomes for babies who have been supported by family nurses. We know that Ages and Staged Questionnaires (ASQs) outcomes for FNP babies are equal, if not better than the average and are looking to review school readiness outcomes for the cohort that have been clients of the family nurse services. However, we know we need to build a robust evaluation framework for this plan. We will shape this by using learning from the EYTA.
81. Dudley is working with the Local Maternity System (LMS) to develop a community researcher approach to improve engagement with the maternity system. We know that the traditional approaches, such as the Maternity Voices Partnership is not

reaching or hearing the voices of those that we need to engage with. We will be training pregnant women and new parents in a participatory appraisal approach to explore the needs of their communities and feedback to senior leaders. Dudley has recruited twelve recent mothers who will be trained by the start of the programme, and can help us with the evaluation of the EYTA in addition to other programmes. It is also intended that through this work a preferred mechanism will be identified through which women can feed into about local maternity, and public health services on an ongoing basis. This will subsequently inform, and shape the future direction of services.

82. Dudley Council's Public Health team is a training department and has links with several universities across the midlands, including the Universities of Birmingham, and Wolverhampton. Dudley hosts trainees including Foundation Year 2 doctors, GP Registrar trainees, Public Health Specialist Registrars (SpRs) who may be doctors or non-medical, and environmental health trainees and provide placements. The Public Health team also provide placements for undergraduate public health degree students studying at Birmingham City University. We see this as an asset because we can utilise the support from the trainees to help with project /programme evaluation.

Early Help

83. Early Help in Dudley has a sophisticated suite of management information that provides partners with a range of information around outputs and outcomes. Critical to the Early Years Transformation Academy programme is a clear baseline of current performance and outcomes during and post the implementation period.
84. Early Help in Dudley is the host for Strengthening Families (Dudley's Troubled Families Programme) where there is already significant expertise tracking longitudinal outcomes for individual families across a range of established outcome measures including employment, school attendance and involvement in statutory safeguarding services. This practice model would be continually developed to ensure that outcomes influenced and affected by the work of the Early Years Transformation Academy are understood and tracked.

Development of the plan

85. The plan will be further developed in consultation with a number of key strategic boards, including the Health and Wellbeing board, Children and Young People's Alliance and the relevant organisations executive boards. Over the last two years, partners in Dudley have been working to review and develop the partnership landscape for the health and wellbeing system. The outcome of this work is a strategic Health and Wellbeing Board comprising elected members, senior officers from the Council, CCG, police and Fire and Rescue Service, GPs, Health Watch Dudley, Dudley Council for Voluntary Services, and, the Chief Executives of our local NHS provider services. Partners are working on an 'Alliance' approach to partnership working and three 'Alliances' report to the Health and Wellbeing Board.



86. One of these is the Children and Young People's Alliance. The transformation work of the EYTA has reported to this Alliance and all of the sponsors are members of the Alliance. As members of the Alliance, the senior sponsors will collectively shape, inform the priorities and plans coming out of the academy, and also help with both opportunities and barriers that the EYTA may face. The board has a strong ethos of holding each other to account and addressing system challenges.
87. The Children and Young People's Alliance has responsibility for contributing to the achievement of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities as well as providing the overall system leadership and accountability for the delivery of improved outcomes for children and young people in Dudley.
88. Dudley Council and Dudley CCG are working together to commission a Multi-Specialty Community Provider (MCP), using the Integrated Care Provider (ICP) contract. The new care model to be delivered by the MCP has been designed largely with a focus on adults and older people. However, it is essential that health, care and wellbeing services for children and young people are integrated into the care model, and this will be the focus of the work of the EYTA.
89. The Health and Well-Being Board will drive the integration of services to achieve outcomes for children and young people through the MCP. The work of the Academy will form the foundation for the development of a robust outcomes based early years model, that can be applied to the age 5 plus population. A local board of key stakeholders, including parents, communities and practitioners will be set up to help drive the implementation of the locality model, they will be included in the local governance model and will have an equal voice.
90. Funding is being sought via Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust to enable midwifery staffing to be at a level that ensures safety during the transition.

Finance

91. There are no direct Local Authority costs attached to this report.

Law

92. The Council is mandated to commission Health Visitor services through its Public Health Grant

Equality Impact

93. The report identifies areas of inequality and there is recognition that any work undertaken in this area will attempt to reduce inequalities in the health and wellbeing of children, young people their parents and carers. If required, an equality impact assessment will be undertaken on the implementation plan.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

94. There are no Human Resource/Transformation implications arising from the contents of this report.

Commercial/Procurement

95. No commercial opportunities have been identified at this stage, although they may be considered through the work of the Early Years Transformation Academy.
96. There are no direct Procurement implications resulting from the content of this report. However, as school readiness is a key challenge in Dudley impacting on education outcomes and the local economy partners may want to consider contribution to school readiness a priority for social value.

Health, Wellbeing and Safety

97. The information provided in this scrutiny report will improve health, wellbeing and safety of families supported by maternity and early years and the centre of the implementation plan. This systems leadership approach to improving inequality across maternity and early years outcomes, has the potential to improve residents health and wellbeing significantly, using health, council and community resources where they are likely to have the greatest impact.



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Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 9th September 2020

Report of the Acting Director of Children's Services

Elective Home Education

Purpose

1. To provide Members with a position statement around Elective Home Education (EHE) in Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's (the Local Authority) area up to July 2020.
2. EHE provision lies within the Education Investigation Service and forms part of the Education Outcomes area. The review of EHE services which was due to be undertaken following the previous report to scrutiny, was put on hold due to the priorities brought about by the Covid-19 response. Despite this a number of actions have been implemented, especially in relation to EHE pupils with special educational needs and/or a disability.
3. Work with Public Health to ensure that the wellbeing of EHE pupils is effectively supported has been commenced and is ongoing. We know that the social elements of school are important determinants of health and contribute to good wellbeing now and in the future. It is important to ensure that support is offered to EHE pupils to address these social influences on health and wellbeing.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Members:
 - Note and comment on the information contained in this report regarding EHE data in the academic year 2019/2020. In particular that the number of EHE pupils both locally and nationally continues to rise and that this will have obvious implications for the service.
 - Also note that a further rise in the numbers of EHE pupils is predicted, due to the effects of Covid-19, and the anxieties many parents face with returning their children to mainstream schools in September, as well as 'Relationships

Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education' being made compulsory, in both primary and secondary schools. Although parents still retain the right to withdraw their child from the sex education aspect, the remaining content is compulsory.

- Are aware that a full review of EHE services is being carried out to ensure that support is provided appropriately; including a review of the existing EHE staffing levels, and the relationship between EHE support and other Education, SEND, Public Health, Connexions, Children Missing Education and Social Care services.
- The Department for Education have carried out a consultation on proposed legislation on EHE, particularly relating to local authority registers of children not attending mainstream schools and the duties of parents. Once the Department for Education [DfE] has analysed the feedback there may be changes to the local authority duties for EHE pupils which will also inform the review of the service

Background

5. In April 2019, the DfE published new guidance entitled 'Elective Home Education: Departmental guidance for local authorities', which defines EHE as *"...a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home - or at home and in some other way which they choose - instead of sending them to school full-time."* In the UK, there are no nationally recognised, reliable data sources on the number of children educated at home and this remains a risk at a national level. The lack of information presents a risk that the required level of support may not be available for potential safeguarding concerns, as well as the possibility of social exclusion. It is also difficult to measure the impact of any services without reliable data.
6. In September 2019 the EHE Service returned to Education Services, and currently sits within Education Outcomes, working alongside the Education Investigation Service, Pupil Access Service, School Admissions Service and Fair Access Panels.
7. The service consists of one full time EHE officer who also has responsibility for Gypsy Roma and Traveller (GRT) children's education.

The Officer for EHE & GRT services follows the EHE Standing Operating Procedures (SOP). The SOP has an annual review planned to be released in September each year. It was last reviewed in June 2019 to take account of the national guidance for local authorities provided by the DfE in April 2019, and is currently under review in preparation for September 2020.

8. Over time the EHE Service has identified the following key issues:
 - The numbers of children whose parents or carers wish to educate their child at home locally and nationally is rising;



- Whilst in the UK there are no reliable data sources on the number of children being educated at home, there is some local data, but as this only identifies the children who are registered as EHE., it is therefore necessary to be cautious about the reliability of this data.
- The reason for parents choosing to Electively Home Educate their children has changed over recent years. More common reasons include issues associated with SEND, avoiding exclusion from school and avoiding fines or legal action due to truancy.

9. Based on these initial concerns, the key areas for development are:

- To improve ICT recording systems and data reporting to ensure a fuller understanding of the wider landscape of EHE, Exclusions and Education Investigation, thus enabling areas of specific concern to be highlighted.
- To create consistency with the wider workforce and embed homogenous processes and procedures.
- To improve working relationships with the SEND Team and ensure that the cases of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), who are also EHE are reviewed by their SEN Case Officer
- To increase working links with the Connexions Service and ensure Year 11 children who are also EHE have positive destinations post 16

Emerging Issues

10. Over the past 12 months the EHE Service has identified and addressed initial concerns and implemented the key areas of development highlighted above. However, a number of emerging issues still need to be addressed.

Evidence of Schools Encouraging Parents to Home Educate

- There is growing evidence from parents to suggest that they have been strongly encouraged by some schools to home educate, when their child or the parent experiences difficulties at school.
- Information in relation to this is being collated, so that officers have the evidence necessary to develop appropriate and informed challenges to the actions of relevant schools.
- Local authorities have no powers to intervene with the parent / school relationship, unless there are safeguarding issues, or the child has an EHCP and its content is not being delivered. However, the new Ofsted Inspection Framework includes a specific judgement relating to “off-rolling” (removing a pupil from the school roll inappropriately), including where schools encourage families to home educate. This gives local authorities more leverage with schools to change policy and has already led to a fall in the numbers of young people home educated locally and nationally;



DfE Consultation on EHE Legislation

14. The DfE's consultation on establishing a local authority registration system for children who do not attend state-funded or registered independent schools closed on 24th June 2019. Their questionnaire sought views on:
 - Proposed legislation to establish a register maintained by local authorities of children not attending mainstream schools;
 - Associated duties on parents and the proprietors of certain educational settings; and
 - Proposed legislation to establish a duty to support parents who educate children at home and seek support from their local authority in doing so.
15. Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's response to the consultation generally welcomed the recommendations, but noted that the resource implications at this stage were not known
16. The DfE have yet to respond to the consultation. Issues relating to Brexit and Covid-19 have delayed the response. There is currently no expected response date.

EHE Pupils with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities

17. The situation regarding pupils that are EHE and have an EHCP has been reviewed. Whilst the DfE makes it clear that "the parents' right to educate their child at home applies equally where a child has special educational needs [SEND]", it also states that this is "often more difficult" for pupils with SEND and that local authorities should use "the full range of powers available to ensure that the education is suitable".
18. A new Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) policy has been produced to give clarity between those receiving EOTAS and those where the parents had Elected to Home Educate their child.
19. The review of the EHE service will ensure that there is a match with SEND arrangements.
20. Children who are EHE and have an EHCP now have access to direct payments for support therapies or other learning aids.
21. The SEND Team and the EHE Service are developing a clear process to ensure that children's progress is tracked appropriately against their EHCP.
22. The SEND Team has identified a Senior SEND Case Officer who manages the cases of all EHE children with an EHCP. This officer is working closely with the Officer for EHE and GRT, and good working practices are being developed. Annual Reviews are

currently being worked through. This is having a positive impact, but it is putting added strain on capacity of the EHE officer.

Safeguarding Pupils

23. A situation in which a child is not receiving a suitable full-time education requires action by a local authority under education law. However, it is important to bear in mind that unsuitable or inadequate EHE can also impair a child's intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development, and may present a safeguarding concern.
24. Local authorities should consider whether they ought to take action under safeguarding law, especially where the actions taken under education law have not been sufficient to address a risk.
25. Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004 give local authorities general duties for promoting the well-being and safeguarding of children, including those who are EHE.
26. The Officer for EHE and GRT works in partnership with social care colleagues to ensure safeguarding concerns are raised, and relevant information on individual children is appropriately shared.
27. There is no proven correlation between home education and safeguarding risk. In some serious cases of neglect or abuse in recent years, the child concerned has been home educated but that has not usually been a causative factor, and the child has normally been known anyway to the relevant local authority. However, a child being educated at home is not always being seen on a regular basis by professionals, such as teachers, and this logically increases the chances that any parents who set out to use home education to avoid independent oversight, may be more successful by doing so. Several recent Serious Case Reviews have illustrated this.
28. As required in guidance we approach all cases where the suitability of home education is in doubt using the powers in the Education Act 1996. We are ready to fully exercise our safeguarding powers and duties, to protect the child's well-being, which includes their suitable education.
29. As part of the service review we will review all policies and practices to ensure they are clear about the circumstances where safeguarding action is likely to be appropriate, in cases where a child is not receiving suitable education.
30. Workforce development needs and resources will also be reviewed to ensure we are able to meet the requirements and ensure children are suitably safeguarded.
31. Our policy on the use of Education Supervision Orders (ESO), under section 36 of the Children Act 1989, will also be reviewed to ensure it provides suitable safeguards for children who are not receiving a suitable education at school, and whose parents have

failed to respond sufficiently to action taken under Local Authority powers provided by the Education Act.

Health Support for EHE Pupils

32. We know that the social elements of school are important determinants of health and contribute to good wellbeing now and in the future. It is important to ensure that support is offered to EHE pupils to address these social influences on health and wellbeing.
32. The Head of Children and Young Peoples' Public Health commissions a School Nurse who specifically supports EHE pupils.

Year 11 Pupils

33. The Local Authority's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for pupil placement state that it will not place Year 11 children in school from September of that year, and this limited amount of school provision for Year 11 children remains a concern. The SOP has been reviewed, ready for September 2020, to ensure that Year 11 pupils achieve expected outcomes and are not missing from education with the risks this entails.
34. Arrangements have been agreed with Connexions to ensure that Year 11 EHE children are supported to access post 16 education / training / employment provision.
35. EHE remains an area that is largely unregulated by central government, and has recently been the subject of a Children's Commissioner report; 'Skipping school: Invisible children. How children disappear from England's schools'. The official response to this report is yet to be published and, without national government intervention, many of the issues that surround home education will remain.
36. The Local Authority is prioritising this area of education and will continue to review and strengthen its processes. The review of EHE Services will provide clear evidence of the additional steps we need to take to ensure children who are Electively Home Educated are safeguarded and have access to a suitable education.

Data in Relation to EHE

37. As of 1 August 2020, Dudley has 440 pupils who are EHE against a whole school population of 47,500, which is 0.92%. This includes all pupils that have been EHE at any point during an academic year, including those that have returned to a school.

The table below shows the rise in EHE numbers since 1998:



Year	Dudley	No Previous School	Out of Borough	Total
1997/98	0	3		3
1998/99	0	3		3
1999/20	1	4		5
2000/01	2	9		11
2001/02	2	10		12
2002/03	4	11		15
2003/04	9	11		20
2004/05	19	16		35
2005/06	47	27		74
2006/07	64	41	1	106
2007/08	55	37	3	95
2008/09	102	40	2	144
2009/10	121	42	2	165
2010/11	119	42	3	164
2011/12	113	39	5	157
2012/13	187	48	10	245
2013/14	210	52	14	276
2014/15	198	56	17	271
2015/16	240	60	17	317
2016/17	312	57	17	386
2017/18	345	62	35	442
2018/19	357	54	29	440

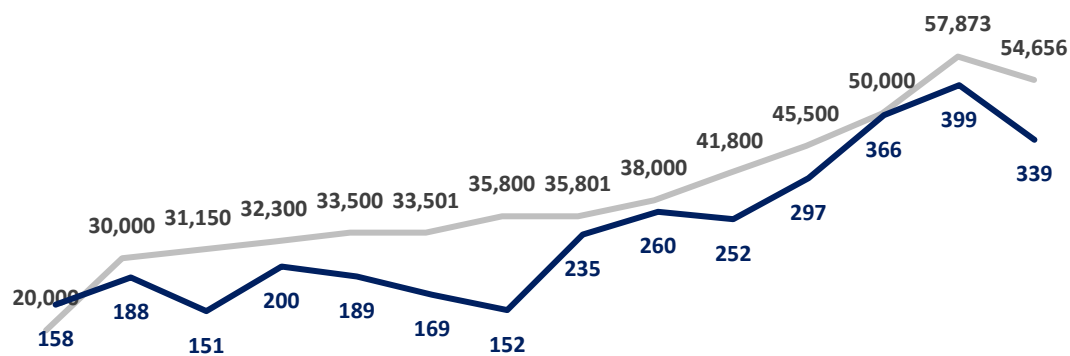
EHE Population in Dudley compared to national data

39. Nationally the figure for 2018 was around 0.72% (57,873 / 8M) but has risen slightly since then. Dudley was just below national levels in 2018 and has followed a very similar pattern of increase.

There is no current national data for EHE numbers to provide an updated comparison.

40. The chart below shows the relative rise in EHE numbers nationally and in Dudley over the past 14 years. As above, Dudley follows a very similar pattern to the national figures, including a decline over the last twelve months.

41.



Numbers for Dudley are in blue, with the national figures in grey.

42.

	Year 2017/18	% of EHE population	Year 2018/19	% of EHE population	Year 2019/20	% of EHE population
Reception	9	2%	9	2%	13	3%
Year 1	23	6%	28	6%	19	4%
Year 2	14	4%	35	8%	35	8%
Year 3	21	5%	23	5%	36	8%
Year 4	21	5%	31	7%	26	6%
Year 5	22	6%	24	5%	26	6%
Year 6	16	4%	29	7%	27	6%
Total Primary	126	33%	179	40%	182	41%
Year 7	40	10%	37	8%	40	9%
Year 8	37	10%	43	10%	41	9%
Year 9	54	14%	56	13%	50	11%
Year 10	57	15%	74	17%	60	14%
Year 11	73	19%	54	12%	70	16%
TOTAL Secondary	261	67%	264	60%	261	59%
Overall Total	387	100%	443	100%	443	100%

The table above shows EHE data per year group for the past 3 years. Whilst the reasons behind it relate to individual pupils, it is clear that an increasing number of primary children are involved.

EHE Pupils with EHCP (Number and % of the EHE Cohort)

43.

Date	Number	% of EHE Cohort
01 July 2018	14	4.4%
01 July 2019	17	4.8%
01 July 2020	19	5.5%

44. For comparison, 3.2% of all Dudley pupils have an EHCP. This means that the numbers of pupils with an EHCP that are EHE continues to rise and is still slightly above the average for all pupils.

Finance

45. If the current DfE consultation does result in an increased level of responsibility for local authorities to monitor Elective Home Education provision, then it would not be possible to deliver such requirements within the confines of the current staffing levels.
46. Within the Elective Home Education Service there is currently 1 FTE EHE Officer, costing approximately £63k per annum, which is funded from the Central School Services Block within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
47. The Department of Education requested additional staffing figures as part of the consultation and so funding from the DfE may be granted, however nothing has been announced as yet. If additional funding is not forthcoming from the DfE, then savings will have to be made from elsewhere within the Central Schools Services Block of the DSG to fund this additional resource requirement.

Law

48. The departmental guidance published the Department for Education in April 2019, entitled '*Elective Home Education*', recognises that under:
 - Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents of children of compulsory school age have a statutory duty to ensure that their child receives a suitable full-time education by attending school or otherwise; and under
 - Section 436A of the Act, local authorities have a duty to make arrangements to identify the children within their area that are not receiving a suitable education, contrary to section 7.
49. Once these children have been identified, other sections of the Act oblige local authorities to take the action that they deem necessary, to encourage parents to comply with their statutory duty, which can involve issuing School Attendance Orders and prosecuting parents in the Criminal Courts.
50. However, where a child is receiving a suitable education without attending school, by Elective Home Education, unless a local authority has issued the child with an Education, Health & Care Plan or has safeguarding concerns, it has no power to interfere with the arrangements being implemented by the child's parent.
51. Although legislation does not oblige local authorities to do so, the new guidance and the recent Department for Education consultation, indicates that central government believes that local authorities should be actively supporting families who elect to educate their children at home.
52. Therefore, as legislation and statutory guidance on this issue appears to be pending, it would be prudent for local authorities to identify the potential extent of the proposed

responsibilities, along with the structures, policies and procedures that will be required to meet them. This report is part of that process.

Equality Impact

53. All statutory school age children have a right to education, irrespective of their background or academic ability. Due to the vulnerability of SEND children it may be that without closer scrutiny of the delivery of their learning, they may be disadvantaged in gaining satisfactory education. Close monitoring is required to ensure children are progressing against their EHCP and that, where applicable, parents are supported in the delivery of education to their children. Regular SEND reviews and home visits must be completed, and if parents do not choose to engage with case officers, regular requests must be made and recorded. It is also recommended that an Equality Impact Assessment is carried out to assess the precise needs of these pupils.
54. Currently EHE data does not capture protected characteristics, other than disability, race and religion. Part of the new intelligence to support EHE provision will be a statistical breakdown of the EHE cohort to identify key trends.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

55. The recommendations within this report do not result in any human resources/service transformation implications.

Commercial/Procurement

56. There is no impact on the potential to commercially trade or a positive / negative impact on our customer base.

Health, Wellbeing and Safety

57. Parents / carers choose to home educate for many reasons and the needs of each young person will be different. Therefore it is important to consider the health, wellbeing and safety of all children educated at home, as well as their educational provision.

Helen Ellis

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List of Background Documents

Dudley EHE Standard Operating Procedures September 2018:

Department for Education, Elective home education departmental guidance for local authorities April 2019:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/791527/Elective_home_education_guidance_for_LAv2.0.pdf

Department for Education Children not in school consultation:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/school-frameworks/children-not-in-school/>

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 9th September 2020

Report of the Acting Director of Children's Services

Summer provision and September school update

Purpose

1. To provide Members with the following:
 - an overview of summer provision in Dudley during 2020.
 - an analysis of secondary and college provision.
 - an analysis of Virtual School events.
 - an analysis of the Dudley Performing Arts (DPA) events.
 - a summary of the Local Authorities support for schools in September 2020
 - (Please note that this report was completed in mid-August).

Recommendations

2. To recommend the following:
 - That Members note the content of the report.
 - That Members suggest any areas they may wish to scrutinise with respect to support for schools in September 2020.

Background

Overview of summer provision in Dudley during 2020

3. Across the summer, we co-ordinated and ran a wide range of programmes, with the overall aim of supporting our children and young people to return to school in September.
4. Six primary schools were open, with Howley Grange and Newfield Park running 5 weeks of sport; Hurst Green operating for up to 4 weeks of sport; Jesson's C of E providing a mixture of literacy, numeracy and sport; Milking Bank targeting their vulnerable pupils, and Withymoor running a 4-week sports club.

5. At the same time, our secondary schools and colleges were supporting young people and adults in Dudley who have been, or will be, affected by COVID-19. In particular they were focussing on;
 - Year 11 leavers who had not indicated any destination.
 - Young people with SEND.
 - Year 12 students who were wavering with their courses.
 - Year 13 students who would ordinarily be going to Higher Education but were not happy to pay fees and be based at home.
 - Residents currently unemployed.
 - Residents newly unemployed due to COVID-19 and those likely to become unemployed after funding for furloughing staff was stopped
6. We have also been working with the Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust on a project called Eduu.School, which is an online programme to support disadvantaged Year 10 children in local authorities in Birmingham and the Black Country during the period of limited school access. It is free of charge to Dudley Schools and, further to the demonstrations which took place at the start of July 2020, several of our mainstream and special schools enrolled their pupils.
7. Dudley Virtual School also delivered a range of provision, including;
 - The Challenge Tuition Programme
 - Artslink Awesome Arts Programme
 - Literacy & Numeracy Programme - Spy School 2020 - The Lockdown Legend
 - Careers – Be Inspired
8. Then, finally, Dudley Performing Arts organised two weeks of events, again targeted at children and young people who were likely to find it difficult to re-engage with school in September.
9. The first week was based at Resonance, with the second being hosted by the Black Country Museum, as shown below;

Tuesday 4th August 09:00 – 09:30 arrivals, session ends 14:30	Drumming for KS2 Bubble B	15 places (KS2)
Tuesday 4th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	Band in a week, Day one Bubble E	16 places (KS3/4) Same group throughout
Wednesday 5th August 09:00 – 09:30 arrivals, session ends 14:30	Drumming for KS2/ 3 Bubble C	15 places (KS2)
Wednesday 5th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	Band in a week, Day two Bubble E	16 places (KS3/4) Same group throughout



Thursday 6th August 09:00 – 09:30 arrivals, session ends 14:30	Drumming for KS2/ 4 Bubble D	15 places (KS2)
Thursday 6th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	Band in a week, Day three Bubble E	16 places (KS3/4) same group throughout
Friday 7th 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	Band in a week, Final day Bubble E	16 places (KS3/4) same group throughout
Monday 10th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	KS2 Day Bubble F	15 places (KS2)
Tuesday 11th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	KS3/4 Day Bubble G	15 places (KS3/4)
Tuesday 11th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	KS2 Day Bubble H	15 places (KS2)
Wednesday 12th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	KS3/4 Day Bubble I	15 places (KS2)
Thursday 13th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	Glass and Crafts Bubble J	15 places (KS2)

Analysis of secondary and college provision

Year 11 engagement

10. SEN

Multi agency meetings took place on Microsoft Teams for young people with Education, Health and Care Plans, including closer working with SEN case officers and transitions Social Workers. Work has also been undertaken with the special schools to establish Post 16 and Post 19 outcomes, and to follow up any actions from SEN and High Cost Funding Panel, in order to obtain support.

11. Information, advice, guidance and support for young people

Staff have continued their support to the vulnerable group clients: home educated, children missing education and alternative provision. Twitter, Facebook and the Connexions website were used to advise on next steps, opportunities and update with relevant information.

12. Staff also worked closely with the Careers Enterprise Council to provide information to careers leaders in schools, young people and parents/carers on year 11 and post 16 transitions.

13. In addition, they worked with national organisations for apprenticeships to gain an understanding of the opportunities that could be available for young people, as well as



sourcing online resources with information about CV completion, guidance for young people and parents, and interviewing skills.

14. Staff also engaged with managers and practitioners to understand the concerns of SEND, Children in Care and Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) as a part of being able to offer support during and post COVID 19. There was also engagement with education psychology to explore wellbeing support that could be offered.
15. Conversations also took place with training providers to gain an understanding as to how applications are managed during this period, to ensure young people are still being offered places and to ensure that young people can start programmes.

Further Education College engagement

16. Dudley College

To encourage new students, Dudley College put on a number of events, many of which were recorded and available online for anyone who missed them.

Appendix 1 - Dudley College - Summer Programme aimed at new students

17. The college anticipates that thousands of young people and parents will have engaged with these activities before the start of the new term, with the events being accessed via their website (<https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Update>).
18. To support continuing students, the college focussed on completed technical students who were not awarded their qualification or their calculated grade. These include mainly technical qualifications where practical assessments and delivery is required, such as construction, engineering and motor vehicle courses. Since the college reopened on June 15th, it has put on a series of assessment activities (<https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Information-for-Technical-Assessments>). Attendance has been excellent and the college expected to have all of these assessments completed by the end of the summer.

Black Country Impact Programme

19. Update on referrals and tenders for BC Impact support programmes

Between the start of lockdown and the end of June the team received 15 referrals, with a further 12 in July. Of the new referrals, 10 are engaging in essential skills programmes and counselling. With limited Department for Work and Pensions access, the upturn in referrals is organic as opposed to referrals direct from Jobcentre Plus.

20. The following is a list of the latest tenders on the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), as of 1 August 2020.

Name	Number of opportunities	Achievement	Restrictions
Railtrack	36	All licences and registrations to work on the railways	18+
Essential Skills	20	English/Maths or ICT Qualifications	
Gas Engineering	10	Qualified Gas Engineer	18+
College Transition	150	Support for YR11 students to transition to college	
Hair Level 1	10	Hair level 1 qualification	
Painting and Decorating	10	Level 2 P&D - CSCS card	
Engineering Tasters	100	Introduction and work experience tasters	
SIA and CCTV	20	SIA door license and CCTV operator	18+
Warehousing (and FLT)	50	Level 2 warehousing (and option for FLT license)	
Counselling	30		
Street works	5	Licenses and registration for street works	18+
Electrical Installation	10	Electrical Installation level 1	
LGV driver	15	Licensed to drive LGV	

21. Year 11 leavers and SEN

The colleges took the decision not to engage with BC Impact to deliver the post school summer transition programme due to restrictions linked to lockdown and the change to remote learning which made delivery of tasters difficult. This meant we didn't start working on this until early June, whereas previously this would have commenced in March for delivery in July.

22. The contract is now in place and being delivered by Phase Trust, with 26 young people registered to date, including 5 SEN learners. Take-up is currently low with respect to previous years, which is to be expected due to Covid-19, but the programme is being promoted via letters to parents, which were sent out across the borough and on social media channels.

23. Further SEN support

Discussions are underway to create a SEN-centric employment programme for those who are deemed to be 'work ready'. The idea is to gain actual work experience placements that can progress to employment or lead straight into employment.



24. The team is re-engaging with Riverside House on their ongoing community project. Previously we worked with them in 2017-18, with a programme to remove the bush and brambles from the site ready for the ongoing construction. We now have the major construction works completed, so our learners can return to Riverside House.
25. At Lunch on the Run we have had a few young people obtain food hygiene qualifications, and we are now trying to get the provider DPS approved, as they offer a great service to young people with SEN.
26. Work Experience
Finally, we are working with Brockswood Animal Sanctuary to access work experience placements but are at a very early stage of tender development as the company also needs to be DPS approved. We are planning a two-week work experience programme to provide animal care and, site and pen maintenance courses. These are ideal for young people who wish to work outdoors on various activities.

Analysis of Virtual School events

27. As part of the Virtual School's summer provision, the following numbers of pupils engaged in the Challenge Tuition Programme:

Key Stage	Numbers
1 and 2	6
3	8
4	20 – including 10 leading to Functional Skills qualifications

28. Numbers for the Be Inspired careers programme and the ArtsLink Awesome Arts Festival were not available at the time of writing this report.
29. The Connect & Create Artslink website has generated 94 new users, spread across 124 sessions, since the start of lockdown.

Analysis of the DPA events

30. The attendance data needs to be read in the context of the programme very deliberately targeting pupils who were identified by their schools as being likely to have issues re-engaging in September.
31. With such a cohort, it is therefore important to focus on the % that did attend, as opposed to the % that did not.
32. Where pupils did not attend this was often due to the anxieties of parents and carers, who were aware at the time of government communications about a possible second



wave of Covid-19, and associated articles in the media about whether schools would be safe in September.

33. However, the vast majority of pupils who attended had a really positive experience.
34. Many of the younger children looked anxious on arrival but were smiling by lunch time. One said she had enjoyed the food and asked if she could eat all day!
35. The older pupils also said they were nervous before coming, partly because they didn't know what to expect. However, they returned on successive days, growing in confidence. One told a member of staff that they would recommend the event to their friends if it was held again next year.
36. C said that all she has been doing since lockdown was colouring and this was something new. She was very nervous on day one, but was more confident on day two, when staff saw her smile for the first time.
37. E now wants to be a musician.
38. A parent also contacted us to say;
39. 'Please pass on our thanks to the team today. F had a great time today. She says the staff were kind and helpful and that she had lots of fun. She now wants music lessons and to join a band.'
40. It is therefore very clear that the programme did exactly what it set out to; making those who attended more confident and, as a result, more likely to re-engage with school in September.
41. A video produced by the DPA team of the summer programme was sent to you prior to this meeting.

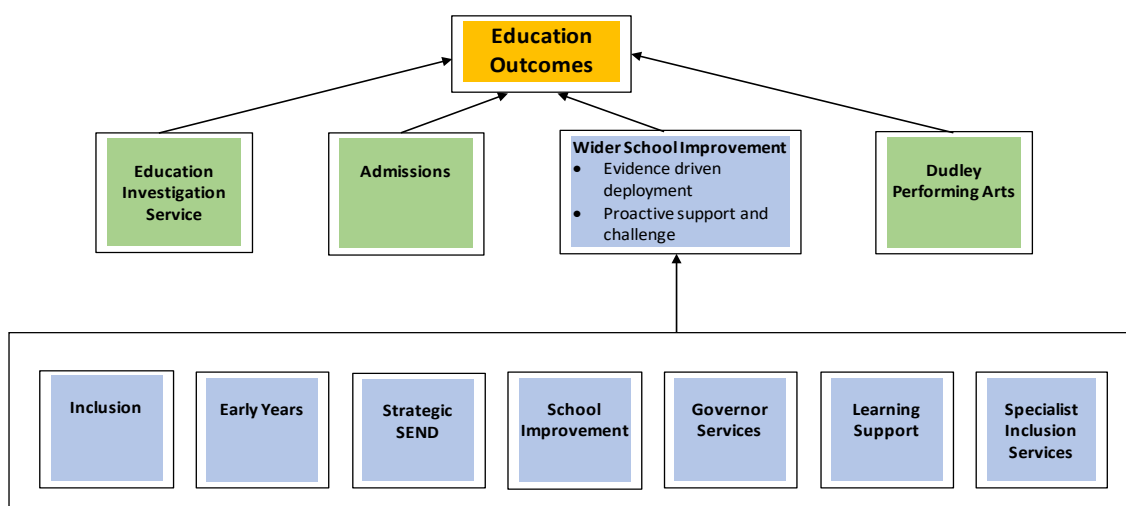
Date	No. of places	No. of pupils attending	Attendance %
Monday 3 August	15	Pupils reallocated to other days	
Tuesday 4 August	31	9	29%
Wednesday 5 August	31	11	35%
Thursday 6 August	31	12	39%
Friday 7 August	16	8	50%
Monday 10 August	15	3	20%
Tuesday 11 August	15	9	60%
Wednesday 12 August	15	8	54%
Thursday 13 August	15	8	54%



Summary of the LA's support for schools in September 2020

42. In order to support and challenge all our schools in September, we are introducing six key principles as part of an overall education strategy for Dudley MBC.
43. These are;
- As a borough we take full responsibility for ensuring that all our children and young people have high quality education, which meets their individual needs and aspirations
 - We expect all our schools and academies to be fully inclusive
 - We are working to ensure that there is clear continuity between mainstream schools, bases, alternative provision and special schools
 - We are committed to reducing exclusions, and the movement of children and young people between our schools and academies
 - As a local authority we will ensure that our teams are fully co-ordinated, and that we work proactively to provide schools and academies with the support and challenge they need
 - We will communicate regularly with all our schools and academies, and expect them to keep up to date with the information we provide
44. These principles will underpin all our work with schools and provide internal coherence to other strategies and initiatives which will be rolled out across the year. It is crucial that schools can see that Dudley has a clear educational philosophy and direction of travel.
45. We are also committed to working more proactively, to drive both the improvement and inclusion agendas. To date, far too much of our work has been reactive and driven by the need to respond to events, as opposed to having a clear set of joined up plans.
46. To support this new way of working, we are re-organising the Education Outcomes team, again with the objective of ensuring internal coherence to all that we do. We need to be seen as more credible by schools, if they are to have the confidence to work with us, and more focused team-working is a vital part of this. In simple terms, each member of the team needs to know what the others are doing, so that our work is fully integrated where it matters, in schools.
47. As shown in the communication structure below, all our work will be co-ordinated in relation to the school improvement priorities of individual schools, with specific teams being deployed to support and challenge accordingly. For example, a school which will be in the Ofsted 'window' in the Spring term, when inspections resume, will be given targeted intervention according to the issues it needs to address.

Education Outcomes – communication structure from September 2020



48. Throughout the lockdown period, we held twice weekly township Heads meetings, in which we answered any questions posed by schools and, where we needed to do so, referred these to the Department for Education via our React calls, passing the answers back to schools as soon as they were received.
49. Overall, schools felt well supported by the local authority and this will also drive a stronger working relationship with them in the months to come.
50. In terms of specific preparation for September, we have provided all our schools with a comprehensive risk assessment template, which is included here;

Appendix 2 – Coronavirus: RA Action Plan for potential opening from September 2020

51. In addition, we have sent them a collation of advice from our internal services with respect to the guidance issued by the DfE.

Appendix 3 – LA commentary on September 2020 Guidance for Schools

52. We have also sent all schools a letter highlighting our high expectations and asked that this is distributed to their parents and carers.

Appendix 4 – Letter to Parents and Carers – July 2020

53. Finally, we are engaging with the Wellbeing for Education Return programme, which was announced by the government in August. This is intended to support pupils' anxiety when returning to school and is being led by the local authority's Education Psychology service. Each school will have a nominated staff member linked to the programme, which will enable co-ordination with their existing mental health leads.

Finance

54. The programmes delivered by Dudley Performing Arts were funded from the Troubled Families budget, with a maximum cost of £20,000. The provision delivered by primary schools came from their own budgets and the Eduu.School online programme was provided free of charge by the Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust.

Law

55. Pursuant to Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, a local authority shall have power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

Equality Impact

56. The summer provision was targeted at pupils who were deemed to be in need of support in order to return to school or college in September. They were identified by their schools and will be supported by these institutions going forwards.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

57. There are no Human Resource/Organisational Development Implications arising from the contents of this report.

Commercial/Procurement

58. There are no specific commercial opportunities arising from this report.

Health, Well Being and Safety

59. All of our summer provision operated according to government guidance and we are supporting our schools to do the same when they return in September.

Helen Ellis

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Helen Ellis
Acting Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Jeremy Keeble
 Telephone: 01384 814979



Email: jeremy.keeble@dudley.gov.uk

List of Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Dudley College - Summer Programme aimed at new students
- Appendix 2 – Coronavirus: RA Action Plan for potential opening from September 2020
- Appendix 3 – LA commentary on September 2020 Guidance for Schools
- Appendix 4 – Letter to Parents and Carers – July 2020

DPA Summer video sent as separate link prior to this meeting.



Dudley College - Summer Programme aimed at new students

Date /Time	Activity	Notes / Call to action
4 th August 2020 12 midday-13.00pm	Dudley Sixth and Dudley College on Line chat via our websites. Ask us anything you want to know about studying A level programmes or vocational subjects with us .	https://dudleysixth.co.uk/live-chat/ https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Live-Chat
11 th August 2020 12 midday-13.00pm	Dudley Sixth and Dudley College on Line chat via our websites. Ask us anything you want to know about studying A level programmes or vocational subjects with us .	https://dudleysixth.co.uk/live-chat/ https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Live-Chat
10 th August 2020 <u>Business Taster Event</u> 10:00am-12:00pm <i>or</i> 1:00pm-3:00pm	16-19 year olds who are interested in studying a full-time programme in these subjects are invited to attend an event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounts • Business & Enterprise • Law & Criminology • Science & Animal Science • Education & Childcare 	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/dudley-college-of-technology-6179120169
11 th August 2020 10:00am-12:00pm <i>or</i> 1:00pm-3:00pm	16-19 year olds who are interested in studying a full-time programme in these subjects are invited to attend an event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering • Electrical Installation 	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/dudley-college-of-technology-6179120169
12 th August 2020 10:00am-12:00pm <i>or</i> 1:00pm-3:00pm	16-19 year olds who are interested in studying a full-time programme in these subjects are invited to attend an event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art & Design • Photography Graphics • Fashion 	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/dudley-college-of-technology-6179120169
12 th August 2020 12 midday-13.00pm	Dudley Sixth and Dudley College on Line chat via our websites. Ask us anything you want to know about studying A level programmes or vocational subjects with us .	https://dudleysixth.co.uk/live-chat/ https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Live-Chat
13 th August 2020 A level Results Day	Dudley Sixth and Dudley College Careers Information Advice and Guidance online – Talk to a friendly advisor about your options after A levels	Rosie Crawford Based Dudley Sixth Pod Pod Extension - 0138436 3672 Rosemary.Crawford@dudleycol.ac.uk Jaki Brooker Dudley Broadway CEIAG B30 Extension: 01384 363963 jaki.brooker@dudleycol.ac.uk

		Margaret Boswell Broadway – Support with UCAS Extension 0138436 3399 MARGARET.BOSWELL@dudleycol.ac.uk
18 th August 2020 12 midday-13.00pm	Dudley Sixth and Dudley College on Line chat via our websites. Ask us anything you want to know about studying A level programmes or vocational subjects with us .	https://dudleysixth.co.uk/live-chat/ https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Live-Chat
19 th August 2020 12 midday-13.00pm	Dudley Sixth and Dudley College on Line chat via our websites. Ask us anything you want to know about studying A level programmes or vocational subjects with us .	https://dudleysixth.co.uk/live-chat/ https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Live-Chat
25 th August 2020 12 midday-13.00pm	Dudley Sixth and Dudley College on Line chat via our websites. Ask us anything you want to know about studying A level programmes or vocational subjects with us .	https://dudleysixth.co.uk/live-chat/ https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Live-Chat
26 th August 2020 12 midday-13.00pm	Dudley Sixth and Dudley College on Line chat via our websites. Ask us anything you want to know about studying A level programmes or vocational subjects with us .	https://dudleysixth.co.uk/live-chat/ https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Live-Chat
2 nd Septmber 2020 12 midday-13.00pm	Dudley Sixth and Dudley College on Line chat via our websites. Ask us anything you want to know about studying A level programmes or vocational subjects with us .	https://dudleysixth.co.uk/live-chat/ https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Live-Chat

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Risk Assessment Action Plan for potential opening from September 2020

<Insert School Name>

Assessment conducted by:	Job title:	Covered by this assessment:
Date of assessment:	Date of next review:	



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The sole purpose of this risk assessment is to support schools in preparing for all pupils, in all year groups, to return to school full-time from the beginning of the autumn term **while reducing the risk of coronavirus transmission**. The risk assessment has been written in collaboration with a number of local authorities.

- For the purpose of this risk assessment, the term ‘coronavirus’ to refer to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Schools must ensure that this risk assessment reflects the local setting and context of the school. Staff must be consulted with regard to this risk assessment (this must take into consideration all types of workers including agency workers, casual staff and contractors and any other adult on site as well as your permanent staff).
- This risk assessment is not exhaustive and is issued to schools as a template to assist in the production of a comprehensive document that covers the particular circumstance of the setting – **as such, the risks and risk controls should be deleted/amended/added-to to reflect the school.**
- This should be viewed alongside relevant advice and guidance from the Department of Education and reflect any additional subsequent guidance issued to schools.
- For further reference, <https://www.gov.uk/government/latest?departments%5B%5D=department-for-education>, including the documents below, issued on the 11 May 2020:
 - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance for schools and other educational settings](#)
 - [Details on phased wider opening of schools, colleges and nurseries](#)
 - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#)
 - [Actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020](#)
 - [What parents and carers need to know about schools and other education settings during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
 - [Opening schools for more children and young people: initial planning framework for schools in England \(updated 12 May \)](#)

Key:	
Level of risk prior to control	Identifies the risk before any steps to reduce the risk have been taken
Risk Description:	Outlines the area of concern. This list is not exhaustive, and schools should add/amend/delete where appropriate e.g. risks for pupils with complex needs.
Risk Controls:	The measures that will be taken to minimise the risk. These are generic and should be adapted for the school context. Add <additional information>
Impact:	Could be L/M/H or numeric, depending on what is used in the school setting.
Likelihood:	Could be L/M/H or numeric, depending on what is used in the school setting. NB IF IMPACT AND LIKELIHOOD ARE BOTH HIGH, THEN THE ACTIVITY SHOULD BE STOPPED UNTIL ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES ARE PUT IN PLACE.
Responsible person:	The identified staff member(s) responsible for implementing the risk controls.



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Completion Date:	The date by which required plans for controls will be in place. To support planning, identify which controls need to be in place before pupils return to the setting. Individual schools can then personalise to their own setting.
Line Manager Check:	Sign off to ensure that the risk has been minimised as far as possible.

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
The school lapses in following national guidelines and advice, putting everyone at risk		<p>To ensure that all relevant guidance is followed and communicated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school to keep up-to-date with advice issued by, but not limited to, DfE, NHS, Department of Health and Social Care and PHE, and review its risk assessment accordingly Information on the school website is updated. Pupils updated via classrooms/email/text as necessary. Any change in information to be shared with Chair of Governors and passed on to parents and staff by email <p>As a result, the school has the most recent information from the government, and this is distributed throughout the school community.</p>					
Poor communication with parents and other stakeholders		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff/pupils aware of current actions and requirements and reminded frequently using school communication systems Headteacher to share risk assessment with all staff Parents notified of risk assessment plan and shared with parents via website. 					

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Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		As a result, all pupils and all staff working with pupils are adhering to current advice.					
Lack of awareness of policies and procedures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leaders will ensure that all policies impacted on by coronavirus controls are updated All staff, pupils and volunteers will make themselves aware of all relevant policies and procedures including, but not limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety Policy Infection Control Policy First Aid Policy Intimate care policy Behaviour policy Staff absence reporting procedures All staff have regard to all relevant guidance and legislation including, but not limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013 The Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010 Public Health England (PHE) (2017) 'Health protection in schools and other childcare facilities' DfE and PHE (2020) 'COVID-19: guidance for educational settings' 					

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Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant staff receive any necessary training that helps minimise the spread of infection, e.g. infection control training. Staff are made aware of the school's infection control procedures in relation to coronavirus via email Parents are made aware of the school's infection control procedures in relation to coronavirus via letter/social media/poster at entrance to school – they are informed that they must contact the school as soon as possible if they believe their child has been exposed to coronavirus Pupils are made aware of the school's infection control procedures in relation to coronavirus via a coordinated programme of delivery from staff on the morning of their first day in school. Care should be taken to do this for every pupil even if they do not attend on the first day. All are informed that they must tell a member of staff if they begin to feel unwell. Daily electronic briefing issued to staff. <p>As a result, all staff and pupils are aware of the policies and procedures in place to keep themselves safe in school.</p>					
Poor hygiene practice in school - general	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posters are displayed at the entrance to the school, around school and in every classroom reminding staff, pupils, parents 					

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Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<p>and visitors of the hygiene practice required in school (e.g. washing hands before entering and leaving school)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils to wash their hands with soap before and after break times and lunchtimes for no less than 20 seconds • Teachers to reiterate key messages in class-time (when directed) to pupils to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, - To throw all tissues in a bin - To avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. • Additional alcohol-based sanitiser (that contains no less than 60 percent alcohol) and tissues to be provided for the school reception area, dining hall, classrooms and other key locations for staff, pupils and visitors • Infection control procedures are adhered to as far as possible in accordance with the DfE and PHE's guidance • Sufficient amounts of soap (or hand sanitiser where applicable), clean water, paper towels and waste disposal bins are supplied in all toilets and kitchen areas • Hand washing facilities are supervised by staff when pupils are washing their hands to avoid overcrowding in hand washing areas • Pupils and staff do not share cutlery, cups or food. 					

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Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to bring in their own cups and utensils All utensils are thoroughly cleaned before and after use Cleaners are employed by the school to carry out additional cleaning. Door handles, doors and toilets are cleaned during the day <insert frequency> and paper/hand towels are refilled regularly <insert frequency> <p>As a result, all pupils and staff are adhering to high standards of hygiene to minimise risk of transmission.</p>					
Poor hygiene practice – specific – school entrance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear signage in place regarding social distancing Barriers/screens to be used by reception staff when dealing with parents/visitors/contractors Areas touched to be wiped down Discourage parents from entering the school building Rearrange furniture in reception area to facilitate social distancing. If possible, arrange for a separate staff entrance to the workplace – stagger start times for staff where possible. <p>As a result, reception staff are protected.</p>					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
Poor hygiene practice – specific – office spaces.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start and end times for administrative staff are staggered to support social distancing Tissues/hand sanitiser to be available in office locations Staff to wash hands on arrival at school Each individual is responsible for wiping down their own work area before and after use. <p>As a result, office practice in office spaces limits the risk of the spread of any infection.</p>					
Poor hygiene practice – specific - spread of potential infection at the start of the school day.		<p>In line with government advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue information to young people, parents, carers and visitors not to enter the school if they display any symptoms of coronavirus Issue information to parents about arrival and departure procedures, including safe drop-off and pick-up Inform each year group and their parents of their allocated times for the beginning and end of their school day <INSERT DETAILS HERE> Inform each year group and their parents of the allocated entrance and exit points to school and where they should go on arrival <INSERT DETAILS HERE> 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that pupils clean their hands regularly, including when they arrive at school, when they return from breaks, when they change rooms and before and after eating. • Soap and water is the best approach to this and schools should endeavor to ensure there are enough hand washing facilities available. The correct hand washing routine should be followed. • hand sanitiser 'stations' are an alternative and sufficient of these should be available so that all pupils and staff can clean their hands regularly between washings. • ensure supervision of hand sanitiser use given risks around ingestion. • Small children and pupils with complex needs should continue to be helped to clean their hands properly. • All staff to wash hands on arrival in school • Make it clear to parents and pupils that they cannot congregate at the front of school prior to the start of the school day • Make parents and pupils aware of government recommendations with regard to transport. Inform parents and pupils of restrictions and plans relating to school transport • Issue information to pupils in relation to restrictions on their movement around the site 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient supplies of hand-washing supplies should be provided to accommodate this procedure at the start of the day. <p>As a result, the risk of infection is reduced as pupils and staff arrive at school.</p>					
Poor hygiene practice – specific – toilet/changing facilities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to wear additional PPE when supporting pupils with toileting routines – mask, gloves, apron All changing surfaces to be cleaned before and after each use Nappies/soiled items to be disposed of in yellow bags Staff to follow specific intimate care procedures insert here Any soiled clothes are put into a plastic bag (double bagged) and sent home. <p>As a result, safe practices are followed and the risk of infection is reduced for staff and pupils.</p>					
Poor hygiene practice – specific - end of the school day.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue information to parents about departure procedures, including safe pick-up Inform pupils and parents of their allocated times for the end of their school day INSERT DETAILS HERE Inform pupils and their parents of the allocated exit points and pick up points INSERT DETAILS HERE 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make it clear to parents and pupils that they cannot congregate at the front of school/in the playground prior to the end of the school day. If waiting to collect pupils, parents are to remain in cars and park safely Make parents and pupils aware of government recommendations with regard to transport. Inform parents and pupils of restrictions and plans relating to school transport and potential road closures. <p>As a result, the risk of infection is reduced as pupils and staff leave school.</p>					
Ill health in school.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are informed of the symptoms of possible coronavirus infection, e.g. a cough, difficulty in breathing, high temperature and Loss of taste or smell and are kept up-to-date with national guidance about the signs, symptoms and transmission of coronavirus Appropriate PPE is sourced and guidance on its location, use and disposal issued to staff in line with government guidance on what to do if a pupil or staff member becomes unwell All staff are informed of the procedure in school relating a pupil becoming unwell in school 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff advised of the procedure in school if a member of staff becomes unwell. Ensure all staff absences are appropriately recorded. Any pupil who displays signs of being unwell is immediately referred to <INSERT HERE> Any staff member who displays signs of being unwell immediately refers themselves to <INSERT HERE> and is sent home Where the named person is unavailable, staff ensure that any unwell pupils are moved to an empty room whilst they wait for their parent to collect them. School admin team to contact parents. Parents advised to follow the COVID-19: Guidance for households, including accessing testing If a pupil needs to use the bathroom, they should use a separate bathroom <insert detail here> which will be cleaned after use. Pupils displaying symptoms of coronavirus do not come in to contact with other pupils and as few staff as possible, whilst still ensuring the pupil is safe. A facemask should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained If contact with a child or young person is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a face mask should be work by the 					


July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<p>supervising adult. If there is a risk of splashing, eye protection should also be worn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant member of staff calls for emergency assistance immediately if the pupil's symptoms worsen Unwell pupils who are waiting to go home are supervised in <an area> where they can be at least two metres away from others Areas used by unwell pupils who need to go home are identified as out of bounds, thoroughly cleaned and disinfected once vacated. <p>As a result, any member of the school community who becomes unwell, is isolated quickly and appropriate action is taken to minimise the risk of infection.</p>					
Poor management of pupil numbers reduces the ability of pupils and staff to practice social distancing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders to identify and communicate clearly to parents and pupils who is to attend and the times they are to attend Leaders to calculate capacities of classrooms. Classrooms allocated for provision and small adaptations made to to support distancing where possible without compromising safety routes or fire escapes. 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classrooms to be arranged so adults maintain 2 metre distance from each other, and from children where possible and when circumstances allow. Classrooms to be arranged to support adults to avoid face to face contact and minimise time spent within 1 metre of anyone. Timetable reviewed and refreshed and programme communicated to teachers and staff Where possible, pupil movement to be limited to make social distancing easier and specialist teachers to move between allocated classrooms Leaders to consider how best to supplement remote education with face-to-face support for pupils. <p>As a result, staff and pupils are clear about where they should be, the times that they should be there and what they are delivering.</p>					
A pupil is tested and has a confirmed case of coronavirus.		<p>In line with government advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rest of the class/group should be advised to self-isolate for 14 days. Do not take any action regarding notifying bubbles until you have been contacted by PHE. Refer to the school symptom management Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Headteacher will contact PHE. Then PHE's local protection teams to conduct a rapid investigation and will advise school on appropriate action. <p>As a result, school leaders taken appropriate action in the event of a confirmed case of coronavirus.</p>  <p>Schools Symptom Management S...</p>					
Insufficient staff to run face-to-sessions for pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders to ensure that they have a complete list of shielded (clinically extremely vulnerable) and clinically vulnerable adults for their school Leaders to ensure that the clinically vulnerable offered the safest available on-site roles where possible Protocols for staff to inform leaders if they need to self-isolate are clearly in place Leaders ensure there is a rota in place for cover in the instance that staff have to self-isolate. 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		As a result, sufficient staff cover in place to provide the face-to-face support sessions for pupils.					
Pupil movement between lesson, at breaktime and lunchtime increases the risk of infection.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staggered starts to be put in place for breaktime and lunchtime <One-way circulation> where possible to be put in place for pupils arriving and leaving shared lunch space/lessons. Allocated outdoor areas for each year group to be identified for breaktime and lunchtime Lunchtime to be staggered for different year groups <insert details> Pupils advised not to play contact games at breaktime or lunchtime. Ball games and shared outdoor equipment to be prohibited Pupils to be supervised in washing hands before and after lunch In canteen/eating spaces, consideration given to marking seats that can be used and removing other seating. Bench style seating clearly marked. · Screen provided to protect food in canteen when pupils purchase food Touch terminals/cashless catering is not used. Till operator searches for pupils by name on the electronic system (rather than using fingerprint recognition) 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tables to be cleaned between year groups using lunchtime facilities Catering staff to maintain strict levels of hygiene in food preparation areas and follow whole staff guidance in reporting illness Pupils who bring a packed lunch, to eat in classrooms to reduce movement and maintain social distancing. <p>As a result, the risk of infection during unstructured time is reduced.</p>					
Spread of infection in classrooms/shared areas.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All unnecessary items to be removed from classrooms and learning environments and stored elsewhere All soft furnishings and items that are hard to clean to be removed Class sizes reduced to ensure social distancing can be adhered to - Follow new guidance re class sizes for primary and secondary Pupils to be directed to specific seats in classrooms and to maintain seats during the day as far as possible - Follow new guidance re class sizes for primary and secondary Tissues and hand sanitiser to be located in each classroom/learning space Bins to be emptied at least twice daily in classrooms. 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with communal surfaces, such as door handles etc to be minimised. Doors to be kept open • Where possible, windows to be opened to provide ventilation. • Inform all the pupils that they must bring the required equipment to school (stationery, calculators etc) to reduce the risk of infection • Pupils/staff to clean IT equipment (esp keyboards) with anti-bacterial wipes before and after each use • Shared telephone handsets to be cleaned with anti-bacterial wipes before and after each use • Shared teaching resources to be cleaned prior to and after use <insert frequency> • If any bodily fluids come into contact with classroom equipment, ensure that gloves are worn to remove the piece of equipment before it is thoroughly cleaned • Guidance issued to staff on the use of the staff room and staff toilet area, including maximum numbers at any one time <insert details here>. Staff to be reminded to adhere to social distancing at all times • Hand sanitiser to be in place at photocopiers/shared keyboards/telephones etc • Staff must wash and dry their own cups, plates and utensils, using disposable towels. 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		As a result, the risk of infection to staff and pupils in classrooms is reduced.					
Poor pupil behaviour increases the risk of the spread of the infection.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils are reminded of the behaviour policy on their return to school Sanctions (and how they will be applied in the context of social distancing) are clearly communicated to pupils and parents. Behaviour policy is adjusted as a consequence Pupils individual behaviour plans are reviewed and specific control measures identified and shared with pupils and staff where necessary. <p>As a result, pupils and staff understand the behaviour policy/individual plans in context.</p>					
Pupils with complex needs are not adequately prepared for a return to school or safely supported.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific arrangements for pupil transport have been risk assessed and agreed with local providers Leaders and staff should review individual pupils handling plans, including the use of PPE Additional advice should be sought from external agencies where appropriate in relation to moving and handling (physiotherapy, occupational therapy) 					

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July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review individual communication plans where close proximity is expected e.g. on-body signing Plans should be understood, shared and followed consistently by all staff working with those pupils Prepare additional social stories to support pupils with autism / learning difficulties (highlighting changes to classrooms/arrangements/use of PPE, for example) and share with parents and pupils prior to pupils returning to school. <p>As a result, pupils with complex needs are well supported.</p>					
Vulnerable pupils and pupils with SEND do not receive appropriate support.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate planning is in place to support the mental health of pupils returning to school Agree what returning support is available to pupils with SEND in conjunction with families and other agencies. <p>As a result, pupils with SEND and those concerned about returning to school are well supported.</p>					
Increased number of safeguarding concerns reported after lockdown.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree safeguarding provision to be put in place to support returning pupils Ensure that key staff (DSL and deputies) have capacity to deal with any arising concerns Follow up any referrals made by staff swiftly, while maintaining social distancing. 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		As a result, safeguarding remains of the highest priority and practice.					
Emergency evacuation due to fire etc.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lockdown, fire and emergency evacuation procedures to be reviewed so that social distancing can be maintained Leaders to communicate procedures to all staff Staff to communicate emergency evacuation procedures to pupils at the beginning of each day. <p>As a result, social distancing is maintained in the event of an emergency evacuation.</p>					
Cleaning is not sufficiently comprehensive.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all cleaning and associated health and safety compliance checks have been undertaken prior to opening A nominated member of staff monitors the standards of cleaning in school and identifies any additional cleaning measures Where possible, additional cleaning staff employed (or given additional hours) to increase the regularity of cleaning Whilst pupils are at breaktime/lunchtime, <identified member of staff> to clean tables/door handles with a disinfectant spray. Gloves to be worn during this and hands washed afterwards 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposable gloves/wipes/sprays are next to photocopiers/printers etc Cleaners to act upon guidance normally linked to 'deep cleans' as part of their daily procedures (i.e. a focus on door handles, toilets, changing room, toys in the Early Years). <p>As a result, high standards of cleanliness are maintained in school.</p>					
Contractors, deliveries and visitors increase the risk of infection.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All contractors to be checked to ensure that they are essential visitors prior to entry to the school Agree arrival and departure times with contractors to ensure that there is no contact with staff or pupils All contractors/visitors to wash hands either prior to or on entry to the school site Contractors and visitors are directed to specific/designated handwashing facilities All areas in which contractors work are cleaned in line with government guidance Contractors to bring own food, drink and utensils onto site. Staff who receive deliveries to the school to wash hands in line with government guidance after handling Where possible, staff to identify safe/designated place for delivery without need for contact with staff. Drivers are not 					

July 2020

Risk Description/Area of Concern	Level of risk prior to control <>	Risk Controls	Level of risk is now <>	Likelihood <>	Responsible person	Planned completion Date	Line Manager Check
		<p>permitted to enter the school premises when making deliveries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If drivers have to enter school site, ensure that they are asked to maintain social distancing and use hand sanitiser before entering the building Surfaces to be cleaned after any deliveries have been made. <p>As a result, any external visitors/contactors are kept safe and the risk to other members of the school is minimised.</p>					

School-specific arrangements relating to risk assessment that may need additional detail:

Capacity and organisation of teaching spaces

Arrival to and departure from school

Movement around the school

Classroom allocations



July 2020

Timetable arrangements

Role of teaching assistants

Breaktime plan

Lunchtime plan

Catering staff

Cleaning

Toilets

Staffroom and offices

Transport

Classroom expectations



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Pupil expectations

Useful links:

- Safeguarding: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>
- Remote learning: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
- Attendance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>
- Premises: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-school-premises-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/managing-school-premises-which-are-partially-open-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>
- Prevention and control: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>
- Advice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>
- Vulnerable: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>
- Extremely vulnerable: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>
- SEND - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance>
- Home learning support: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources>
- Remote support: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
- Accountability measures: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-school-and-college-performance-measures/coronavirus-covid-19-school-and-college-accountability>
- Pupils' mental health support/pastoral care at home: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak#helping-children-and-young-people-cope-with-stress>
- Parents: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supporting-your-childrens-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
- Parents with pupils with SEND: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-with-send-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
- Supporting parents: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing#working-with-parents>
- Financial support: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care>



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- Exceptional costs: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-schools/school-funding-exceptional-costs-associated-with-coronavirus-covid-19-for-the-period-march-to-july-2020>
- Reducing burdens: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-reducing-burdens-on-educational-and-care-settings/reducing-burdens-on-educational-and-care-settings>
- Social distancing: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings>
- PPE: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>
- Public health England <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>
- NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/what-to-do-if-you-or-someone-you-live-with-has-coronavirus-symptoms/>
- Government advice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>
- DfE <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>
- A detailed checklist and key guidance for action for health and safety is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-school-premises-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/managing-school-premises-which-are-partially-open-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak
- Information re testing: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>



Dudley MBC initial commentary on DfE September 2020 guidance for schools

The following is a set of initial comments on the guidance.

It is not intended to be a definitive list of answers to all the questions we know schools will wish to raise; rather a collection of suggestions and identification of matters you might need to consider when planning for September.

HR

- We do not have a feel for a union response to the guidance yet. We are meeting with unions again locally on the 14th July.
- In the event of staff absences due to Covid-19, the DfE is directing schools to its list of approved agencies. We need to identify support and signposting.
- Schools will need to manage the fear element with staff who are anxious about returning. Learning & Organisational Development have been asked to develop sessions to support schools in courageous conversations.

Health + Safety

- It would be prudent to place the risk assessment in the public area of schools' web pages for reassurance to all who use the school.
- The guidance document discusses the use of Bleach, which is effective in the removal of COVID-19 from surfaces. However, this has to be risk assessed and a control measure put in place to ensure the bleach is used in accordance with manufacturers' directions and that neat bleach is not left on surfaces so as to cause a H&S burn risk.
- Enhanced cleaning and more frequent cleaning of toilets will mean cleaning staff may also be required on the premises during the school day. This adds to the school staff loading and increases potential contact issues.
- How will school mealtimes be organised to keep social distancing working – will meals be taken in class?
- If schools have to move furniture out to get a more front on teaching style, do they have storage facilities a) within the school or b) elsewhere?

The Local Authority will be reviewing the risk assessment shared with schools in the run up to the expansion of provisions on 1st June and updating it to support schools in their September plans.

Safeguarding in Education

Schools should consider revising their child protection policy to reflect the return of more pupils. Schools must have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, (KCSIE) and should also refer to the coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers' guidance. A new CP policy is being sent to DSLs in the next few weeks which will ask them to include any differences to their normal arrangements and ensure the above legislation is cited within their policy

Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) should be provided with more time, especially in the first few weeks of term, to help them provide support to staff and children regarding any new safeguarding and welfare concerns, and the handling of referrals to children's social care and other agencies where these are appropriate. In particular, we suggest that;

- DSLs share safeguarding responsibilities with their Deputy DSLs to ease their caseload
- DSLs ensure that all staff understand how to raise a concern and contact partner agencies particularly if they are moving between sites or the normal arrangements have been amended.
- DSLs consider online virtual teaching and the safeguarding implications if still teaching to a cohort of students that are not in school
- Schools review and amend school online safety and acceptable use policy to reflect the current situation
- DSLs update any pupil's care plan in writing, with any changes to staff rotas,
- DSLs must be contactable using KCSiE guidance 'adequate and appropriate cover for any out of hours or out of term activities'. DSLs do not have to be on site during the holidays but should ensure a senior member of staff is able to lead on safeguarding duties and contact them asap.

Communication with school nurses is important for safeguarding and supporting wellbeing, as they have continued virtual support to pupils who have not been in school. Gail Hooper and her School Nurse team are available to offer continuous support to all pupils of concern. The team have also been visiting children at home to do safe and well checks.

Access and Inclusion

Many children will have experienced trauma and loss during their time at home and this will make their return to school very difficult. These children will need support and the move from stay at home to everyone back to school must be carefully managed.

After such a long period of time away from school some of the less well engaged pupils may find it more difficult to re-engage with school. The use of the formal powers to exclude need to be used sensitively in these situations as they may not support reintegration, simply create a wider gap between the school, child and family.

Transport could be a significant issue, particularly if buses are not at full capacity in September, and schools might need to consider making allowances in the interpretation of their attendance policies.

We could see a rise in families moving to Elective Home Education and need to be aware that, for our most vulnerable groups, this is not the best option.

As such we are currently liaising with the DfE over the precise timescale for when using fixed penalty notices will be required, on the basis that we want to encourage pupils to return to school, rather than going down a more punitive route. We will keep you updated.

Early Years

The issue for schools regarding early years is that there are two separate sets of guidance to be looked as both refer to early years including nursery and reception.

There is not clarity always around which early years groups they are referring to in the guidance and who the youngest or younger children are.

We have raised this issue with the DfE and are awaiting feedback.

The table below identifies the key discrepancies.

	SCHOOL GUIDANCE – 2 nd July 2020	EARLY YEARS GUIDANCE – updated 2 nd July 2020
Who does it apply to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'It applies to primary, secondary (including sixth forms), infant, junior, middle, upper, <u>school-based nurseries and boarding schools</u>' 	When they mention early years settings, they seem to be referring to PVI group settings and childminders on the early years register
Groupings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'We recognise that <u>younger children will not be able to maintain social distancing and it is acceptable for them not to distance within their group</u>'. 'Consistent groups reduce the risk of transmission by limiting the number of pupils and staff in contact with each other to only those within the group. They have been used in schools in the summer term in recognition that children, and <u>especially the youngest children, cannot socially distance from staff or from each other</u> and this provides an additional protective measure. Maintaining distinct groups or 'bubbles' that do not mix makes it quicker and easier in the event of a positive case to identify those who may need to self-isolate, and keep that number as small as possible. In this guidance for the autumn term, <u>maintaining consistent groups remains important</u>, but given the decrease in the prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the resumption of the full range of curriculum subjects, <u>schools may need to change the emphasis on bubbles within their system of controls and increase the size of these groups</u> Where staff need to move between classes and year groups, they should try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can, ideally 2 metres from other adults. <u>Again, we recognise this is not likely to be possible with younger children and</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Update - From 20 July, early years settings will no longer be required to keep children in small, consistent groups within settings.</u> Settings should still consider how they can <u>minimise mixing within settings</u>, for example where they use different rooms for different age groups, keeping those groups apart as much as possible. <u>Reception is subject to school admissions (infant class size) regulations, therefore, until the end of the summer term, schools should follow the primary guidelines for reception which sets a limit of 15 children per group. New guidance has also been published for schools for autumn term from September</u>

	<p>teachers in primary schools can still work across groups if that is needed to enable a full educational offer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally, adults should maintain 2 metre distance from each other, and from children. <u>We know that this is not always possible, particularly when working with younger children, but if adults can do this when circumstances allow that will help.</u> <p>By younger and youngest children do they mean nursery and reception? Not all schools have a nursery so their younger children are reception. Also the reception children will be only four years old on entry and many of them for some time.</p>	
Ratios and qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>In nursery classes in maintained schools, caring for children aged 3 and over, reasonable endeavours should be used to ensure that at least one member of staff is a school teacher. Where this is not possible, there must be at least one member of staff for every 8 children, with at least one member of staff who holds at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification. Providers should use their reasonable endeavours to ensure that at least half of other staff hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification</u>
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>For children in nursery settings, teachers should focus on the prime areas of learning, including: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development (PSED) and physical development. For pupils in Reception Year, teachers should also assess and address gaps in language, early reading and mathematics, particularly ensuring children's acquisition of phonic knowledge and extending their vocabulary.</u> • Settings should follow updates to the EYFS disapplication guidance. • <u>For nursery settings and Reception, consider how all groups of children can be given equal opportunities for outdoor learning</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>For children in pre-reception settings, practitioners may focus at this time on the prime areas of learning, including: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development (PSED) and physical development. For children in reception year, teachers should also assess and address gaps in language, early reading and mathematics, particularly ensuring children's acquisition of phonic knowledge and extending their vocabulary.</u>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an update on Early Years Foundation Stage reforms (7.6) and Reception Baseline Assessment (7.7) –

Our ref: SE/HE

Service: Children's Directorate

Direct Line: 01384 812032

Date: July 2020

Parent/Carer

Dear Parent/Carer

As we look forward to all of our children and young people returning to school this September, I am writing to explain how you can work with us to make this successful.

Although many restrictions have been eased, schools will still be very different from when they were last full in March and it is important that you follow any specific guidance or instructions you are given. These will be explained in detail by your child's school and might include changes to the start and end of the day, and for those of you with younger children, changes to how you can drop off and collect them.

Schools will continue to teach children in distinct groups, or bubbles and it is important that you make sure your child understands what this means before the start of term. For the safety of all children, young people and staff, schools will expect that these arrangements are followed and will contact parents/carers if they have any concerns.

With all children and young people being expected to return to school, please also be aware that unless there are specific health issues in your family, no work will be sent home for children who are not in school.

We are conscious that this has been and continues to be an unsettling time for many of you but hope that, with your support, schools can quickly return to caring for and educating all of Dudley's children and young people.

Yours sincerely



Helen Ellis

Assistant Director - Education, SEND, Family Solutions, Early Years & Youth