

# Public Document Pack



## Northumberland County Council

**Your ref:**

**Our ref:**

**Enquiries to:** Lesley Little

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**Tel direct:** 01670 622614

**Date:** Wednesday, 9 June 2021

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held in the Meeting Space - Block 2, Floor 2 - County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF on **THURSDAY, 17 JUNE 2021 at 10.00 AM.**

Yours faithfully

Daljit Lally  
Chief Executive

**To Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee members as follows:-**

**Councillors C Ball, W Daley (Chair), L Dunn, D Ferguson, A Scott, G Stewart (Vice-Chair), M Swinburn, C Taylor and T Thorne**

**A Hodgson, D Lennox, P Rickeard, L Houghton and J Sanderson**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor G Renner-Thompson**



**Daljit Lally, Chief Executive**  
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# AGENDA

## PART I

It is expected that the matters included in this part of the agenda will be dealt with in public.

### 1. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

**19 Members**

**10 County Councillors (5:3:1:1)**

**Quorum - 5**

**Chair: W. Daley**

**Vice Chair: G. Stewart**

<b>Conservative</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Independent Group</b>	<b>Liberal Democrats</b>	<b>Green Party</b>	<b>Ind No Group</b>
W. Daley	C. Ball	C. Taylor			
D. Ferguson	L. Dunn				
M. Swinburn	A. Scott				
G. Stewart					
T. Thorne					
<b>One TBC 1 Min Gp place gifted to Con</b>					

### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

### 3. MINUTES

(Pages 1  
- 6)

The Minutes of the Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committees, held on Thursday 1 April, 2021, as circulated, to be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### 4. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest) they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 4 July 2012, and are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature (as defined under paragraph 17 of the Code Conduct) they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room. NB Any member needing clarification must contact the monitoring officer by email

at [monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk). Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this agenda letter.

- 5. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS** (Pages 7 - 8)

To note the latest Forward Plan of key decisions for June to September 2021. Any further changes made to the Forward Plan will be reported to the committee.
- 6. SUMMARY OF NCC APPROACHES TO MEETING THE NEEDS OF SEND LEARNERS DURING THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC MARCH 2020-MARCH 2021** (Pages 9 - 24)

The report informs the Scrutiny Committee about the response of Northumberland County Council to the COVID pandemic (March 2020-March 2021) in relation to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND).

It offers an overview of the response over three distinct phases, corresponding to the different periods of school partial closures.
- 7. WINTER SUPPORT GRANT UPDATE** (Pages 25 - 34)

The report provides members with updated information regarding delivery of the Winter Support Grant during Spring Term 2021, including the provision of Free School Meals (FSM) over the February half-term and Easter school holidays and the roll-out of the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) at Easter.
- 8. FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND MONITORING REPORT 2019/20.** (Pages 35 - 40)

Members are asked to review and note the Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and Monitoring Report.
- 9. URGENT BUSINESS**

**IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST AT THIS MEETING, PLEASE:**

- Declare it and give details of its nature before the matter is discussion or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- Complete this sheet and pass it to the Democratic Services Officer.

<b>Name (please print):</b>
<b>Meeting:</b>
<b>Date:</b>
<b>Item to which your interest relates:</b>
<b>Nature of Registerable Personal Interest i.e either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Annex 2 to Code of Conduct or other interest (as defined by Annex 3 to Code of Conduct) (please give details):</b>
<b>Nature of Non-registerable Personal Interest (please give details):</b>
<b>Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?</b>

**1. Registerable Personal Interests** – You may have a Registerable Personal Interest if the issue being discussed in the meeting:

a) relates to any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined by Annex 1 to the Code of Conduct); or

b) any other interest (as defined by Annex 2 to the Code of Conduct)

The following interests are Disclosable Pecuniary Interests if they are an interest of either you or your spouse or civil partner:

(1) Employment, Office, Companies, Profession or vocation; (2) Sponsorship; (3) Contracts with the Council; (4) Land in the County; (5) Licences in the County; (6) Corporate Tenancies with the Council; or (7) Securities - interests in Companies trading with the Council.

The following are other Registerable Personal Interests:

(1) any body of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management) to which you are appointed or nominated by the Council; (2) any body which (i) exercises functions of a public nature or (ii) has charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management); or (3) any person from whom you have received within the previous three years a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of more than £50 which is attributable to your position as an elected or co-opted member of the Council.

**2. Non-registerable personal interests** - You may have a non-registerable personal interest when you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are, or ought reasonably to be, aware that a decision in relation to an item of business which is to be transacted might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well being or financial position, or the well being or financial position of a person described below to a greater extent than most inhabitants of the area affected by the decision.

The persons referred to above are: (a) a member of your family; (b) any person with whom you have a close association; or (c) in relation to persons described in (a) and (b), their employer, any firm in which they are a partner, or company of which they are a director or shareholder.

### **3. Non-participation in Council Business**

When you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are aware that the criteria set out below are satisfied in relation to any matter to be considered, or being considered at that meeting, you must : (a) Declare that fact to the meeting; (b) Not participate (or further participate) in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; (c) Not participate in any vote (or further vote) taken on the matter at the meeting; and (d) Leave the room whilst the matter is being discussed.

The criteria for the purposes of the above paragraph are that: (a) You have a registerable or non-registerable personal interest in the matter which is such that a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would reasonably think it so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest; **and either** (b) the matter will affect the financial position of yourself or one of the persons or bodies referred to above or in any of your register entries; **or** (c) the matter concerns a request for any permission, licence, consent or registration sought by yourself or any of the persons referred to above or in any of your register entries.

**This guidance is not a complete statement of the rules on declaration of interests which are contained in the Members' Code of Conduct. If in any doubt, please consult the Monitoring Officer or relevant Democratic Services Officer before the meeting.**

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## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

### FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At the meeting of the **Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held at Remotely on Thursday, 1 April 2021 at 10.00 am.

#### PRESENT

M Swinburn (Chair) (in the Chair)

#### COUNCILLORS

T Cessford  
L Dunn  
K Stow

W Daley  
J Lang

#### CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES

A Hodgson

D Lennox

#### OFFICERS

C Angus

Scrutiny Officer

L Dixon  
A Kingham  
L Little  
C McEvoy-Carr

Democratic Services Assistant  
Service Director - Education and Skills  
Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Executive Director of Adults and Children's  
Services

N Taylor

Head of Inclusive Education Services

#### ALSO PRESENT

R Dodd

G Renner-Thompson

H Bowyer

CYP Operational Commissioning Manager,  
Northumberland CCG

#### 139 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Campbell, P Rickeard and L Houghton.

#### 140 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Dunn advised that she was a Member of the North of Tyne Scrutiny Committee.

141 **FORWARD PLAN**

**RESOLVED** that the Forward Plan of key decisions for April to July 2021 be noted.

142 **EDUCATION AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMY PORTFOLIO NORTH OF TYNE COMBINED AUTHORITY**

The report provided an overview of the ongoing projects and work in the Inclusive Economy Portfolio within the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) with a comprehensive introduction and overview provided by the Service Director, Education and Skills. Councillor Dodd as the Portfolio Holder was also in attendance and commended the report to the Committee.

During discussion of the report, the following information was noted:

- A lead support officer from the NTCA who undertook all the development work was now working with the Directors of the three constituent local authorities to accelerate the school improvement timetable. There was now a 12 month calendar of work to be achieved as a team and this was the first phase which nested within the school improvement agenda.
- The biggest challenge within Northumberland was the secondary schools performance, as the first and primary schools performances had improved significantly. Unfortunately this was being hampered at the current time as no judgements were being changed, however work was continuing on delivering improvements. Eleven very brief focussed inspections had just taken place and all eleven schools were deemed to be taking effective action. It might be useful to have School Improvement Plan update report presented to the Committee which would provide assurance that work was still ongoing in Northumberland.
- In terms of a cost analysis, it was at a very high level as the Education Challenge was planned around £10m for 10 years and there had been confidence that this would make a significant difference. Existing funding was targeted to where it would have the greatest impact.
- There was a strand of both the Joint School Improvement Strategy and the Education Challenge which was around retention and recruitment across leaders at all levels and some suggestions for the way in which these could work were provided.
- There was already an education outcome deficit within NTCA and Northumberland with a challenge to address even prior to Covid, which potentially could impact on life chances for young people. With Covid the focus was even more important after the struggles being encountered during the previous year with home schooling and children and young people not being able to attend schools.
- The NTCA Education Challenge funding was written into Parliamentary Statute and it was very clear that NTCA should continue to push Government to make sure this happened, following the success of this in London and the improvements it achieved.

- The possibility of changing term time and holidays was raised as there was always a deficit when children and young people returned to school following the 6 weeks summer break, and whilst the 13 weeks holiday in total could be retained, these could be more spread out. This was an area that DfE were currently looking at.
- The importance of training, sharing good teaching practices and support for teachers across subject networks was highlighted, especially in relation to maths, physics and computer science and a greater focus on the STEM subjects would see improvements being made in these areas.

The Executive Director stated that there were a lot of exciting opportunities regarding skills development coming forward to attract those with the skills to drive improvements. She confirmed that Northumberland and also NTCA had not lost sight of the fact that the Education Challenge money had not been forthcoming, but both would continue to lobby Government for this and keep the agenda live and ensure that their voices continued to be heard.

The Chair suggested that more reports be brought to this Committee which provided Northumberland's view so that Members were aware of what was happening.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The key themes and workstreams in the Inclusive Economy portfolio and the progress to date be noted;
2. The plan for the Joint School Improvement Strategy be noted; and
3. The work of the Northumberland Officers Group developing projects for submission to meet the needs of Northumberland be noted.

## 143 **MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS**

The report informed the Committee about the current offer of mental health support available to students and staff in schools across Northumberland. It had been written in conjunction with Helen Bowyer, CYP Operational Commissioning Manager, Northumberland CCG, with contributions from Yvonne Hush, Public Health Manager and Kay Vincent, Professional Lead and Clinical Manager within Northumbria Healthcare Trust responsible for School Health. The report offered a comprehensive overview of support provided across NCC and partner agencies and summarised the position with regard to services usually available, and the additional offer in place to support during the COVID 19 pandemic. A comprehensive introduction to the report was provided by the Head of Inclusive Education Services with the aid of a Power Point presentation. Councillor Renner-Thompson, Cabinet Member was in attendance and commended the report to the Committee.

Members welcomed the comprehensive report and the significant reduction in the waiting times for access to help.

In respect of early identification of behaviour patterns in pre-schools, and private settings it was explained that a lot of work had been done on the interaction with early years family teams and the incorporation of mental health workers in family centres to work with pre-school children and families. However due to Covid it had not been physically possible to access the buildings, but a lot work had been undertaken in the background so that this could be driven forward quickly when they were able to do so. It was also confirmed that early identification was pushed all the time from the Early Years Teams, who were very responsive to queries. In terms of work within private settings this had not been undertaken but it was on the radar to do and it would possibly be undertaken using a stepped approach. In terms of support for parents and carers, there was a lot of self-help information on the BeYou portal for parents and as part of the Trailblazer funding money was provided to Cygnus to develop parent/carer support. This work had been started before Covid and it had slowed during this time, however some work had been done digitally and would be able to move quickly when circumstances allowed.

In respect of the suggestion of a Governor at each school being responsible for mental health and it being on all Governing Body agendas, this would be picked up with the Education and Skills Governing Body Team to see if it could be taken forward.

In response to the suggestion from the Chair that the report should be shared with all Members of Council to assist them to be able to respond to queries from residents, the Executive Director stated that a briefing note had previously been provided, but this could be updated and circulated to Members as a refresher.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The contents of the report be noted; and
2. The Committee recognised the support on offer to staff and students in Northumberland Schools.

144 **FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND MONITORING REPORT 2019/20.**

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

145 **CHAIR'S CLOSING COMMENTS**

The Chair advised that the role of this committee was to monitor, review and make recommendations about education, social care, training, safeguarding, youth, family, and children's services – to name just a few things. Also to oversee and monitor school improvement. It was not always easy, but the Committee was prepared to tackle and address those issues that did arise and work towards improvement. He recognised the hard work and efforts of the officers, and all staff and partners involved to deal with changes that were required and it was their efforts and flexibility that had helped Northumberland rise from near bottom of the table up to 79th in the education results in the last few years, and to the top of the tables in the North East; to set up its own Social Worker Academy, producing 44 'home grown' qualified Social Workers for Northumberland, with another 12 due to start; the huge achievement of apprenticeships in this last year at 19% above the National average; a significant reduction in the level of

exclusions; and being the top authority in the country for offering school placement.

He offered his thanks first to the officers and their teams for the hard work for this committee and the work that they did for Northumberland. He also thanked all of those involved in all areas of the Council and Schools, including support staff, for helping the people in Northumberland every day. He also thanked Ken Stow, Vice-Chair; Chris Angus, Lesley Little and all of Democratic Services; and all committee members for their input to this scrutiny committee, which was one of the few that met on a monthly basis due to the volume of work it was required to undertake.

**CHAIR.....**

**DATE.....**

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## Forward Plan

### FORTHCOMING CABINET DECISIONS JUNE TO SEPTEMBER 2021

DECISION	PROPOSED SCRUTINY DATE	CABINET DATE
<p><b>Financial Performance 2020-21 - Provisional Outturn</b>                      The report will provide Cabinet with the revenue financial position as at 31 March 2021 for the Council against the Budget for 2020-21.                      (R. Wearmouth/A. Elsdon 01670 622168)</p>		8 June 2021
<p><b>Northumberland Business Park</b>                      To seek approval to terms for the disposal of the site by way of an option agreement and sale.                      (Confidential report)                      (G. Sanderson/D. Lally – 01670 622669)</p>		8 June 2021
<p>✓</p>		
<p><b>Funding for the North Pennines and Northumberland Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>                      NCC's current funding agreements with the North Pennines AONB Partnership and Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership expired at the end of March 2021. This report requests that current funding continues, so that the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty staff teams can continue to receive funding from Defra, on the basis of 75% Defra funding to 25% local authority funding.                      (J. Riddle/ D. Feige - 01670 622653)</p>	C&P 30 June 2021	13 July 2021
<p><b>NE Enhanced Bus Partnership</b></p>	CSEG 12 July 2021	13 July 2021

<p>The report will set out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Bus Strategy context - building on the Strategic Transport update we took to Execs/IC in March</li> <li>• Timeline for establishing an Enhanced Bus Partnership in NE by March 2022 as prescribed in the national strategy</li> <li>• Resourcing implications - confirming our financial contribution to the centralised team to be managed by Nexus and highlighting the role of NCC in directly contributing to this work and thereby having a clear influence from a rural perspective</li> <li>• Emerging issue for bus services in the county as a result of the creation of the partnership - and to confirm that regular updates on progress will be fed through to the portfolio holder and Informal Cabinet in tandem with forthcoming NE Joint Transport Committee meetings.</li> </ul> <p>(W. Ploszaj/N. Easton – 07979 233477)</p>		
<p><b>Write Offs 2020-21</b> To report on debt written off during the 2020-21 financial year. (R. Wearmouth/S. Mounsey – 01670 624285)</p>	CSEG 12 July 2021	13 July 2021
<p><b>Draft Private Housing Sector Strategy 2020-23</b> The report provides Members with the draft Private Sector Housing Strategy 2020-2023 for review and agreement. (C. Horncastle/ J. Stewart 01670 623076 / 07771 974 112)</p>	C&P 30 June 2021	13 July 2021



## **Families and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

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### **Summary of NCC approaches to meeting the needs of SEND learners during the COVID 19 Pandemic March 2020- March 2021**

Report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Children's Services, Cath McEvoy-Carr

Cabinet Member for Children's Services: Cllr Guy Renner-Thompson

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#### **Purpose of report**

To inform the Scrutiny Committee about the response of Northumberland County Council to the COVID pandemic (March 2020-March 2021) in relation to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND).

It offers an overview of the response over three distinct phases, corresponding to the different periods of school partial closures.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Note the contents of the report.
2. Recognise the support provided over this period and identify any potential issues for further consideration if appropriate.

#### **Link to Corporate Plan**

This report is relevant to priority 3 in the NCC Corporate Plan 2020 (Living) and priority 6 (Learning).

It is also relevant to all priorities within the [Northumberland Children and Young Peoples Plan](#); ensuring that the needs of children and young people were met as

well as possible in extraordinary times, and minimising the impact of the pandemic as far as possible.

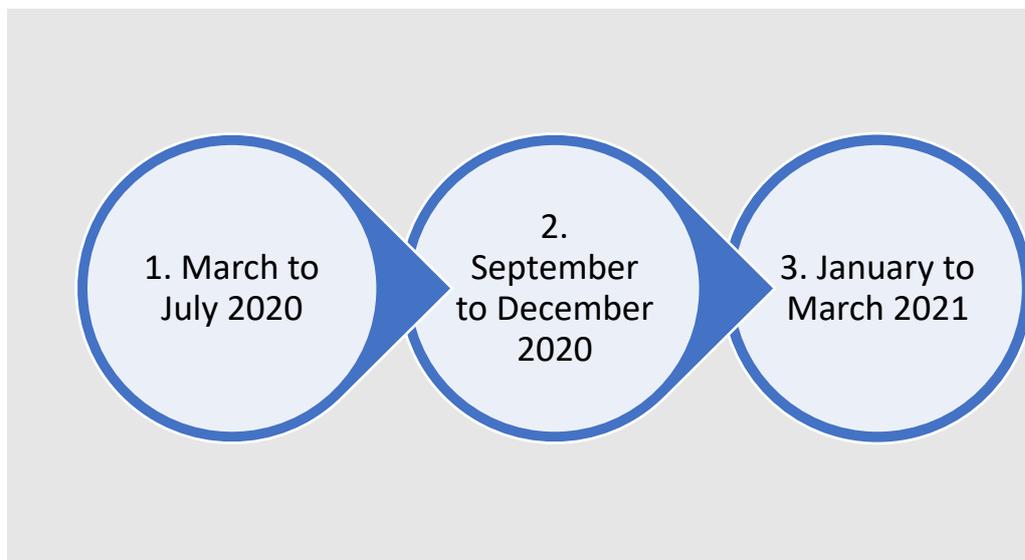
### **Key Issues**

1. Periods of school closure impacted on the lives of children and young people with SEND and their families, which were reported by schools and families. NCC Officers designed and published a survey for parents/carers in June 2020 to enable understanding of this impact and assist planning for the future
2. Easements in statutory processes were put in place, but NCC Services in this regard continued as far as possible which has meant that overall our families have not experienced undue time delays
3. An offer was provided to schools by specialist teams in order to support the attendance at school for pupils with SEND and other vulnerabilities. Schools were supported to conduct risk assessments for learners not attending, involving families and other professionals where necessary
4. Multiagency responses were put in place to meet emerging needs
5. The use of new technologies has supported ongoing delivery of training and support for families. Many of these are becoming part of business as usual

## BACKGROUND

### Introduction

The COVID 19 pandemic brought three discrete periods of time during which Northumberland County Council services for children and young people with SEND needed to respond in a dynamic way to changing circumstances and need. Many of the changes involved multiagency approaches. This paper summarises the actions taken.



### Overall Impact on Statutory Processes

During the pandemic we have not noticed any significant changes in the demand for EHCPs and the Local Authority have endeavoured to ensure statutory timescales have been adhered to. We adapted our processes in order to try and operate as close to a "business as usual" approach as possible. Our advisory SEN Panel moved to being held weekly online, we advised schools very early on around the need to continue to hold annual reviews and provided guidance on this. Our 20-week completion rate for new EHCPs has improved during the pandemic. Some of the advice received from our Educational Psychologists has not been as comprehensive as we would have ideally preferred as this has been limited where they have been unable to carry out face to face assessment or observations in school settings.

Our Post 16 Panel continued to meet weekly online.

Our mediation with parents has continued as have our appeals as these have also moved online. Further information regarding First Tier Tribunals is contained in a separate briefing paper.

*'I can't thank the whole team enough for everything they have done. I have been really impressed that everything has kept going through lockdown, I have still been receiving phone calls and the process has happened much quicker than I thought it would!' (parent)*



## **1. March to July 2020**

Schools were open for vulnerable children and young people, and to the children of key workers. Government guidance was being issued on a daily basis. Most of our schools had only a small proportion of their learners attending and were supported by the Health and Safety Team and Education and Skills staff to ensure COVID safe environments.

Headteachers received daily updates from the Director of Education and Education and Skills SMT, and weekly Locality Headteacher meetings were held. In relation to SEND learners specifically, the following approaches were taken:

### **Monitoring Vulnerable Learners**

A system was put in place by week 2 of the 'lockdown' period which required the completion of monitoring forms by all schools and settings (including Out of Area) making provision for EHCP learners. This enabled officers to monitor the attendance of EHCP learners and understand the reasons behind non attendance. The work involved the data and performance team, strategic leaders of SEN and the Virtual School.

Weekly scrutiny of returns allowed support and challenge to schools and settings; where learners who had not had risk assessments (RAs) reviewed, where learners were not attending and no reason for absence was stated and, where schools had not had any contact with their vulnerable learners where there has been no contact.

School closures were monitored, with support and challenge provided where schools were not open for vulnerable learners including formal requests to the RSC to intervene where necessary.

SENCOs were issued with guidance on responsibilities as laid out in Government directives.

### **Risk Assessment Process**

Government guidance indicated that for all learners with EHCPs, a risk assessment (RA) should be undertaken with families and any other professionals involved. Our schools and settings (inside and outside Northumberland) were provided with guidance around this, and with a template to assist robust decision making. The template clearly indicated best practice, and the crucial aspects consulting with parents/carers and other agencies when determining eligibility for a school place.

Colleagues in social care were informed of this requirement of schools in order to help support discussions with families and ensure that they were aware of eligibility for a place.

Children's Services Briefings contained regular updates throughout this period.

### **Multi Agency responses to Risk Assessments**

An audit process was put in place whereby on a weekly basis RAs were sampled, requested and checked by NCC officers. Additionally, pathways were created to enable action taken with schools where families and/or social care teams reported that schools were not offering places to young people who were vulnerable to risk if not attending

school. Close working across Education teams and the Virtual School supported individual casework for Children Looked After, and for those where there was an active role for the Education Welfare Service.

### **Northumberland Inclusive Education Service (NIES) Direct Support Offer**

In order to support the attendance at school of vulnerable learners, risk assessments were created and signed off by Public Health and Trade Unions to allow staff from specialist teams into schools safely. This offer also applied to schools who required additional staff simply to remain open, in the case of their own staff being unable to attend. A process was put in place for schools to submit requests which were usually processed for the next working day. Specialist SEN teams supported the attendance of 22 learners with identified SEN who would otherwise not have been able to take up a school place. This helped to ensure additional disadvantage was minimised.

*'At our school we have some really complex young people who have lots of needs, the current situation has intensified those needs making it really hard for school to manage their behaviours. I really appreciate your efforts in helping us to maintain a stable school placement when everything else in their lives is quite unstable. We couldn't have managed to sustain their education without your support so thank you.'* (school)

*'the organisation of the services has been brilliant during times of such uncertainty.'* (school)

*'The support throughout the academic year for pupils, staff, SENCO and families has been outstanding and this committed teamwork has continued through the challenges of 'lockdown'. I know that the support as these pupils transfer back into school will be paramount as we work together during 2020-2021.'* (school)

Pre school services such as Sensory Support and Portage offered virtual only support to families, creating innovative approaches to this work. Bespoke arrangements were made to continue to meet the needs of individual learners and families as far as possible.

A consultation line was set up by Psychological Services to provide guidance and support to residential children's home staff.

Families supported by the English as an Additional Language Team were provided with new ways of working. A consultation line was set up to provide advice and guidance around access to school work, and welfare calls were made to children and young people under the Voluntary Persons Resettlement Scheme.

### **Statutory Processes**

Despite easements laid out in statute for this period of time, the NCC SEN Monitoring and Assessment team continued to work to required timelines, adapting to working from home. Some challenges were experienced with the use of encrypted means of sharing documents with families. Limitations imposed by being unable to assess learners face to face and within educational settings had some impact on the timeliness of Educational Psychology advice. Data indicates that over this 5 month period, an average of 41% of requested advice was submitted beyond the requested deadline. This was also impacted upon by capacity issues within the team. However, overall timeliness figures through May, June and July were at around 90%, indicating that the delays were absorbed within the timeline set, having no impact on most children, young people and families going through the process.

The SEND Commissioning Panel continued throughout, operating virtually and ensuring the timely consideration of requests for EHC needs assessment and the issuing of EHCPs.

Good practice guidance on conducting Annual Reviews virtually was issued to schools, and Annual Reviews were monitored to ensure that those due took place, when parents/carers were happy for this to happen.

### **Virtual Offer/Resources**

NCC specialist teams including Psychological Services, High Incidence Needs Teams (HINT) and Low Incidence Needs Teams (LINT) created substantial and dynamic [padlets](#) providing resources for a range of relevant topics.

These included resources for parents and carers, which were made available on the NCC website via accessible links on the home page and via the Local Offer. Specific wellbeing resources were subject of a Communications exercise in July 2020, made available via NCC social media platforms. Parents and carers were telling us through our virtual outreach work that they needed resources to help them manage the wellbeing of their children with SEN, so a specific padlet was designed for this purpose.

Teams worked collaboratively with Health colleagues and established virtual offers of Cygnet and Earlybird for families of children and young people diagnosed with Autism. This ensured that this part of the Autism pathway was secure.

A SENCo conference was delivered virtually, along with SENCo network meetings, in order to maintain the community of practice.

### **Support for School SENCos and Sharing Good Practice**

SENCos received all Headteacher updates via the central mailing list, along with regular updates and summaries of changes to government guidance.

Ongoing advice and guidance was provided around individual learners, to enable access to school and remote learning.

Sharing good practice was facilitated, and a response was provided to the DfE national call for examples.

A whole area Virtual SENCo meeting was held in July covering a range of topics.

### **Voice of CYP and Families**

Over this period the Social Care First Contact team made 1000 calls to families who were recently closed to either Social Worker teams or Early Help Family Work Teams- to check in on family and children/young people's wellbeing. Where families or young people were experiencing particular challenges, referrals were made to relevant teams.

The COVID Survey was initiated in order for us to understand the experience of our learners and their families up to that point, and to inform future planning. It told us:

1. Some families reported that they had suffered significantly from the lack of provision of 'in person' interactions with support services and the lack of availability of therapies.
2. Many families were concerned about the impact of the pandemic on the wellbeing and emotional health of their young people. NCC and the CCG commissioned Kooth, an online platform for young people over the age of 11,

which was launched in July 2020 and has subsequently been widely advertised through schools and GP networks.

3. Some families reported that home learning had been very difficult, with poor communication from schools and work being inaccessible for their children. This informed planning for the following period.
4. Whilst some families had good experiences of the statutory processes, two thirds of families going through EHC needs assessment reported communication not being optimal. This has informed the action plan of the relevant SEND workstream (Workforce Development and the Graduated Approach).

Recommendations emerged from the report, which were all included in the action plans underway for 20/21 within SEND workstreams.

The SEN Monitoring and Assessment Team, NIES staff, and Strategic SEND staff provided support and guidance directly to families about individual learners, and also via other NCC teams eg Education Service for Looked After Children (ESLAC), Early Help, Disabled Children Team, Childrens Social Care Locality Teams and Inclusion Team.

### **Planning for Reopening**

In readiness for September, information was gathered around reopening plans for Special Schools within and outside Northumberland, and advice provided to Northumberland mainstream Headteachers regarding meeting the needs of SEND learners on reopening. This included ensuring that schools communicated effectively with parents and carers about plans.

We understood that the return to school would be challenging for some learners, and that a new and different approach may be required to support this. Colleagues across Education, Health and Social Care Teams worked collaboratively to set up a new pathway for schools to use, 'Pop Up Hub', which was positioned securely within a graduated approach and communicated to schools in a timely way, ready for the start of term.



## **2. September to December 2020**

Schools were fully open for all learners.

### **Pop Up Hub**

The time limited Pop Up Hub operated throughout the Autumn term to meet the needs of children and young people who were struggling to return to school for COVID related reasons; their own or their families' circumstances and specific anxieties, and about whom schools/settings were most concerned.

The Hub complemented other pathways to services and received 90 referrals over the course of the term, all of which were directed to relevant teams. Numerous services offered support.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Number of children offered support</b>
Early Help Hub	24
Education Welfare Service	26
NIES High Incidence Needs Team	22
Education Psychology	2
Primary Mental Health Team	23
CYPS	8
Schools Inclusion Team	9
School Health Teams	22
Other	19

Interventions were arranged with the child/young person, family and school as appropriate. Through this work, 43 of the young people reached attendance over 75% from very low starting points (many not attending at all). Of the total number of 90, average attendance increased to 52%. Of note was that although many referrals were COVID specific, some were more about longer term mental health concerns which had become worse through the COVID situation.

### **Documentation and guidance issued to schools**

A 'Return to School Plan for Learners with SEN' template with guidance was issued to schools. RAs were adapted and promoted for use with learners who did not return, or who were struggling to return. This ensured that schools remained aware of the ongoing need to support learners not in school. In reality, schools were experiencing closure of 'bubbles' at this time, so were developing and improving their approaches to remote learning.

### **Training Offer**

The Training Offer for SENCOs was redesigned and delivered virtually in response to system need, via SENCO network meetings and centrally run events. This demonstrated the return to business as usual in relation to relevant workstreams and the identified ongoing need for workforce development. The impact of this was good, with attendance higher than would have been expected at face to face training.

### **NIES Support Offer**

On site visits resumed, where safe to do so, as determined by government guidance. Full risk assessments undertaken before each visit, and a virtual offer also available. Demand for services was high, and the new model of delivery increased access to specialist teaching teams to provide equity. This demonstrated a return to business as usual in respect of supporting the early identification of SEND in schools and enabling specialist interventions to help meet need, as well as meeting needs emerging specific to absence from and return to school.

Guidance was provided for families related to safe online learning practice when engaging with NIES teams.

## School Improvement

The School Improvement Partner Autumn Term proforma was changed to include scrutiny of the previous and ongoing offer for SEN learners, encouraging conversations between school leadership teams and SIPs about SEND provision. This meant that leaders were sighted on their responsibility to tackle additional disadvantage.

The School Improvement Leader for SEND oversaw actions arising from these reports, providing support and challenge to schools where necessary.

## Voice of CYP and Families

In response to concerns from families about wellbeing and the impact of the pandemic and school absence, actions were taken to promote whole school approaches to mental health via the activity of the WellBeing for Education Return team and the Senior Mental Health Lead Coordinator, working closely with the Educational Psychologists and the Primary Mental Health Work team. The training package released by the DfE/DHSC was successfully delivered to representatives of 53% of Northumberland schools and settings via a conference in November. Further work through the Spring Term has ensured all schools have the training materials and have received support to deliver the package to their staff.



### 3. January to March 2021

Schools were closed to most learners during this period in response to rising infection rates. Again, guidance indicated that places should be available for vulnerable learners, including those with EHCPs.

#### Attendance of learners with EHCPs

School attendance (at schools within geographical boundaries of Northumberland) was monitored via daily returns to the Local Authority which enabled clearer insight regarding % EHCP learners taking up a school place. Attendance exceeded national benchmarks in all but one week and showed an upward trend during the period overall.

The degree to which the Special Schools within Northumberland were open was monitored on a weekly basis. NCC Officers worked with Headteachers to ensure that places were available for the most vulnerable and responded to individual requests that were made by parents/carers directly to Local Authority teams eg SEN Monitoring and Assessment team, Social Care teams, ESLAC. The impact of this on individual learners and their families was high.

#### Monitoring EHCP learners

SENCOs and nominated leads in OOC settings were asked to complete a weekly return indicating confidence levels in providing remote learning, which was accessible and in line with national expectations, engagement of learners in that remote delivery, and the levels of communication with parents and carers. This was a direct response to the concerns raised by the COVID survey in July 2020.

Multi agency group scrutinised returns on a weekly basis and actioned matters arising; contacting families where schools alerted to lack of engagement, a concern about non-attendance when additional vulnerabilities indicated it would be beneficial, contacting schools where required hours of teaching were not being delivered, or where parents/carers were not being contacted on an at least weekly basis.

The impact of this was that in some cases, individual learners were supported to increase attendance, schools were brought together to share best practice around remote learning, and there were overall increases in the levels of communication with parents reported. Where schools expressed concerns about individual learners, these were followed up by the relevant teams. This applied to within and out of county settings.

### **Advice and Guidance to Schools**

Guidance was issued on requirements for remote learning and for meeting the needs of learners with SEND, with challenge provided by NCC officers when required.

In addition, in the Spring term the Education Mental Health Practitioners usually working into Trailblazer partnership schools worked county wide with schools to support the prevention and early intervention agenda.

### **Monitoring of learners referred into Pop Up Hub**

The 90 learners referred into the Pop Up Hub have been tracked and reviewed through the course of the Spring term. Of these, 65 had successfully returned to school by the end of the term, with an average attendance of 75%. The remaining children and young people have services involved with plans around them. The impact of this work has been that two thirds of these young people were, by the end of the Spring term, accessing their statutory entitlement to school, following interventions centred around them as individuals, together with their families and schools.

### **Voice of CYP and Families**

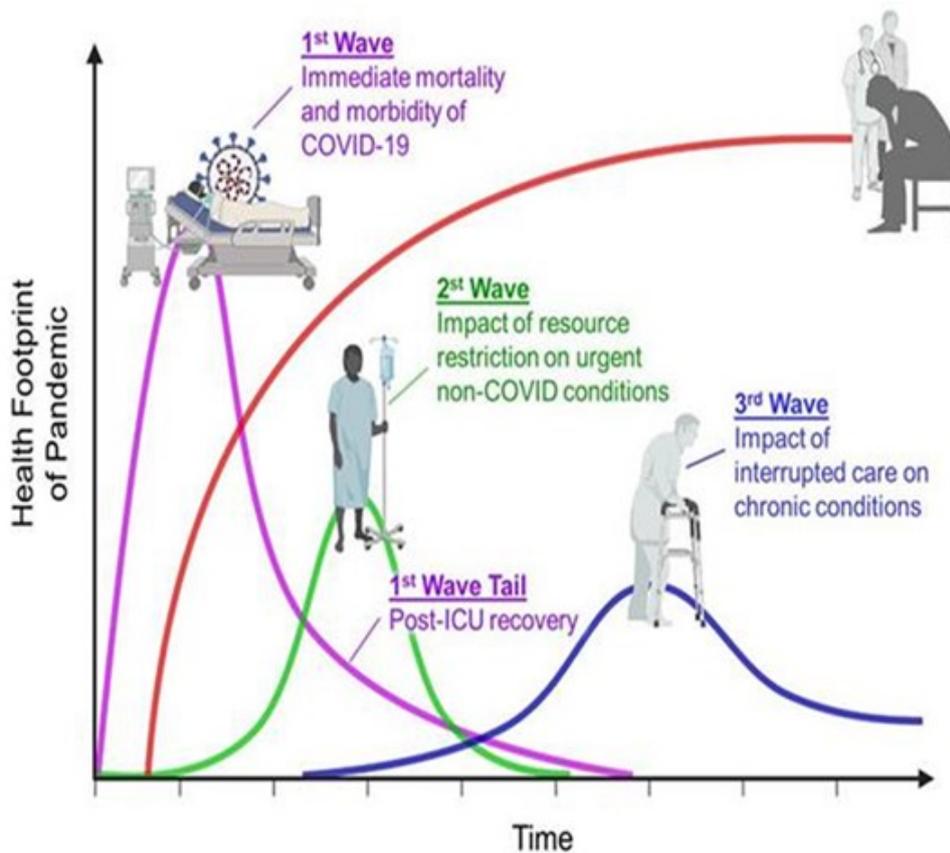
Wellbeing for Education return training packages are now available to all schools, and work is ongoing to ensure that all staff have received the training, responding to the concerns arising from the Survey.

The Be You website was launched in January which describes the Northumberland graduated approach to social and emotional health, with portals for parents/carers, young people and professionals. This marks a significant development in the information easily available to residents about available support.

The Education Welfare Service supported 708 requests from Designated Safeguarding Leads and other professionals over this period. Staff contacted families where schools had been unable to do so to understand the family context and work with them, and schools, to support attendance. This ensured that individual stories were heard and understood.

### **Impact of COVID –19 on Health Activity and Outcomes**

Health providers responded to changing needs of children and young people across the local area throughout the whole period, taking account of the health footprint:



A surge in mental health service demand due to the COVID19 pandemic is well recognised and monitoring demand across a large geographical area with multiple providers has been important. Addressing the wider inequality impact factors in communities and investing in community resilience is necessary to flatten the demand curve in the longer term.

Rates of probable mental disorders have increased since 2017. In 2020, one in six (16.0%) children aged 5 to 16 years were identified as having a probable mental disorder, increasing from one in nine (10.8%) in 2017. The increase was evident in both boys and girls.

The likelihood of a probable mental disorder increased with age with a noticeable difference in gender for the older age group (17 to 22 years); 27.2% of young women and 13.3% of young men were identified as having a probable mental disorder

Among 11 to 16 year old girls, 63.8% with a probable mental disorder had seen or heard an argument among adults in the household, compared with 46.8% of those unlikely to have a mental disorder.

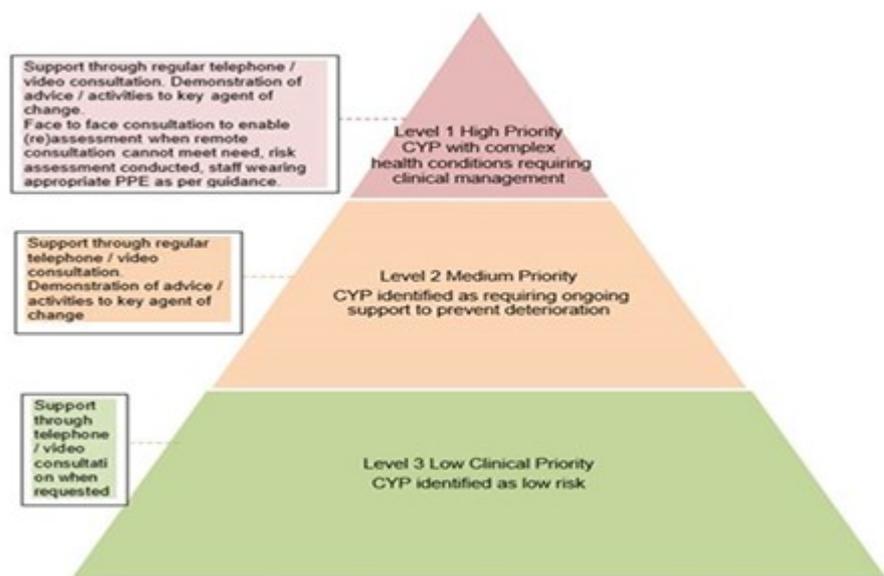
Among those aged 5 to 22 years, 58.9% with a probable mental disorder reported having sleep problems. Young people aged 17 to 22 years with a probable mental disorder were more likely to report sleep problems (69.6%), than those aged 11 to 16 (50.5%) and 5 to 10 (52.5%).

About six in ten (62.6%) children aged 5 to 16 years with a probable mental disorder had regular support from their school or college, compared with 76.4% of children unlikely to have a mental disorder.

Children aged 5 to 16 years with a probable mental disorder were more than twice as likely to live in a household that had fallen behind with payments (16.3%), than children unlikely to have a mental disorder (6.4%).

Children and young people with a probable mental disorder were more likely to say that lockdown had made their life worse (54.1% of 11 to 16 year olds, and 59.0% of 17 to 22 year olds), than those unlikely to have a mental disorder (39.2% and 37.3% respectively).

Services have responded in the following ways, in addition to contributing to the multiagency activity described in earlier sections of this report. They adopted new ways of working, skill mix, and an integrated approach in order to meet need:



- Special school nursing service developed and implemented a needs led audit tool for Special Schools to complete resulting in better access to nursing support.
- Integration and collaboration improved via new digital approaches, improving access, triage and MDT working - which have been well received by parents and teachers.
- In development are a core set of principles which we will use to co-design new ways of working – focusing on OT and Speech and Language.

## IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

<b>Policy:</b>	N/A
<b>Finance and value for money:</b>	N/A
<b>Legal:</b>	N/A
<b>Procurement:</b>	N/A
<b>Human Resources:</b>	N/A
<b>Property:</b>	N/A
<b>Equalities:</b> (Impact Assessment attached)  Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	N/A
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder:</b>	N/A
<b>Customer Considerations:</b>	The response has been concerned with meeting the needs of residents (children and young people with SEND and their families).
<b>Carbon Reduction:</b>	The use of digital technology will have an ongoing positive impact on carbon reduction.
<b>Wards:</b>	All

## CONSULTATION

Consultation with families conducted (June/July 2020) in order to understand the impact of the pandemic on their lives.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Links to FACS Report on Mental Health Support in Northumberland Schools, April 2021.

## **Report sign off**

Finance Officer	
Monitoring Officer/Legal	
Human Resources	
Procurement	
I.T.	
Executive Director of Children's Services	Cath McEvoy-Carr
Portfolio Holder(s)	

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Report Author: Nicola Taylor



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## Northumberland County Council

### **Families and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee**

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021

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#### **Winter Support Grant Update**

Report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Children's Services, Cath McEvoy-Carr

Cabinet Member for Children's Services: Councillor Guy Renner-Thompson

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#### **Purpose of report**

To provide members with updated information regarding delivery of the Winter Support Grant during Spring Term 2021, including the provision of Free School Meals (FSM) over the February half-term and Easter school holidays and the roll-out of the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) at Easter.

#### **Recommendations**

##### **It is recommended that FACS**

- 1) Note the content of the report and the successful implementation of the initiatives undertaken with the funding from the Winter Support Grant.
- 2) Note the strategy, roll-out and benefits of the activities for children and young people organised through the Holiday Activity Fund across Northumberland during the Easter holiday.

#### **Link to Corporate Plan**

This report is relevant to the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2021, in particular in relation to the value "We want you to feel safe, healthy, and cared for".

#### **Key Issues**

1. FACS was informed in February 2021 regarding the Winter Support Fund of £992k issued directly to the Council by Government in November 2020 in order to support families and individuals in Northumberland. The grant was issued to cover the period to 31 March 2021 in order to support eligible families who access FSM and also to support residents and communities more widely in the county.
2. Since February, a great deal of additional work has been undertaken to

ensure that the grant has been disseminated effectively.

### Free School Meals at February half-term and Easter holidays

3. FACS are reminded that in February the FSM element of the Winter grant was disseminated via:
  - a. A centrally funded voucher scheme (HUGGG) set up and managed by the Council and used by schools to disseminate vouchers to parents electronically or in paper format where requested;
  - b. Schools funded directly by the Council where they already had a system in place to disseminate the FSM element of the grant themselves, e.g. alternative voucher system, hot meals or food parcels/delivery.
  - c. Gift cards for CO-OP for families living in more rural area who were unable to access larger supermarkets easily.
4. The above systems were utilised again for the dissemination of the proportion of Winter grant funding allocated to FSM for the February half-term and Easter school holiday periods. This was in particular due to the success of the HUGGG voucher system for the dissemination of the grant for the Christmas holidays 2020, as reported to FACS in early February.
5. The following tables show the amount of funding for FSM issued via the HUGGG system for the February half-term and Easter holidays; the tables also indicate the number and value of vouchers redeemed by parents and young people (latter in relation to care-leavers):

#### February half term holiday vouchers data

	Number produced	Number redeemed	Redemption rate	Total amount issued	Total amount redeemed
Schools	6410	5970	93%	£192,300.00	£179,100.00
Adult Services	10	10	100%	£300.00	£300.00
Alternative Providers	57	52	91%	£1,710.00	£1,560.00
Post 16 learners (Ashington College)	121	49	40%	£3,630.00	£1,470.00
Care leavers	1	1	100%	£30.00	£30.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6599</b>	<b>6082</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>£197,970.00</b>	<b>£182,460.00</b>
<b>Total % redeemed</b>					<b>92%</b>

#### Easter holidays vouchers data

	Number produced	Number redeemed	Redemption rate	Total amount issued	Total amount redeemed
Schools	6322	5665	90%	£284,490.00	£254,925.00
Adult Services	9	9	100%	£405.00	£405.00
Alternative Providers	58	51	88%	£2,610.00	£2,295.00
Post 16 learners (Ashington College)	127	45	35%	£5,715.00	£2,025.00
Care leavers	132	81	61%	£5,940.00	£3,645.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6648</b>	<b>5851</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>£299,160.00</b>	<b>£263,295.00</b>

Total percentage redeemed		88%
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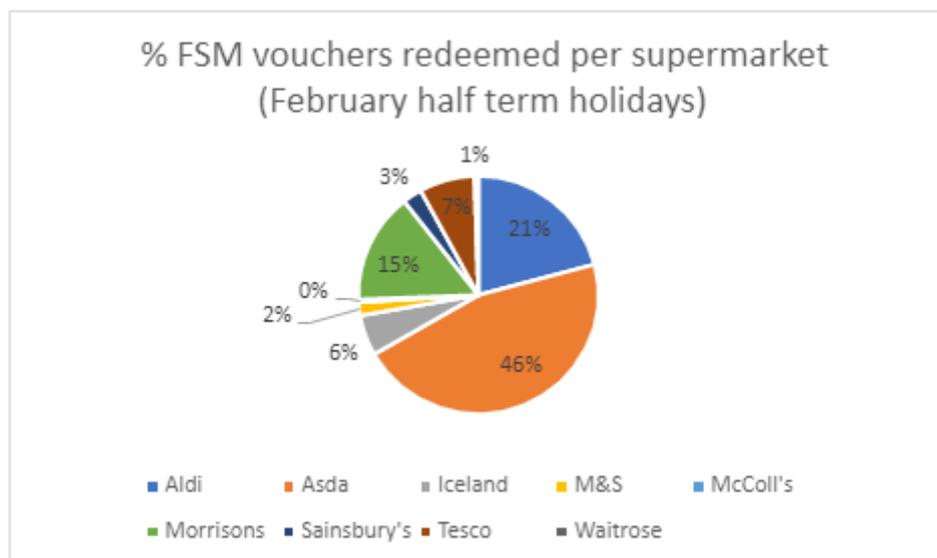
6. With regard to FSM funding disseminated via local arrangements, this could be an alternative voucher or food parcel the number of children and young people receiving support directly from their local school is shown below together with the total value issued to schools.

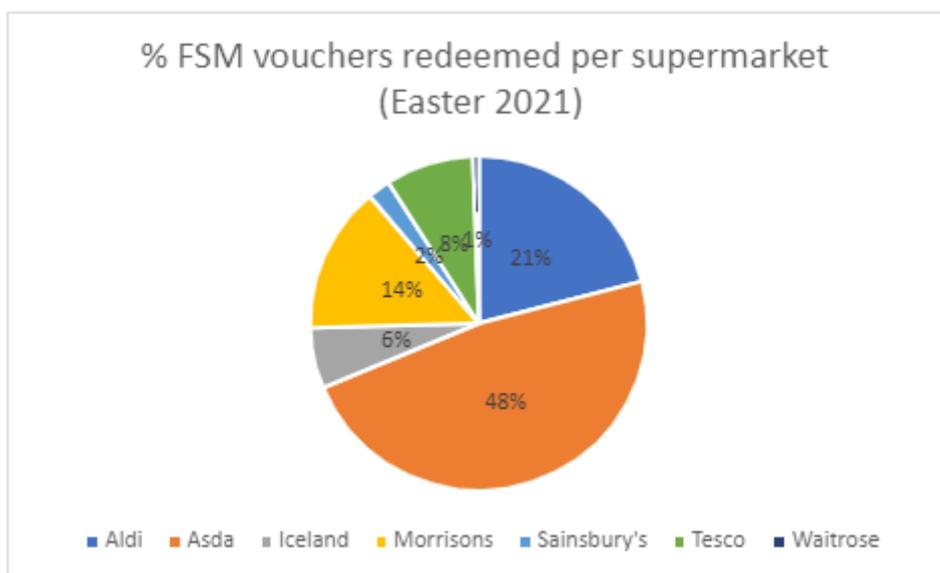
- February half-term: number of vouchers issued - 2,969; Value - £89,070
- Easter holidays: number of vouchers issued – 3,017; Value - £135,765

7. FACS should also note that the amount of funding issued for FSM from the Winter Grant for the Easter holidays included an additional element for parents/carers to put towards the cost of utility bills, the amounts being as follows:

- Utility bill element disseminated via HUGGG system - £99,720
- Utility bill element disseminated via local arrangements - £45,255

8. In relation to vouchers issued via the HUGGG system, it has again been possible to identify at which supermarkets parents/carers were redeeming FSM vouchers, as demonstrated by the following charts:





9. With the introduction of the COVID Local Support Grant, the Council has been advised that payments to parents/carers for Free school meals for the Summer half term may be made from this grant allocation. The plan would be to offer a similar scheme to qualifying families and young people for this week.

### **Holiday Activity Fund 2021**

10. The Strategic Holiday Activities Fund Group made up of Northumberland Communities Together, Early Help, Community, Education and Inclusion Teams have been managing and co-ordinating the Holiday Activities Fund 2021 on behalf of the Council. The programme covers the Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays in 2021 and is available to children in Northumberland who receive benefit-related free school meals.
11. The funding covers the provision of free holiday places and the coordination of the programme locally. Evidence suggests that free holiday clubs can have a positive impact on children and young people and that they work best when they provide consistent and easily accessible enrichment activities, for more than just breakfast or lunch, and when they involve children and parents in food preparations. The grant funding in Northumberland is being informed by the numbers of children eligible for free school meals and the overall levels of participation experienced in our previous programmes from 2018 to 2020. Through the funding, the aim is to make free places available to children eligible for free school meals for the equivalent of at least four hours a day, four days a week, six weeks a year. This would cover four weeks in the summer and a week's worth of provision in each of the Easter and Christmas holidays. This is an extension on the four summer weeks offered in our 2018 to 2020 holiday programmes.
12. The Strategic Group oversees the programme and ensures policies and procedures are in place, while the activities programme itself is community led, delivered by schools and local voluntary organisations. 'Host' delivery teams have been developed in the North, Castle Morpeth, Central, South East and West localities and delivers consistent relationships with children, young

people and their families. Members of the strategic team liaise with the delivery teams to offer solutions and support.

13. The programme offered across the County over the Easter holidays 2021 was as follows:

Locality	Name of school/organisation	Sessions run	Total Number of children attended	Total Number of FSM children
North	St Marys C of E, Berwick	29th-1st April	122	115
	Spittal First School	3 days	48	48
	Music Workshop	4 days	45	45
	NE66 Youth Provision	6 sessions	49	49
	Red Row First School	29th-1st April	108	108
Central-Ashington	Central Primary School	4 days	68	68
Ashington	Family Gateway	1 session	22	22
Cramlington	Cramlington Village Primary	4 days	163	163
Blyth	St Wilfrid's Primary School, Blyth	4 days	148	148
Blyth	Newsham Primary School	4 days	48	48
Bedlington	St Benet Biscops	2 days	44	40
West	Hexham Youth Project	4 days	32	32
Choppington	Choppington First School	4 days	118	101
Newbiggin	Community Organisation & sports development Partnership	4 days	80	80
Linton	Leading Link	1 session	20	20
Ellington	Leading Link	1 session	80	80
Lynemouth	Leading Link	1 session	40	40
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1235</b>	<b>1207</b>

14. Provision was also offered for children and young people with SEND as follows:

Locality	Name of school/organisation	Sessions run	Total number of children attended	Total number of FSM children
North	The Grove school	4 sessions	6	6
West	Tanga Club	3 sessions	75	75
Central	The Dales-Ashington	4 sessions	27	27
South East	The Dales-Blyth	4 sessions	29	29
		<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>137</b>

15. A total of 1,372 children participated in the activities programmed this year's HAF Easter Holiday scheme, which has provided 1482 places for children and young people in Northumberland, which equates to 5704 hours of fun across 22 provisions.
16. In addition to the organised activities, Community Pop Up Provisions were organised across Ashington and Choppington where 420 Easter eggs were distributed. In addition, food is an important part of the holiday scheme and groups offered a variety of options including, breakfast, hot lunch, often utilising surplus food donated by supermarkets.

17. The provisions offered over Easter have been publicised using the We are Northumberland Facebook page. A great deal of positive feedback has also been received from parents, e.g.

*“So pleased that the kids can get out and enjoy themselves!”*

*“This is fab – exactly what the school holidays should be about”*

18. A ‘Young Leaders’ scheme is being planned to run in parallel with the next round of holiday schemes to encourage young people of secondary school age to become involved, including a residential course to equip them with the skills needed to support the schemes.
19. Planning for the summer schemes is now underway, with some activities being trialled at the May half-term to inform the summer offer.

## BACKGROUND

20. Northumberland's allocation of the Winter COVID support grant was over £992k to cover the 3 school holidays - Christmas, February half term and Easter Holidays up to 31 March 2021.

The grant had two criteria that NCC need to prepare for and deliver against:

- Household - 80% of the funding is targeted at Children and Young People and their families,
- 20% to other i.e. individuals

21. In relation to provision, the 80% criterion is targeted for Food, Fuel, Water and Utilities, while the 20% criterion is intended for other emergency assistance. In addition, the local authority will be required to monitor and report the spend and repay any underspend.

22. The winter support grant needed to be able to satisfy the government's commitment to FSM entitlement over the Christmas and February (spring half term) and March/April (Easter) school holidays - 5 weeks in total. Officers are in the process of preparing a report to DfE setting out the details of the costs and numbers involved in the programme.

## IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

<b>Policy:</b>	The actions set out in this report support the vision and values set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2020/21, particularly in relation to the value of "We want you to feel safe, healthy, and cared for"
<b>Finance and value for money:</b>	The cost of the provision of FSM over the February half-term and Easter Holidays has been funded from the Government's Winter Grant as set out in para. 1 of this report
<b>Legal:</b>	N/A
<b>Procurement:</b>	N/A
<b>Human Resources:</b>	N/A
<b>Property:</b>	N/A
<b>Equalities:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	An Equalities Assessment was carried out in relation to the consent of parents/carers to approve the uploading of their contact details to the HUGGG system.
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	N/A
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder:</b>	This report has considered Section 1 (CDA) and the duty it imposes and there are no implications arising from it.
<b>Customer Considerations:</b>	The actions set out in this report are based upon a desire to meet the needs of children in receipt of FSM and their families fairly and effectively in response to the Government's allocation of Winter Grant to Northumberland.
<b>Carbon Reduction:</b>	It is not envisaged that the processes set out within this report will have any impact on positive or negative on carbon reduction.
<b>Wards:</b>	All

## CONSULTATION

The actions set out in this report have been undertaken in consultation with the Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Children's Services and the Member for Children's Services.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

## **Report sign off.**

Finance Officer	AE
Monitoring Officer/Legal	N/A
Human Resources	N/A
Procurement	N/A
I.T.	N/A
Executive Director of Children's Services	Cath McEvoy-Carr
Portfolio Holder(s)	GRT

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# **Northumberland County Council**

## **Family and Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

### **Work Programme and Monitoring Report 2021 - 2022**

Page 35

Chris Angus, Scrutiny Officer  
01670 622604 - [Chris.Angus@Northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Chris.Angus@Northumberland.gov.uk)

20 May 2021 - CA

Agenda Item 8

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

(a) To monitor, review and make recommendations about:

- Early Years
- Education and Schools
- Special education needs and disability
- Adult and Community Education
- Training and Vocational Education
- Lifelong Learning
- Youth Offending
- Social Services for Children and Young People
- Children's Health
- Teenage Sexual Health
- Looked After Children
- Safeguarding - Children
- Youth Services
- Family Services
- Children's Centres

(b) To oversee and monitor school improvement, as follows:

- (i) To receive feedback on the Ofsted inspection of schools.
- (ii) To support the work of the County Council and the progress of schools on the School Intervention and Support Programme in specified categories.
- (iii) To receive an annual report about the number of schools that have been on the School Intervention and Support Programme, the reason(s) for their inclusion, the support given by the Council and the success of this support.
- (iv) To receive an annual report on the performance of schools.

## ISSUES TO BE SCHEDULED/CONSIDERED

### Regular updates:

Safeguarding Activity Trends Report  
Finance and Performance Six Monthly Report  
Children Permanently Excluded from School/Elective Home Education  
Schools performance  
Joint Targeted Area Inspection

### Issues to be raised:

### Themed Scrutiny:

### Issues to be scheduled

**Northumberland County Council  
Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Work Programme 2021 - 2022**

17 June 2021

Impact of COVID Pandemic on SEND Services  
Winter Support Grant Update

1 July 2021

Care Leavers Action Plan  
Schools Forum Summary of Decisions Taken: Spring Term

September 2021

School Organisation Plan for 2021 – 2024  
Schools Forum Summary of Decisions Taken: Summer Term  
Complaints Annual Report 2020/2021 - Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, and Continuing Health Care Services

7 October 2021

Finance and Performance Report

4 November 2021

2 December 2021

Page 38

6 January 2022

Schools Forum Summary of Decisions Taken: Autumn Term

3 February 2022

**PRE-SCRUTINY:** School Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2023/2024 Academic Year

3 March 2022

Director of Education Annual Report: Key Educational Outcomes (2020-2021 Academic Year)

Page 39  
April 2022

**Northumberland County Council**  
**Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Monitoring Report 2021-2022**

Ref	Date	Report	Decision	Outcome