

Sheffield City Council CYP&FS Scrutiny Committee 15 October 2020

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COVID19 response since March

- The Council, with our partners in Learn Sheffield have provide a strong lead, advice and guidance to:
 - All early years settings and providers
 - All maintained schools, academies and private schools in Sheffield
 - All post 16 providers
 - All schools and providers outside of Sheffield where Sheffield children and young people attend

Timeline

- All schools were partially closed from 23 March 2020 except for vulnerable children, children with EHCPs and children of key workers.
- From 15 June, Sheffield schools opened more widely offering provision to children in Foundation Stage 1 and 2, Year 1 and Year 6 as well as the original groups of children.
- Children and young people in Year 10 and Year 12 were also offered some face to face part time education
- All schools and settings opened for all children and young people from September 2020

Support provided

The Council as a whole, along with Learn Sheffield has provided a wide range of tangible help, support and guidance to schools/education and childcare settings

Public Health – support provided

- Response has been for EYs, Schools and Universities
- Providing PH advice and guidance: Case & Risk Management
- Supporting interpretation of national guidance so as to open and function following COVID-19 secure guidelines
- Getting back to school safely campaign and comms
- Providing Public Health advice on virus transmission & risk = delayed wider opening of schools by 2 weeks.
- Current position focuses on continued PH response. Case, cluster and outbreak management where required. Supporting and enhancing PHE role.
- Local current position reflects increasing levels of community/household transmission of COVID-19. Majority are single cases in year groups and staff. Settings role is to mitigate and slow down transmission therefore PH provide technical advice to settings on what action to take and follow.
- Single cases, clusters and outbreaks reflect what we would expect to see in relation to the epidemiology of the pandemic. Focus is community transmission rather than linked setting transmission

Issues

- Proportionate response required regarding level of risk
- System wide capacity – DfE and PHE system is overwhelmed requiring localised response which means technical local PH capacity is required
- Schools resilience: School Leadership are providing a PH response. They are doing a fantastic job in identifying contacts and seeking guidance from the LA PH team frequently.
- Resilience of the EYs and school sector to remain open with staff and pupils isolating.
- Balance of education and risk of virus transmission. Therefore PH advice carefully assesses risk and potential impact.
- Winter/Autumn – Flu season in addition to management of COVID-19.
- Wider impact of University opening and increase of cases

School Food

Since March

- 4,600 free school meals (FSM) food parcels were delivered to homes in the Easter holidays
- A spike in Universal Credit lead to 2,871 FSM applications but only 48% were authorised
- A 'discretionary' FSM category was introduced so no child got lost in the system through hardship grounds
- The council's School Catering Contract served 94k meals in school and 25k meals as either weekly or daily food parcels

Page 43 Current position

- Meal numbers steadily rising - running at 72% take up against Sept 2019
- Schools now trying to move to a full hot meal provision

Issues, Concerns & Challenges

- FSM applications far exceeds FSM eligibility – many families will be living with an element of hardship as the spike in Universal Credit does not bear out with an equivalent FSM
- Emergency FSM food parcels for children who are isolating at home – 240 FSM 'grab bags' delivered to families this week for 1 school at short notice
- Serving food in 'bubbles' - there are other food safety risks emerging as displaced dining creates other problems and costs that schools have to confront. We are helping schools to manage this.

Community Food Supply Operation

- Staff from Lifelong Learning working with colleagues across the authority established the service with a 4 day lead-in
- The operation was launched on 3rd April running through to 31st July during which time it delivered 1300 7-day food parcels supplying 2000 individuals with food, including 25 infants supplied with baby formula and nappies
- This was followed by an Emergency Over-Night service running throughout August during which 40 24-hour food bags were supplied to individuals at most risk
- Alongside this 20 Food-Banks were provided with food sourced and delivered by the team; from April to July 97,000 kgs of food was provided
- In addition 2,000 Easter Eggs were delivered to care homes, schools and children's centres, 12 deliveries of pet food was supplied
- The operation was based at Sheaf, the Moor Market and the Winter Garden, and it received support and donations from; Nestle', Costco, Fair-share, The Sheffield College

SEND – Activity during lockdown

- Children with EHCPs a priority group for access – all schools had systems in place
- All special schools remained open throughout
- Suggested minimum contact frequency – EHCPs weekly, SEND fortnightly – positive feedback where done well
- Advisory service contact with schools fortnightly to risk assess and offer support and advice
- Risk assessment of all children with EHCPs to offer support
- Statutory processes continued as far as possible
- Special school and IR heads met weekly to share support needs
- SEN school transport remained in place for those attending
- Parent / carer survey on concerns for return to school completed with over 350 responses – particular concerns re mental health and lost learning – positives identified for some families in lockdown due to reduced stress and anxiety

SEND – Current position and concerns

- All children with SEND should be back in school
- All special schools have completed risk assessments to identify specific SEN needs in line with DfE guidance
- Statutory duties to deliver provision in EHCPs now back in force
- Advice and support offered to schools around individual cases and how to meet needs including through individual risk assessment
- 39 children in special / IR where parents have not sent back due to concerns re risk of covid – schools and LA looking to support in each case (as of 28/09/20)
- Growing number of schools struggling with pressure of staffing who are isolating whilst waiting for tests which is putting additional pressure on specialist provision to be able to remain open
- High numbers in some special schools who are symptomatic and waiting for tests or isolating via track and trace
- Support for children who require specific medical interventions is being resolved where new issues have been identified around areas such as oral and nasal suction
- Special schools are learning to manage the ‘new normal’

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team

- Since the start of the pandemic we have produced the model risk assessment – Version 8 (Currently on version 9) for Schools to adopt and amend to suit their individual setting.
- Once Schools have completed their risk assessment they have shared it with us for comment and feedback.
- We have been in regular contact with Head teachers throughout the pandemic providing support and helping them with any concerns they may have.

In addition to the model risk assessment we have produced:-

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A risk assessment for School staff working from home

An individual risk assessment for staff who are shielding / BAME / pregnant / extremely clinically vulnerable / clinically vulnerable

- A cleaning guidance for Schools
- A guidance for Administering first aid, administration of medicines and providing intimate care in Schools
- A risk assessment for support staff (based at Moorfoot) visiting Schools with SEN
- A risk assessment for support staff (based at Moorfoot) visiting SEN pupils in the Home

As government guidance changes, the risk assessment will be updated to take on board any changes required.

Statutory HR

Some key points on what has been done since March

- Provision HR advice for COVID 19 (local advice and guidance - e mail briefings) to all educational settings in Sheffield.
 - Communication with external school HR providers to ensure consistent information and messaging to Sheffield schools - incorporating national advice from DfE / LGA and local SCC. Reinforcing expectations with regard to the role of external HR providers for advising their client schools on operational matters.
 - Collaborating with colleagues from Health & Safety and Public Health on developing Risk Assessments for schools.
- Working closely with school based Trade Union representatives via weekly meetings to address concerns and to facilitate Sheffield schools remaining open from March and subsequently wider to full re-opening from September.

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Key points on the current position

- Continue to address Employee Relations issues raised by trade union representatives and maintain a close / collaborative working relationship.
- Reinforce consistent messaging to HR providers about SCC expectations about “doing the right thing” when they advise their schools operationally.

Remaining issues/concerns/challenges

- Funding particularly in light of increased pressures due to staff being required to self-isolate or to take time off as a result of child/caring responsibilities. If not possible for staff to work from home or take paid leave, potential for expectation that this is unpaid leave. An issue already highlighted by TUs with potential for discrimination claims being flagged.

SEN Transport

- SEN Transport **operated throughout the pandemic**, following all appropriate government guidance and public health advice
- Operating procedures were brought to **IMG** for discussion/approval ahead of the full return to school in September 2020. The recommendations were supported by ICMs, Senior Managers, Public Health, and subsequently approved by IMG
- The vast majority of **parent/carers and schools** affected have been understanding and supportive
- Outstanding issue – further clarification required regarding **different vehicle types used as SEN Taxis**. Options paper planned to go to IMG w/c 5 October

Mainstream School Buses

- Mainstream School buses did **not** operate during the pandemic
 - DfT approved a **change of classification for school buses**, so they are no longer accessible to the general public. The reclassification as 'dedicated school buses' helped to avoid a major capacity problem
 - Operating procedures were also brought to **IMG** for discussion/approval ahead of the full return to school in September 2020. The recommendations were supported by ICMs, Senior Managers, Public Health, and subsequently approved by IMG
- No significant operational concerns have been** reported since the start of the school year in September
- Additional funding allowed SYPTE to arrange **extra routes** where required to minimise the number of pupils using public transport through to the October half term
 - Some of this funding will extend to the Christmas break, depending on national levels of need. **It is not clear if this will be extended** into the Spring Term

School attendance

- Data collected daily from schools
- Some schools not regularly returning information – current data covers approx 90% of the City's young people
- Year to date attendance is lower than the same period in previous years
- Latest national data is showing an attendance rate of 93% for primary and 86% for secondary
- Approx 2.7% of pupils are isolating due to suspected or confirmed covid

Elective Home Education and Inclusion

Sept 2020	158	Sept 2019	33	Sept 2018	23	Sept 2017	30	Sept 2016	34
Total 2020	210	Total 2019	243	Total 2018	184	Total 2017	155	Total 2016	144
Remain	192	Remain	109	Remain	67	Remain	56	Remain	42

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- The de-registration for EHE have increased over and above numbers expected and continuing to rise significantly daily. Every family is contact by both Children Missing Education and the Advisory Teacher for Elective Home Education.
 - 326 sessions of exclusions have been issued over September, this has affected 166 children. (149 Secondary age and 17 Primary)
 - There have been 11 permanent exclusions issued over the last 14 days. (9 Secondary and 2 Primary) there are 3 that may be withdrawn.
 - 35 Reduced Time Tables have been logged since the start of term. 18 of these are Primary, 5 attending special school, 12 are for children in secondary.
 - 7 of the RTTs have been for reasons of anxiety, 28 behaviour.

Laptops for learners at home

- June/July DfE scheme provided c1800 laptops to vulnerable children
- New DfE laptop scheme has been established for children without access to IT devices at home. This applies to children in years 3-11 who have been sent home due to confirmed cases of coronavirus.

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All Sheffield secondary and primary schools have been allocated a limited number of laptops based on need and school size

- Schools must complete an educational settings status form and provide a number from DHSC in order to access laptops
- LA officers have provided contact information for all schools to both DFE and DHSC.
- Information and updates about the laptop scheme has been shared with schools through the regular school bulletin

COVID-19 catch-up premium

£1 billion of funding to support children and young people to catch up. This includes a one-off universal £650 million catch-up premium for the 2020 to 2021 academic year to ensure that schools have the support they need to help all pupils make up for lost teaching time.

£350 million National Tutoring Programme to provide additional, targeted support for those children and young people who need the most help.

Eligibility: The £650 million of universal catch-up premium funding will be available for all state-funded mainstream and special schools, and alternative provision.

Funding allocation: £80 for each pupil in years reception through to 11.

Special, AP and hospital schools will be provided with £240 for each place for the 2020 to 2021 academic year.

This means a typical primary school of 200 pupils will receive £16,000 while a typical secondary school of 1,000 pupils will receive £80,000

COVID-19 catch-up premium

Payments: This funding will be provided in 3 tranches. First payments have been made.

Payment 2 early 2021

Use of funds: schools should use this funding for specific activities to support their pupils to catch up for lost teaching over the previous months.

National Tutoring Programme: £350 million National Tutoring Programme to provide additional, targeted support for those children and young people who need the most help.

The programme will comprise of at least 3 parts in the 2020 to 2021 academic year, including:

- a 5 to 16 programme
- a 16 to 19 fund
- a reception year early language programme

Sheffield COVID RECOVERY FESTIVAL



- Festival ran across September - sessions live online and recorded so colleagues could watch at a time convenient to them.
- Just over 400 people watched the 23 sessions live.
- Just over 300 people had watched recordings by the end of the month – this will continue to grow significantly.
- The festival included:
 - 2 Public Health sessions
 - Leadership – Sir David Carter
 - 2 Mental Health sessions – Zoe Brownlie (Health Minds)
 - Listening & Empathy – Jenny Mosley
 - Disadvantaged Gap – Marc Rowland
 - SEND – David Bartram
 - EEF Guide to supporting school planning – Julie Kettlewell
 - Governance – Emma Knight (NGA)
 - Professional Development – David Weston
 - 2 sessions about remote learning – EdTech Demonstrator School
 - Curriculum inputs – maths, early reading & phonics, science, music, PE, physical activity, swimming, educational visits, role of creativity.
- Session [reflections](#) on the website.

Sheffield COVID RECOVERY FESTIVAL



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- Next step is to take the learning from the festival and the first month of term to identify the key issues for schools to plan support for the rest of the year.
- **COVID Recovery Plan** will seek to bring together resources from different partners into one coherent support plan for Sheffield schools and academies.
- This includes identifying support to access and use national programmes (for example **catch up funding, tuition, laptop distribution**, etc.) effectively.
- It will also include seeking to support schools and academies to **identify and address gaps which have potentially widened** so far and which may widen further during the months ahead. These will include gaps for **disadvantaged** pupils, pupils with **SEND**, pupils with **health needs** and those affected by issues relating to **digital access and connectivity**.
- It is likely to also address **remote learning, mental health & wellbeing** (pupils and staff), **curriculum development, professional development, support for governance and school leaders**.
- Out for comments, suggestions and information **before half term**.

Support is ongoing

- The support for schools and childcare settings continues
- A number of Council services have returned to onsite activity where it is safe to do so and does not compromise the measures put in place by schools and childcare settings