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Northumberland County Council

Your ref:

Our ref:

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Tel direct: 01670 622614

Date: Wednesday, 21 December 2022

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 **COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL** on **THURSDAY, 5 JANUARY 2023** at **10.00 AM**.

Yours faithfully

Rick O'Farrell
Interim Chief Executive

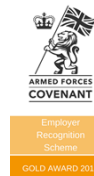
To Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee members as follows:-

C Ball, A Dale, W Daley (Chair), R Dodd (Vice-Chair), C Dunbar, S Fairless-Aitken, M Richardson, M Swinburn, T Thorne and A Watson

Co-opted Members: A Hodgson, L Houghton, D Lennox, P Rickeard and J Sanderson



Rick O'Farrell, Interim 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. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES

(Pages 1
- 8)

(a) 10 November 2022

The minutes of the Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Meeting held on Thursday 10 November 2022, as circulated, to be agreed as a true record and be signed by the Chair.

(b) 1 December 2022

The minutes of the Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Meeting held on Thursday 1 December 2022, as circulated, to be agreed as a true record and be signed by the Chair.

3. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required where a matter arises at a meeting;

- a. Which **directly relates to** Disclosable Pecuniary Interest ('DPI') as set out in Appendix B, Table 1 of the Code of Conduct, to disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote and not to remain in room. Where members have a DPI or if the matter concerns an executive function and is being considered by a Cabinet Member with a DPI they must notify the Monitoring Officer and arrange for somebody else to deal with the matter.
- b. Which **directly relates to** the financial interest or well being of a Other Registrable Interest as set out in Appendix B, Table 2 of the Code of Conduct to disclose the interest and only speak on the matter if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain the room.
- c. Which **directly relates to** their financial interest or well-being (and is not DPI) or the financial well being of a relative or close associate, to declare the interest and members may only speak on the matter if members of the public are also allowed to speak. Otherwise, the member must not take part in discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.
- d. Which **affects** the financial well-being of the member, a relative or close associate or a body included under the Other Registrable Interests column

in Table 2, to disclose the interest and apply the test set out at paragraph 9 of Appendix B before deciding whether they may remain in the meeting.

- e. Where Members have or a Cabinet Member has an Other Registerable Interest or Non Registerable Interest in a matter being considered in exercise of their executive function, they must notify the Monitoring Officer and arrange for somebody else to deal with it.

NB Any member needing clarification must contact monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk. Members are referred to the Code of Conduct which contains the matters above in full. Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this agenda letter.

4. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS (Pages 9 - 14)

To note the latest Forward Plan of key decisions for December 2022 to March 2023. Any further changes made to the Forward Plan will be reported to the committee.

5. CABINET REPORT - NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA & SCHOOL FUNDING 2023/24 (Pages 15 - 34)

The report provides an update to Cabinet regarding the National Funding Formula (NFF) and the implications for 2023/24 School Funding in Northumberland. Comments made by this Committee will be reported to Cabinet when they consider the report on Tuesday 17 January 2023.

6. UPDATE OF SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN 2021-24 (Pages 35 - 98)

Cabinet approved the publication of the second iteration of the School Organisation Plan for 2021-24 in September 2021. As agreed, the plan is to be updated on an annual basis with the latest relevant school information and data. FACS are asked to note the update of the School Organisation Plan for 2021-24 and recommend its publication.

7. NORTHUMBERLAND CHILDREN AND ADULTS SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP (NCASP) ANNUAL REPORT SEPTEMBER 2021 - AUGUST 2022 (Pages 99 - 166)

The report sets out Northumberland's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA) for children and young people. The safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, the Integrated Care Board and Police) are required to publish a yearly report, setting out what they and relevant agencies have done as a result of the MASA. The purpose of the report is to ensure transparency for children, families and practitioners about the activity agencies have undertaken and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.

- 8. REVIEW OF SEND PROVISION IN NORTHUMBERLAND: SCOPING REPORT** (Pages 167 - 172)

In November 2022, Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FACS) recommend creating a task and finish group to examine the continued increase of children and young people requiring an Education and Healthcare Plan (EHCP). This scoping report will set out the terms of reference, membership and timeline of the proposed Family and Children's Services FACS Task and Finish Group.

- 9. FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND MONITORING REPORT 2022/23** (Pages 173 - 182)

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman, should, Members are asked to review and note the Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and Monitoring Report.

- 10. URGENT BUSINESS**

IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST AT THIS MEETING, PLEASE:

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

Name:		Date of meeting:	
Meeting:			
Item to which your interest relates:			
Nature of Interest i.e. either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Table 1 of Appendix B to the Code of Conduct, Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest (as defined by Appendix B to Code of Conduct) (please give details):			
Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?		Yes - <input type="checkbox"/>	No - <input type="checkbox"/>

Registering Interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

"Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest.

Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in **Table 1**) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
- a. your own financial interest or well-being;
 - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or
 - c. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests as set out in **Table 2** you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied
9. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above) **affects** the financial interest or well- being:
- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
 - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where you have an Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and Property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licenses	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body

	<p>where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor’s knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or ii. if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.
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* ‘director’ includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* ‘securities’ means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- b) any body
 - i. exercising functions of a public nature
 - ii. any body directed to charitable purposes or
 - iii. one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

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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 Council Chamber - County Hall on Thursday, 10 November 2022 at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT

W Daley (Chair) (in the Chair)

COUNCILLORS

C Ball
R Dodd
M Richardson
A Watson

A Dale
C Dunbar
M Swinburn

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES

D Lennox

TEACHER UNION REPRESENTATIVES

J Sanderson

OFFICERS

C Angus
S Aviston

A Kingham
L Little
D Street

Scrutiny Officer
Head of School Organisation and
Resources
Joint Interim Director of Children's Services
Senior Democratic Services Officer
Deputy Director of Education

Around 9 members of the press and public were present.

44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillor Fairless-Aitken and G Renner-Thompson along with A Hodgson, L Houghton, G Reiter and P Rickeard.

45 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 8 September 2022, as circulated, be agreed as a true record and be signed by the Chair with the following amendment noted:

Minute number 41 - the beginning of paragraph 5, should read Councillor Swinburn

46 **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

47 **CABINET REPORT - OUTCOMES OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR THE COQUET PARTNERSHIP**

The Cabinet report set out an analysis of the representations and responses received from interested parties and stakeholders during the four week statutory consultation in relation to the proposals for the Coquet Partnership. The report also set out an analysis of the responses received to the four week statutory consultation in relation to proposals for Barndale House Special School. Cabinet was being asked to make a final decision on the proposed prescribed changes to the schools within the Coquet Partnership and to Barndale House Special School to which Cabinet which were also set out in the report. A comprehensive introduction to the report was provided by S Aviston, Head of School Organisation and Resources, with A Kingham, Joint Interim Director of Children's Services advising of the huge amount of hard work and support by everyone involved in bringing the proposals forward.

In response to questions from Members the following information was provided:-

- There was already additional capacity in Grange View CoE First School and a spare classroom which was currently being used for staff. The extension would include one additional classroom and some provision for the staff.
- Officers were confident that the budgets were robust and the report made it clear that Cabinet were not only being asked to make a decision to change the organisation of the partnership, but to confirm that funding was also in place.
- It was assumed that every child in year 4 would stay to year 5 and therefore additional revenue funding would go into the school for the maximum number of pupils. There were other partnerships with small primary schools that were very successful and remained in budget.
- There would be pressure on all school budgets within the current financial climate however additional children would bring more revenue into the school as the National Funding Formula (NFF) was based on the number of children in a school. Modelling would be undertaken at Schools Forum in advance of any revenue budget settlement being announced and a report would be provided to this Committee in January on this.
- In terms of staff, it was not being proposed that any schools would close and the principle would be that staff and resources would follow the children with some redeployment opportunities.
- Part of the carbon neutral proposals for the new build for James Calvert Spence College would be the provision of solar panels and a separate programme regarding the retrofitting of solar panels on schools and their suitability was ongoing. However it was confirmed that some schools already had solar panels fitted.

- The proposals for all schools would be fully funded by the Local Authority.
- Officers had met with Governors from Barndale House Special School who had been pleasantly surprised by the plans and space which would be available on the JCSC site and were reassured that a transition plan would be introduced to ensure that expansion growth was undertaken in a phased and managed way.
- The additional £2m funding identified for the Coquet Partnership was from the Cabinet decision on the Seaton Valley Partnership not to include the relocation of Seaton Sluice Middle School.

Members were pleased to see the proposals were supported by the Governing Bodies and Headteachers within the partnership and particularly welcomed the additional places at Barndale House Special School.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet be advised that this Committee supported the recommendations as outlined in the report.

48 **CABINET REPORT - SEND CAPACITY AND PLACE PLANNING STRATEGY**

The Cabinet report advised of the development of a 5 year SEND Capacity and Place Planning Strategy which outlined the approach for growth in order to increase capacity in line with predicted demand across Northumberland to meet the needs of children and young people as close to their home communities as possible. An introduction to the report was provided by S Aviston, Head of School Organisation and Resources. A Kingham, Joint Interim Director of Children's Services along with the Committee acknowledged and thanked the team of staff involved for their excellent work.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee the following information was provided:-

- Increased demand within Northumberland reflected growth nationally and was due in the main to better identification of need along with parental choice and expectations.
- It was clarified that an EHCP was only required when additional needs to those which were being met within mainstream schools was required to be provided. Members were reassured by Officers that the needs of a number of pupils with higher SEND were being met within their current mainstream school.
- There was less demand for specialist provision in the west of the County as needs were often met within Hexham, however workshops would still be undertaken in the area to ascertain demand and the plan updated annually.
- There was a separate piece of work in relation to employability and future pathways with more work being undertaken with industries to support this and a report would be provided when more details were known.

Whilst Members welcomed the strategy and the improvement in schools over the years, they sought to gain an understanding of what had driven a 78% increase in children and young people with an EHCP from 2013 to 2022. The Committee were minded to commission a report; however, after further discussion the members were in favour of establishing a task and finish group to examine the

factors leading to the need for EHCPs, review of the curriculum, and how needs were being met outside the County. The scoping report for the task and finish group would be circulated for agreement at the next meeting of this Committee in December.

RESOLVED that

1. Cabinet be advised that this Committee unanimously supported the recommendations as outlined in the report; and
2. A Task and Finish Working Group be established as outlined above.

49 **FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND MONITORING REPORT 2022/23**

The work programme had been circulated for information and any issues which Members wished to bring to the Committee should be raised with the Chair or the Scrutiny Officer in the first instance.

The date of the next meeting was Thursday 1 December 2022 at 10.00 am.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

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 Council Chamber - County Hall on Thursday, 1 December 2022 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

W Daley (Chair) (in the Chair)

COUNCILLORS

C Ball
M Richardson
T Thorne

R Dodd
M Swinburn
A Watson

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES

A Hodgson

OFFICERS

C Angus
L Little
G Reiter
K Scovell

Scrutiny Officer
Senior Democratic Services Officer
Joint Interim Director of Children's Services
Senior Manager - Specialist Services

ALSO PRESENT

Cabinet Member

Around 1 member of the press and public was present.

50 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors A Dale, C Dunbar, S Fairless-Aitken and G Renner-Thompson also L Houghton, D Lennox, and J Sanderson.

51 FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the National Funding Formula Report which was coming to this Committee in January should also be included on the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

CARE PROCEEDINGS AND PUBLIC LAW OUTLINE ANNUAL REPORT ON PROGRESSION

The report provided information on the performance of Children's Services within legal proceedings in 2021/2022. G Reiter, Interim Joint Director of Children's Services and K Scovell, Senior Manager, Specialist Services were in attendance and provided an introduction to the report. Highlighted were the Ofsted Focused Inspection which had been undertaken at the end of July 2022 and which had found that Social Workers identified permanence plans for children at the earliest opportunity; and the creation of the Pre-Birth Team which had been set up in response to the Born into Care review, to work with parents who had previous significant involvement with the Social Care service. Positive feedback was now received from regular meetings with the Lead Family Court Judge, however the average time for a case to conclude was still significantly higher than the Public Law Outline target of 26 weeks.

In response to questions Members were advised that no Court nationally achieved the target of 26 weeks mostly due to Court capacity but also the need to explore all alternative safe options for each child thoroughly ensuring that the decision to go to proceedings to provide permanence was robust. Feedback was consistently provided from the Directors of Children's Services across the Country that the target of 26 weeks would never be achieved unless Court capacity was increased. Once a care plan and order had been made by a Judge parents could only appeal a decision if a threshold of sufficient grounds was passed. If this happened then the 26 week target would start again.

The Pre-Birth Team had been recruited from the Council's own team of Social Workers, however all had joined the team without any other casework. It was expected that following the establishment of the team a reduction in other Social Worker caseloads would occur, however this should be taken in the context of increasing demand for Social Care generally. It had been anticipated that the Team would see approximately 100 cases per year, however from it going in live at the end of September 2022 they had already been involved with 20 unborn babies. The Team worked alongside the front door service however as soon as a pregnancy was known a referral could be made to the service. A system to review the effectiveness of the team would include data being fed into CAFCASS, feedback from partner agencies and also the families themselves.

Members thanked the officers for the information and welcomed the transformation in the service since the original concerns were raised by the Lead Family Court Judge in 2017. It was asked that thanks and the acknowledgement of the large amount of work undertaken by staff and the leadership team be fed back to the staff involved.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

53 **FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND MONITORING REPORT 2022/23**

The work programme had been circulated for information and any issues which Members wished to bring to the Committee should be raised with the Chair or the Scrutiny Officer in the first instance.

Clarification would be provided on the date the National Funding Formula would be coming to this Committee. A report on the School Organisation Plan would be included on the January agenda. An invitation would also be issued for Northumberland College to attend a future meeting. A scoping report on the Task and Finish Working Group would also come to Committee in January. The report on School Transport had been deferred and it would added back to the work programme once a data had been agreed.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

54 **URGENT BUSINESS**

Councillor Thorne advised of the death of Miss Nancy Middleton who had been an inspirational infant school teacher at Newton on the Moor Primary School. He wished that her contribution to education in Northumberland County Council be marked and celebrated.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

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Forward Plan

FORTHCOMING CABINET DECISIONS DECEMBER 2022 TO MARCH 2023

DECISION	PROPOSED SCRUTINY DATE	CABINET DATE
<p>Council Tax Base 2023/24 The Council is required to set its council tax base annually. The tax base must be set between the 1st of December and 31st January. The tax base is a measure of the Council's taxable capacity which is used for the setting of its council tax. Legislation sets out the formula for calculation. Cabinet have delegated authority to approve the tax base. (R. Wearmouth/G. Barnes – 01670 624351)</p>	Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC 12 December 2022	13 December 2022
<p>Council-owned Company Governance Framework The purpose of the report is to propose a Council-owned Company Governance Framework to ensure a consistent approach and set of considerations are made to the governance arrangements for existing, or in the establishment of, companies wholly or partly owned by Northumberland County Council (NCC). (G. Sanderson/S. McMillan – 07814298052/W. Thompson - 07929 836 782)</p>	Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC 12 December 2022	13 December 2022
<p>Financial Performance 2022-23 - Position at the end of September 2022 The report will provide Cabinet with the revenue and capital financial performance against budget as at 30 September 2022.</p>	N/A	13 December 2022

(R. Wearmouth/K. Harvey - 01670 624783)		
<p>Trading Companies' Financial Performance 2022-23 - Position at the end of September 2022</p> <p>The purpose of the report is to ensure that the Cabinet is informed of the current financial positions of its trading companies for 2022-23</p> <p>(R. Wearmouth/M. Calvert - 01670 620197) (Confidential report)</p>	<p>Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC 12 December 2022</p>	13 December 2022
<p>Budget 2023-24 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023-27</p> <p>This report will provide an update on the development of the 2023-24 Budget and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) covering the period 2023 to 2027. This report will also detail the budget proposals for 2023-24 to meet the budget gap and provide an update on the Local Government Finance Settlement 2023-24 if it has been received.</p> <p>(R. Wearmouth/A. Elsdon – 01670 622168)</p>	<p>CSEG OSC 16 January 2023</p>	17 January 2023
<p>30 Year Business Plan for the Housing Revenue Account</p> <p>The report presents to Cabinet the 30 year Business plan for the Housing Revenue Account.</p> <p>(R. Wearmouth/A. Elsdon – 01670 622168)</p>	<p>CSEG OSC 16 January 2023</p>	17 January 2023
<p>National Funding Formula and 2023/24 Schools Funding</p> <p>This is an annual report to update Cabinet in relation to the implementation of the Department for Education's National Funding Formula, and to seek delegated powers to set the formula values in order to distribute the 2023/24 Dedicated Schools Grant</p> <p>(G. Renner Thompson/ Sue Aviston (01670) 622281)</p>	<p>FACS OSC 5 January 2023</p>	17 January 2023

<p>Notification of the Estimated Collection Fund Balances 2022-23 – Council Tax and Business Rates</p> <p>The report will advise members of the estimated surplus or deficit balances on the Collection Fund in relation to Council Tax and Business Rates at 31 March 2023. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) requires the Council as the Billing Authority to calculate a Council Tax Collection Fund estimate by 15th January each year. The Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013 require the Council as the Billing Authority to calculate a Business Rates Collection Fund estimate on or before 31st January each year.</p> <p>(R. Wearmouth/A. Elsdon – 01670 622168)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>17 January 2023</p>
<p>Recommissioning of an Integrated Drug and Alcohol Service for Adults in Northumberland</p> <p>To seek permission from Cabinet to commission an Integrated Drug and Alcohol Service for Adults in Northumberland. This Service will be commissioned using the Public Health Ring-Fenced Grant. The grant conditions state that Local Authorities must improve the take up of, and outcomes from, its drug and alcohol misuse treatment services, based on an assessment of local need. The contract will be greater than £2m, therefore there is the need to ask Cabinet to delegate the expenditure to the Director of Public Health.</p> <p>(W. Pattison/John Liddell M: 07929 775559)</p>	<p>H&W OSC 6 December 2022</p>	<p>17 January 2023</p>
<p>School Transport Review Outcome Options</p> <p>At SLT on 1st November 2022 the full range of recommendations resulting from the system wide review of</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>17 January 2023</p>

<p>home to school transport were shared. In response to this, SLT requested a further paper to provide a summary with greater detail on the range of options considered during the review on where the transport service best sits within Northumberland County Council. This report provides the options as requested for evaluation and alongside this request's approval for the specific initiative to establish NCC delivered Independent Travel Training provision using start-up funding from the Council Transformation Fund (G. Renner Thompson/N. Dorward – 07811 020 806)</p>		
<p>Strategic Change Programme – Business Case Proposed Business Case for the Strategic Change Programme to be delivered across the Council over the period Feb 2023 – March 2025 (G. Sanderson/K. Gardner - 07971008878)</p>	<p>CSEG OSC 16 January 2023</p>	<p>17 January 2023</p>
<p>Budget 2023-24 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2023-27 The report presents the updated Budget 2023-24 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2023-27 to Cabinet following the receipt of the provisional local government settlement which is due to be announced during December 2022. The report will also include an update on the deliverability of savings. (R. Wearmouth/A. Elsdon 01670 622168)</p>	<p>Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC 13 February 2022</p>	<p>14 February 2022 Council 22 February 2022</p>
<p>Produced in Northumberland Scheme An update on the status of the Produced in Northumberland Scheme. A review of the scheme in 22-23 together with the intended further promotion and development of the scheme in 2023/24 (C. Horncastle/P. Simpson – 07920806260).</p>	<p>Communities and Place OSC TBC</p>	<p>14 February 2023</p>

<p>Revenues and Benefits Policies for 2023/24 The report sets out the policies that the Revenues and Benefits services operate for the administration of council tax, business rates, housing benefit and council tax support. The report is for information and approval of any updates or legislation changes that need to be made. The policies need County Council approval on 22 February 2023. (R. Wearmouth/G. Barnes 01670 624351)</p>	<p>Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC 13 February 2022</p>	<p>14 February 2022 Council 22 February 2022</p>
<p>Financial Performance 2022-23 - Position at the end of December 2022 The report will provide Cabinet with the revenue and capital financial performance against budget as at 31 December 2022. (R. Wearmouth/K. Harvey - 01670 624783)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>14 March 2023</p>
<p>Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy for Northumberland 2022 The report provides Members with the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2022-2026 for review and agreement (C. Horncastle/J. Stewart - 07771 974 112)</p>	<p>Communities and Place OSC 5 April 2023</p>	<p>14 March 2023</p>
<p>Service Charges in Sheltered Accommodation The report will request permission to introduce Service Charges to all tenants in 8 Sheltered Housing Schemes in line with those currently charged at Arnison Close in Allendale. The HRA is currently subsidising these tenants at a cost of approx. £200k per year. (C. Horncastle/S. Ogle – 07976851270)</p>	<p>Communities and Place OSC 5 April 2023</p>	<p>14 March 2023</p>

<p>Trading Companies' Financial Performance 2022-23 - Position at the end of December 2022 The purpose of the report is to ensure that the Cabinet is informed of the current financial positions of its trading companies for 2022-23 (R. Wearmouth/ M. Calvert - 01670 620197) Confidential report</p>	<p>Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC 13 March 2022</p>	<p>14 March 2023</p>
<p>Financial Performance 2022-23 – Position at the end of March 2023 (Provisional Outturn) The report will provide Cabinet with the revenue and capital financial performance against budget as at 31 March 2023 (provisional outturn) (G. Wearmouth/K. Harvey - 01670 624783)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>9 May 2023</p>
<p>Outcomes of Phase 2 Consultation about Education in Berwick Partnership This report sets out the feedback received from stakeholders arising from Phase 2 of informal consultation with stakeholders in the Berwick Partnership area and other relevant parties on the possible models of school organisation within both the current 3-tier system and within a 2-tier (primary/secondary) system. (G. Renner Thompson/S. Aviston - (01670) 622281)</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>9 May 2023</p>



Northumberland County Council

CABINET

17TH JANUARY 2023

National Funding Formula & School Funding 2023/24

Report of the Joint Interim Director of Children's Services, Audrey Kingham

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

Purpose of Report

To update Cabinet regarding the National Funding Formula (NFF) and the implications for 2023/24 School Funding in Northumberland.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1) Approve the proposals for the continuing implementation of the National Funding Formula for 2023/24 as agreed previously, in line with the recommendation of the Schools Forum meeting of 16 November 2022 and the results of the subsequent consultation exercise held with schools.
- 2) Approve the transfer of up to 0.25% funding from the Schools' Block to the High Needs Block, in line with recommendation of the Schools Forum meeting of 16 November 2022 and the results of the subsequent consultation exercise held with schools.
- 3) Approve the delegation of the approval of the final formula values to the Joint Interim Director of Children's Services in consultation Lead Member for Children's Services and Deputy Leader of the Council in line with the principles agreed at Schools Forum on 16 November 2022, once the final budget allocations are released by the Department for Education in December 2022.

Link to Corporate Plan

These proposals are most closely linked to the Council's priority for Learning (achieving and realising potential, but it is also strongly linked with the priority for Connecting (having access to the things you need).

Key Issues

1. It remains the intention of the Department for Education (DfE) to move to a National Funding Formula (NFF). A report to Schools Forum in September 2022 confirmed Northumberland's progress as a local authority "that mirrors the NFF in most factors" with the only difference being in relation to the mobility factor. This was introduced into the local formula at 50% of the national value for 2022/23 with the intention, to move to the NFF value in 2023/24 depending on the overall level of finance available.
2. While previously no firm fixed target date had been proposed, in July 2022 the DfE indicated an expectation for LAs:

"to have moved to the direct NFF within the next 5 years – that is by the 2027/28 funding year at the latest."

(The national funding formulae for schools and high needs 2023-23 July 2022)

It is anticipated that this time scale should not present any problems to Northumberland, given our current proximity to the NFF.
3. It has been confirmed that for 2023/24 local authorities will continue to have some discretion over their schools funding formula within parameters determined by the DfE, and in consultation, will determine values and allocations in their area. This allows local authorities to mitigate the impact of significant changes in the respective formula funding factors as authorities move from local to nationally determined formula values
4. As reported previously, historically Northumberland has maintained higher levels of standard "per pupil" Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) funding. This has largely been at the expense of the Primary Low Prior Attainment values which again have previously been lower in Northumberland.
5. The two-step approach agreed in November 2020 meant that those values that were significantly over (Primary and KS4 Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)) or under (Primary Low Prior Attainment) National Funding Formula Values would have this gap closed in two equal steps. These rates are now in line with the NFF levels.
6. While we await final Dedicated Schools Grant figures for 2023/24 the DfE has published revised national funding formula values for 2023/24. These can be seen in the table in Appendix A of the attached 16 November 2022 School Forum report. It should be remembered that these figures are used to distribute funding at a local authority level, so funding any elements above NFF values can only be done by incorporating reductions to other values

elsewhere.

7. At the time of drafting the report, the final Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) figures had not yet been released. This report has therefore been prepared on the basis of provisional figures released by the DfE in July, using October 2021 data. When the final figures are released in December 2022, these will be taken into account when setting 2023/24 budgets. Delegated powers are requested as part of the report to allow the Interim Director of Childrens Services to make any minor adjustments required to values once final overall figures are known. Other key respective deadlines are:

- **20 January 2023** Northumberland’s Authority Pro-Forma Tool (APT) must be returned to the ESFA, this confirms the funding formula values for 2023/24 and
- **28 February 2023** all maintained schools notified of their budgets. Academies are notified separately by the ESFA using the same funding formula values.

8. The provisional 2023/24 figures based on October 2021 data are shown in the table below:

DSG Block	Final 2022-23 (Dec 2021)	(prev Oct 2021 data)	Potential Change	
			£	%
Schools Block	£208,482,884	£218,666,487	£10,183,603	4.88%
High Needs Block	£44,497,569	£48,408,073	£3,910,504	8.79%
Central School Services Block	£2,454,271	£2,273,655	-£180,616	-7.36%
TOTAL	£255,434,724	£269,348,215	£13,913,491	5.45%
EY Block not yet available for 2023/24	£17,609,703	n/a	-	-

9. It should be stressed that both these figures and the indicative school figures supplied as an Appendix, will be updated with reference to the October 2022 School Census data when the final figures are released in late December.

10. In relation to the proposals for a transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs block, for 2018/19 and 2019/20 a transfer of 1% was agreed; this reduced to 0.5% for 2020/21 and 2021/22. An undertaking has been made to schools that this would not exceed 0.5% for 2022/23, and the final transfer made was 0.25% £515,696. While mindful of the financial pressures Schools are currently facing, Schools Forum supported a recommendation that a maximum of 0.25% could again be transferred, taking into consideration the context of the continuing increase in Education Health and Care Plans, pressures arising from independent sector placements and permanent exclusions, and the opening of the Gilbert Ward Special Free School in September 2023.

11. It was also agreed that:

- A mobility element should continue to move towards NFF.
 - Capping and Scaling continues to be an option for 2023/24, but we should seek to limit its impact where possible, thereby allowing Schools to retain as much funding formula gains as possible
 - Where we have previously set Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) at 2%, new restrictions mean the maximum figure of 0.5% but we should continue to set it at the maximum, thereby giving the largest possible per pupil increase to all schools;
12. The above would be subject to the overall funding available once the final figures are known.
13. The recommendations agreed with the Schools Forum were the basis for a consultation with all schools carried out between 28 November and 16 December 2022. 8 responses were received within the consultation period. The responses are detailed below

The questions asked together with a summary of the responses are below:

Q1 MINIMUM FUNDING GUARANTEE:

- At what level do you believe Northumberland's MFG should be set for 2023/24? (0.0%, 0.25%, 0.5%)
- In future years should a disapplication request be considered to the ESFA in order to increase the level at which the MFG can be set?

As in previous years, there were differences of opinion over the MFG rate with respondents split between 0.25% and 0.5%. In the absence of a strong view to the contrary, it is believed the approach of 0.5% favoured by Schools Forum should be supported providing the highest possible level of funding increase to all schools with the resources available. There was little support for considering an exceptional request to the ESFA to increase this level for future years.

Q2 CAPPING AND SCALING

- Do you support the potential use of capping and scaling as part of the 2023/24 School Budget setting process?
("capping and scaling" is a mechanism by which different increases under new formula values are averaged out in order to limit some gains and provide more funding for general distribution to schools via the formula values. Without the use of capping and scaling, formula funding values would need to be set at lower values.)

7 out of the 8 responses supported the potential use of capping and scaling in 2023/24

Q3 TRANSFER FROM THE SCHOOLS BLOCK TO THE HIGH NEEDS BLOCK

- Do you support a Council's decision to seek a transfer of up to 0.25% (£546,000) from the Schools Block to the High Needs block for the financial year 2023/24, , particularly given the ongoing increasing rise in EHCP numbers, demand for Special School places including the opening of the Gilbert Ward Free Academy in September 2023 and ongoing free at the point of delivery offer for NIES Services?

A clear majority (6 of 8 or 75%) supported a potential transfer of up to 0.25% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, only 1 respondent was against, stating he would require further information.

Q4 REVIEW OF THE SPLIT SITE ELEMENT

- Do you agree to the proposal that the "Split Site" payment made to 4 schools in Northumberland should be brought in line with the NFF proposals and be based on 75% of the NFF Lump Sum amount, subject to the funding being available?

All respondents supported moving in line with the NFF proposals for the split site funding.

14. As in previous years the recommendations requests approval for delegated authority for the Joint Interim Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Children's Services to agree the final formula values, in line with the principles outlined once the final 2023/24 Schools Block figure is known in mid to late December.

Background

1. For 2018/19, Cabinet was informed of the decision of the Schools Forum to seek a move towards the implementation of the NFF in a measured gradual approach, in order to avoid any significant changes (“cliff edges”) when the NFF final formula was fully implemented. This approach was also supported by the majority of schools who responded in that year’s consultation exercise. This approach continued to be endorsed by both Schools Forum and the school consultation for 2019/20 and 2020/21. A two step approach was agreed with Schools Forum in November 2020 to align remaining funding values with NFF and with the anticipated changes to mobility for 2023/24 this will have been achieved.
2. In January 2018 Cabinet also agreed the transfer of up to 1% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block in order to assist with the increasing pressures in this area including rising numbers of pupils with Education Health and Care Plans receiving Top Up funding, and in specialist independent sector placements. Increasing costs arising from the rising number of permanent exclusions were also highlighted.
3. Funding was also sought in order to grow places in our own maintained special schools, following the outcome of the SEND consultation exercise.
4. Schools’ Forum had previously supported this transfer, and it was also part of the consultation exercise with all Northumberland Schools, who supported the 1% transfer. A transfer of 1% was again agreed for 2019/20.
5. These key pressures remains but a combination of improved financial management and additional high needs resources means that the requested transfer for 2020/21 & 2021/22 was reduced from 1% to 0.5%, as a contribution to the costs of SEND Support Services. While agreement was gained to a maximum of 0.5% for 2022/23, the actual transfer was reduced to 0.25% following the announcement of additional funding by the Department for Education in January 2022. 0.25% has again been proposed and agreed with School Forum as a maximum for 2023/24.

IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

Policy:	Further Changes to the formula funding mechanism for schools for 2023/24 as part of the move to implementation of the NFF
Finance and value for money:	Further Changes to the formula funding mechanism for schools for 2023/24 as part of the move to implementation of the NFF
Legal:	Potential Changes arising in support to Schools as and when further schools academise. The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 confirm that the matters within this report are not functions reserved to Full Council.
Procurement:	None.
Human Resources:	Potential issues for school staffing structures arising from budgets, depending on individual school circumstances.
Property:	Further academization of schools will affect school estate.
Equalities: (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	Changes arising from the implementation of the National Funding Formula will impact on children in schools, particularly when fully implemented in the future.
Risk Assessment:	As stated previously, there are risks arising for individual school's funding from the switch to the NFF, but the LA has continually sought to mitigate these, including in the proposals for 2023/24.
Crime & Disorder:	There are considered to be no implications arising from this report.
Customer Considerations:	The introduction of the National Funding Formula has implications for schools, parents and children, particularly over the longer term.
Carbon Reduction:	None.
Health and Wellbeing	The strategy aims to improve the educational experience and outcomes for children and young people in the county by providing appropriate provision as close to their homes communities as possible.
Consultation	Consultation on the funding formula principles for 2023/24 were consulted upon with all schools and academies across Northumberland.

Wards:	All.
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Report sign off

Finance Officer	Jan Willis
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Suki Binjal
Interim Director of Children's Services	Audrey Kingham
Chief Executive	Rick O'Farrell
Portfolio Holder(s)	Guy Renner-Thompson

Report Author Sue Aviston – Head of School Organisation and Resources
(01670) 622281 Sue.Aviston@Northumberland.gov.uk

DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

In carrying out the consultation set out in this report, the Council has acted in compliance with Data Protection Act 1998 via the Council's Data Protection Policy

Specifically,

- Data gathered during this consultation process has been dealt with fairly - e.g. the responses from members of the public have been anonymised, whilst those responding within a public role have been identified e.g. Chairs of Governors, Dioceses and so on.
- The data and information gathered during consultation has been used to assist in informing the recommendations set out in this report and will not be used for any other purpose, i.e. it will not be shared with another service area or any third party.
- The data and information gathered has been limited to that which would assist in informing the recommendations set out that will arise from this consultation.

The Council has set out how it deals with information received as part of consultation in the Council's Privacy Notice, at

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/About/Contact/Information.aspx#privacynotices> .

**National Funding Formula & Dedicated
Schools Grant (DSG) & Consultation on
2023/24 Funding Values****1. Purpose of the Report**

To provide further additional information in respect of the continuing implementation of the National Funding Formula, the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and associated 2023/24 Schools Funding information. This includes formal consultation with Schools Forum in relation to funding for 2023/24.

2. Recommendations

Schools Forum is asked to:

- a. Agree to a transfer of up to 0.25% (approximately £546,000) from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2023/24.
- b. Agree that the funding values for 2023/24 be set in line with the principles outlined in the report; and agree for these to be the basis for the wider consultation with schools.
- c. Note the delegation of final decisions on the values to the Interim Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the lead member for Children's Services once final funding becomes known in December 2022, in order to enable the required Cabinet report to be prepared and submitted to the 10 January 2023 meeting, and the submission of the necessary return to the ESFA by 20 January 2023.
- d. Receive a further report to the Schools Forum meeting on 18 January 2023 on the outcome of the consultation with schools and final funding values to be used for 2023/24.

3. Background

Schools Forum has previously received reports outlining developments in relation to the National Funding Formula (NFF). The latest report to Schools Forum in September 2022 confirmed Northumberland's progress as a local authority "that mirrors the NFF in most factors" with the only difference being in relation to the mobility factor was introduced into the local formula at 50% of the national value for 2022/23 with the intention, to move to the NFF value in 2023/24 depending on the overall level of finance available.

While previously no firm fixed target date had been proposed, in July 2022 the DfE indicated an expectation for LAs:

"to have moved to the direct NFF within the next 5 years – that is by the 2027/28 funding year at the latest."

(The national funding formulae for schools and high needs 2023-23 July 2022)

Figures for 2023/24 include the School Supplementary Grant, which was distributed separately in 2022/23. It should also be noted that overall funding is not increasing by the same amounts as in 2022/23 for both Schools and High Needs, with no indication of any further support at the time of writing this report. Schools are advised to budget accordingly when preparing 2023/24 figures.

4. Latest Information

The provisional 2023/24 allocations based on October 2021 data are shown in the table below:

DSG Block	Final 2022-23 (Dec 2021)	(prev Oct 2021 data)	Potential Change	
			£	%
Schools Block	£208,482,884	£218,666,487	£10,183,603	4.88%
High Needs Block	£44,497,569	£48,408,073	£3,910,504	8.79%
Central School Services Block	£2,454,271	£2,273,655	-£180,616	-7.36%
TOTAL	£255,434,724	£269,348,215	£13,913,491	5.45%
EY Block not yet available for 2023/24	£17,609,703	n/a	-	-

It should be stressed that both these figures and the indicative school figures supplied as an Appendix, will be updated with reference to the October 2022 School Census data when the final figures are released in late December.

5. Minimum Per Pupil Funding (MPPF)

The reduced increase in the MPPF levels was highlighted at the September meeting, meaning that any schools reliant on this could see increases in funding as low as 0.5%. Using the July 2022 funding tool circulated by the ESFA incorporating the previous years (October 2021) data, it is estimated that this could impact 22 Schools in Northumberland, and account for £1.558 million funding, a reduction of £0.893 million on last year's figure of £2.451 million.

This issue has also been highlighted to the Formula 40 funding group of authorities.

6. Transfer from Schools Block

In November 2021, the local authority consulted with both the Schools Forum and wider schools and requested agreement to up to a 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2022/23. This was agreed at the Schools Forum meeting and in the subsequent Schools consultation.

Following further analysis and the receipt of the final settlement figures in December 2021, it was decided to reduce the transfer from 0.5% to 0.25%, and the final figure transferred was £515,696 instead of the original estimate of £1.043 million.

As reported to Schools Forum in July, because of the exceptional circumstances caused by covid, overall balances of £4.032 million were reported, including £1.804 million for the High Needs Block. However future pressures for the area were also highlighted including rising

expenditure for Alternative Provision, and a 11% increase in Education Health and Care Plans, the key indicator of costs for SEND, as well as continuing to offer NIES services free at the point of need.

2022/23 Financial Monitoring reports elsewhere on the agenda, report continuing underspending across the Schools, Early Years and Central Services Blocks, but report an overspend of £586,000 in relation to High Needs.

This is before the other additional pressures identified in 2023/24, notably the opening of the Gilbert Ward Special Free School Academy in Blyth in September 2023. The 40 estimated places required initially are likely to cost in the region of £420,000 Top Up Funding and £426,000 Place Funding (for a full year) or £580,000 for the two terms within the 2023/24 financial year. This does not take into consideration the general growth in numbers or any proposals for increasing capacity within our existing special schools and academies.

The increasing numbers of Education Health and Care Plans and increasing numbers of permanent exclusions continue to place growing pressures on the HN block. It is also the intention to continue to deliver the Northumberland Inclusive Education Service (NIES- covered elsewhere on this agenda) free at the point of delivery, having previously been funded via a Service Level Agreement with schools.

Further information will be provided to the January and February meetings in relation to this, but the agreement of Schools Forum is again sought to the potential transfer of 0.25%, or approximately £546,000 from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, based on the provisional 2023/24 Schools Block figure using October 2021 data in section 4 of this report.

7. Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)

Formula Funding Committee requested that additional information be provided to the Schools Forum in relation to the potential impact of the MFG levels. School Forum members will recall that MFG is a way of giving schools a guaranteed minimum increase in funding per pupil each year. It works by comparing a school's level of funding per pupil from one year to the next on a like for like basis. Previously Northumberland made the decision to set the MFG at the maximum level of 2%, but the ESFA has limited the level of MFG to between 0% and 0.5%.

MFG Level	No Of Schools	Total MFG Increase
0.5%	13	£ 152,794
0.25%	6	£ 131,350
0%	6	£ 120,412

Setting the MFG at either 0% or 0.5% therefore only makes a net difference of £32,382, though this is subject to change when the October 2022 data becomes available. There is therefore potentially comparatively little variation, but in line with previous Schools Forum decisions it is felt that, subject to the resources available the MFG should be set at 0.5% in order to maximise the number of schools supported.

8. Central Services Block

As previously reported, the Central Services Block funding continues to fall, due largely to the continuing reduction in the historic element. While there is a small 2% increase in the

ongoing responsibilities element, this needs to be balanced against the significant pay and price inflation pressures anticipated.

	2022/23 (actual)	2023/24 (provisional)	Change	
			£	%
Ongoing Responsibilities	£1,410,271	£1,438,455	+£28,184	+2.0%
Historic Commitments	£1,044,000	£835,200	-£208,800	-20.0%
TOTAL CSSB	£ 2,454,271	£ 2,273,655	-£180,616	-7.4%

Discussions last year with the ESFA mitigated the impact of the reduction in the Historic Commitment elements as this figure no longer covered the Capital Financing and Historic Retirement costs of £1,305,000. However, this element will continue to unwind. It is anticipated that the historic commitment element should continue to cover Northumberland's costs in relation to ongoing prudential borrowing costs and termination of employment costs, but this will continue to be monitored on an ongoing basis.

9. Early Years Block

No information for Northumberland is available yet in relation to Early Years funding, in line with previous years. Details of the 2023/24 EY funding will be received in December together with the rest of the DSG information for 2023/24.

10. De-delegation

De-delegation is the process by which the relevant maintained school members of Schools Forum can agree to have funding deducted at source from maintained schools for certain services as specified by the DfE. For academies to access these services, they will need to agree to buy in, either on an individual or a multi academy trust level.

For 2022/23, de-delegation was agreed in respect of the following services:

- Contingency for costs arising from reorganisation or restructuring;
- Free School Meal eligibility checking;
- Trade union facility time; and
- Support to underperforming ethnic minority groups and bilingual learners;

It is anticipated that de-delegation will again be sought in respect of these services.

In November 2021 we shared details of the Department for Education's consultation as to how School Improvement functions will be funded in the future. While de-delegation was among the options to replace the School Improvement Grant which is entirely withdrawn for 2023/23, it is not intended to seek de-delegated funding for School Improvement for 2023/24.

11. Other Information

The Schools Forum have overseen a relatively smooth transition towards NFF rates. With the exception of the mobility factor, only introduced in 2022/23, other values are in line with NFF rates. Further information was published by the DfE in a consultation over the summer, the details of which are available at the link below:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/implementing-the-direct-national-funding-formula/>

While most of the issues covered are likely to have little impact given how close we are to the NFF, one area to consider further is the proposed changes to the split site factor (pages 30-36). Under the NFF it is proposed that a Split Site Factor is composed of two parts:

- A Basic element based on a split site as being defined as being separated either by a public road or railway line
- A Distance element, using a threshold of 0.3 miles (500 metres)

Furthermore, there is a proposal that the split site element is based on a 60% of the lump sum, currently the Northumberland figure is £62,267 or 48% of the lump sum. It is proposed to move this to 60% for 2023/24 which would be £76,800 subject to the funding being available.

This does not have any financial implications for other schools not in receipt of split site funding, as it is classified as a “Premises” factor and funded on the basis of previous years spend. It is recommended that we move towards this, though this included in the Schools Consultation.

We are currently working with the 4 Northumberland Schools currently in receipt of split site funding to assess any implications from the reforms.

In addition, for 2023/24:

- Without a disapplication request, the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) is only able to be set between 0 and 0.5%. For the last 2 years we have set the MFG at 2%, but this is now restricted as the ESFA move schools towards NFF;
- Capping and Scaling continues to be an option for 2023/24, but we should seek to limit it’s impact where possible, thereby allowing Schools to retain as much funding formula gains as possible;
- We need to continue to move the mobility element towards the NFF value;

This will be reflected in the principles used to establish Northumberland’s Funding Values for 2023/24 once the 2023/24 allocations are known in late December, and as is reflected in recommendation 2 (b) of this report.

Information is attached at Appendix B showing the impact of the increased 2023/24 Formula Values on a School Level basis, but it must be remembered that these figures are based on the previous October 2021 data and will be subject to change when the revised APT tool is received in late December incorporating the updated October 2022 data. The 2023/24 Provisional figures must therefore be treated with caution as they will not reflect any changes in pupil numbers or other formula data.

12. Next Steps:

Following any comments received today, the intention is also to consult with schools ahead of the final budget setting report to Cabinet. The consultation is proposed to run from Tuesday 22 November to 12.00 noon on Monday 12 December. A copy of the draft consultation paper is attached for your consideration in Appendix C. The results of the consultation and final recommendations to Cabinet will be reported back to the January 2023 Schools Forum meeting.

Because of the short timescales between receiving the final 2023/24 DSG settlement in December, the preparation of a report to the Cabinet meeting on 10 January 2023 and the submission of the final figures to the ESFA by 20 January 2022, delegated powers are sought for the Interim Director of Children's Services and Service Director – Education to set the final figures, in line with the principles and illustrative figures outlined in this report.

As reflected in the recommendations the Cabinet report will seek delegated powers to agree the final values, there will be reported to the Schools Forum meeting on 18 January 2023 prior to submission to the ESFA by 20 January 2023.

13. Summary and Conclusions:

The support of Schools Forum in relation to 2022/23 School Funding is requested in line with the recommendations in section 2 of this report, with regard to the principles to be adopted for the setting of the DSG for 2023/24. Further information will be provided to the January and February 2023 meetings once the final 2023/24 DSG settlement has been received in December 2022, but the views of School Forum are required at this stage to enable the appropriate report seeking approval to go to Cabinet in January 2023, as has been the case in previous years.

Bruce Parvin
Education and Skills Funding Manager
15 November 2022

COMPARISON OF FINAL 2022/23 AND POTENTIAL 2023/24 FORMULA VALUES FOR NFF AND NORTHUMBERLAND

Factor (all figures £)	NFF Values	NCC Values	NFF Values	Potential NCC Values	Movement in NFF values	Movement in NCC values
	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	22/23 to 23/24	22/23 to 23/24
col (a)	col (b)	col (c)	col (d)	col (e)	col (f) #	col (g) #
AWPU Primary	3,217	3,217	3,394	3,394	5.50%	5.50%
KS3	4,536	4,536	4,785	4,785	5.49%	5.49%
KS4	5,112	5,112	5,393	5,393	5.50%	5.50%
Lump Sum Primary	121,300	121,300	128,000	128,000	5.52%	5.52%
Middle	121,300	121,300	128,000	128,000	5.52%	5.52%
High/Secondary	121,300	121,300	128,000	128,000	5.52%	5.52%
Deprivation - Free School Meals Primary	470	470	480	480	2.13%	2.13%
Secondary	470	470	480	480	2.13%	2.13%
Deprivation – FSM6 Primary	590	590	705	705	19.49%	19.49%
Secondary	865	865	1030	1030	19.08%	19.08%
Deprivation – IDACI:						
Primary Band F	220	220	230	230	4.55%	4.55%
Band E	270	270	280	280	3.70%	3.70%
Band D	420	420	440	440	4.76%	4.76%
Band C	460	460	480	480	4.35%	4.35%
Band B	490	490	510	510	4.08%	4.08%
Band A	640	640	670	670	4.69%	4.69%
Secondary Band F	320	320	335	335	4.69%	4.69%
Band E	425	425	445	445	4.71%	4.71%
Band D	595	595	620	620	4.20%	4.20%
Band C	650	650	680	680	4.62%	4.62%
Band B	700	700	730	730	4.29%	4.29%
Band A	890	890	930	930	4.49%	4.49%
Low Attainment Primary	1,130	1,130	1,155	1,155	2.21%	2.21%
Secondary	1,710	1,710	1,750	1,750	2.34%	2.34%
EAL Primary	565	565	580	580	2.65%	2.65%
Secondary	1,530	1,530	1,565	1,565	2.29%	2.29%
MOBILITY : Primary	925	463	945	945	2.16%	104.10%
Secondary	1,330	665	1,360	1,360	2.26%	104.51%
SPARSITY(max): Primary	55,000	55,000	56,300	56,300	2.36%	2.36%
Middle	80,000	80,000	81,900	81,900	2.38%	2.38%
Secondary/All Through	80,000	80,000	81,900	81,900	2.38%	2.38%
Capping		13%				
Scaling		50%				
Minimum Funding Guarantee		2%		0.5%		
<i>(max of 0.5% dictated by ESFA for 2023/24)</i>						

Illustrative 2023/24 School Level DSG based on October 2021 data – see separate schedule

National Funding Formula (NFF): Update and 2023/24 School Funding Consultation

Previously Northumberland County Council consulted on its approach to the introduction of the National Funding Formula (NFF) in Northumberland, following discussions at Schools Forum. The results of these discussions have consistently been to move in a phased or gradual approach to NFF values, reflecting the fact that historically Northumberland has maintained some values that were different to the NFF values. For 2022/23 Northumberland was in line with National Funding Formula figures for all values, with the exception of the Mobility Factor which was introduced at 50% of the NFF Value following the December 2021 consultation.

The results of the December 2021 consultation were reported to Schools Forum in January 2022 and are available on the Schools forum page [HERE](#) as part of the 19 January 2022 Full Agenda Pack.

Whereas previously no firm dates had been set by the Department for Education for the full move to a hard formula (where rates are set centrally), in July 2022 the DfE suggested this may be by 2027/28. This timescale is not expected to provide an issue for Northumberland.

Other information includes:

- School Supplementary Grant (SSG) paid separately in 2022/23 will be rolled into standard formula funding in 2023/24;
- Minimum per pupil funding (MPPF) levels continue to be determined centrally, the 2022/23 figures are £4,265 (primary) and £5,715 (secondary), as per the calculations below:

Phase	2022/23 MPPF Level	Increase	2023/24 MPPF Level
Primary	£4,265	£119 (2.8%) SSG + £21 (0.5%) inc	£4,265
KS3	£5,321	£155 (2.9%) SSG + £27 (0.5%) inc	£5,503 #
KS4	£5,831	£173 (3.0%) SSG + £29 (0.5%) inc	£6,033 #

- For 2023/24 Local authorities continue to set a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG), which protects schools on a per pupil basis from significant year to year changes in pupil characteristics (e.g. fall in FSM numbers) and provide a baseline level of increase in per pupil funding. For 2022/23 Northumberland set a figure of 2%, within the permitted range of +0.5% to +2%. For 2023/24, the permitted range has been reduced to 0% to +0.5%.
- With the approval of Schools Forum, local authorities can transfer up to 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block;

Further supporting information is available on the Council website at:

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/Consultations.aspx#schoolconsultations>

Schools' Forum agendas, minutes and reports are also available on the Council website at:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Professionals/Forum.aspx>

Responses need to be received no later than **12.00 noon on Monday 12 December 2022**. Due to reporting deadlines in line with Department for Education requirements for the submission of information, responses received after this closing date will not be considered.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

QUESTION 1: Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)

The MFG is a way of giving schools a guaranteed minimum increase in funding per pupil each year. It works by comparing a school's level of funding per pupil from one year to the next on a like for like basis, and in such a way as to exclude funding that could distort the per pupil value that is the basis for the guarantee. The baseline for the calculation is intended to cover as much of a school's budget as possible but does not include rates (because they are funded in the formula on actuals) and lump sum allocations because they do not relate to pupil numbers. The MFG is how the ESFA protects individual schools from excessive year to year changes or falls in their formula funding (e.g., as a result of reducing levels of deprivation within a school). In 2021/22 Northumberland set its MFG at +2%, on a range of +0.5% and +2.0%. In 2021/22 & 2022/23 Schools Forum agreed with the proposal to set MFG at the maximum 2%, in order to increase the funding for those schools receiving the lowest level of per pupil funding increase. For 2023/24 the ESFA have restricted the range at which MFG can be set to between 0 to 0.5%. An increase over and above that would require a disapplication request to the ESFA, which is not believed to be practical given the timescales.

At what level do you believe Northumberland's MFG should be set for 2023/24?

- 0.0% *(using 21/22 data 6 schools would benefit sharing £120,412)*
- 0.25% *(using 21/22 data 6 schools would benefit sharing £131,350)*
- 0.5% *(using 21/22 data 13 schools would benefit sharing £152,794)*

In future years should a disapplication request be considered to the ESFA in order to increase the level at which the MFG can be set?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

QUESTION 2: CAPPING AND SCALING INCREASES

The use of capping and scaling is a mechanism by which different increases under new formula values are averaged out in order to limit some gains and provide more funding for general distribution to schools via the formula values. Without the use of capping and scaling, formula funding values would need to be set at lower values. Northumberland has previously used capping and scaling for the School Block DSG, setting these values at 4% and 50% in 2021/22 but changing the capping level to 13% for 2022/23 respectively. Increasing the cap level reduces the influence of capping and scaling, meaning schools keep more of their formula gains, but means less funding is available to support other aspects of the funding formula. For 2022/23, this meant that any gains by Schools over 13% were reduced by 50% and redistributed via the funding mechanism. As Northumberland moves closer to the NFF, the need to use Capping and Scaling should reduce, however it remains a useful tool to ensure the distribution of a general level of increase via the funding formula.

Do you support the potential use of capping and scaling as part of the 2023/24 School Budget setting process?

- Yes
 - No
-

QUESTION 3 – Transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block

For 2022/23 the Schools Forum, and subsequently the consultation with Schools agreed a transfer of up to 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. The final figure taken was a transfer of 0.25%. After careful consideration, and in anticipation of significant High Needs pressures arising during 2022/23 and 2023/24, it is Northumberland’s intention to again seek a reduced transfer of up to 0.25% (approx. £546,000) for 2023/24. This equates to approximately £14 per school age pupil in Northumberland.

Do you support a Council’s decision to seek a transfer of up to 0.25% (£546,000) from the Schools Block to the High Needs block for the financial year 2023/24, , particularly given the ongoing increasing rise in EHCP numbers, demand for Special School places including the opening of the Gilbert Ward Free Academy in September 2023 and ongoing free at the point of delivery offer for NIES Services?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t Know

QUESTION 4 – REVIEW OF THE SPLIT SITE ELEMENT

Further consultation information from the DfE on the Implementation of the Direct National Funding Formula is available [HERE](#) . One of the areas under further consideration is how the DfE can standardise the premises “Split Site” payment under the NFF.

Under the NFF it is proposed that a Split Site Factor is composed of two parts:

- A Basic element based on a split site as being defined as being separated either by a public road or railway line
- A Distance element, using a threshold of 0.3 miles (500 metres)

Furthermore, there is a proposal that the split site element is based on a 60% of the lump sum, currently the Northumberland figure is £62,267 or 48% of the lump sum. This figures has not been reviewed for a number of years. It is proposed to move this to 60% for 2023/24 which would be £76,800 subject to the funding being available.

This does not have any financial implications for other schools not in receipt of split site funding, as it is classified as a “Premises” factor and funded on the basis of previous years spend.

Do you agree to the proposal that the “Split Site” payment made to 4 schools in Northumberland should be brought in line with the NFF proposals and be based on 75% of the NFF Lump Sum amount, subject to the funding being available?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t Know

FURTHER COMMENTS

Please use the box below for any other comments that you have in relation to the implementation of the NFF or this consultation exercise:

Responses need to be received no later than **12.00 noon on Monday 12 December 2022**. Due to reporting deadlines in line with Department for Education requirements for the submission of information, responses received after this closing date will not be considered.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.



Northumberland County Council

FAMILY & CHILDREN'S OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5TH JANUARY 2023

Update of School Organisation Plan 2021-24

Report of Interim Joint Directors of Children's Services, Audrey Kingham and Graham Reiter.

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

Purpose of Report

Cabinet approved the publication of the second iteration of the School Organisation Plan for 2021-24 in September 2021. As agreed, the plan is to be updated on an annual basis with the latest relevant school information and data. FACS are asked to note the update of the School Organisation Plan for 2021-24 and recommend its publication.

Recommendations

FACS OSC are recommended to note:

- 1) that the School Organisation Plan 2021-24 has been updated with the latest school information and data for 2022 as agreed by Cabinet in October 2021. The data reflects changed data and circumstances relating to relevant schools within Northumberland since July 2021.
- 2) that the updated School Organisation Plan 2021-24 will be circulated to all schools and academies in the county and will be published on the Council's website.

Link to Corporate Plan

These proposals are most closely linked to the Council's priority for Learning (achieving and realising potential), but it is also strongly linked with the priority for Connecting (having access to the things you need).

Key Issues

1. Although it has not been a statutory requirement for local authorities to publish

a school organisation plan for a number of years, the Council chose to reinitiate the publication of a 3-year plan for Northumberland in 2018 in order to bring key school place planning data and information into one document.

2. The Northumberland School Organisation Plan assists schools, academies, parents, the DfE and other partners to understand the factors that impact school place planning within the county such as housebuilding, pupil growth and pupil decline. It also sets out the methodology for forecasting school places, including the identification of both the need for additional places in some areas or the potential need for reduction of the availability of places in other areas as a result of falling pupil rolls.
3. The capacity and pupil forecasting information set out in the School Organisation Plan is also required by the DfE on an annual basis through their school place data collection process (SCAP) in any event. This is used to inform the need for places across the country and the allocation of Basic Need capital funding.
4. FACS should also note that as a result of the approval by Cabinet of the SEND Capacity and Place Planning Strategy, the latter document is now referenced in the School Organisation Plan 2021-24 and a link to it is provided.
5. FACS is now requested to recommend the circulation of the updated School Organisation Plan for 2021-24 and its publication on the Council's website.

IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

Policy:	The School Organisation Plan are most closely linked to the Council's priority for Learning (achieving and realising potential), but it is also strongly linked with the priority for Connecting (having access to the things you need)
Finance and value for money:	There are no direct financial implications as a result of the School Organisation Plan.
Legal:	There is no statutory requirement on local authorities to publish a school organisation plan. The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 confirm that the matters within this report are not functions reserved to Full Council.
Procurement:	There are no direct Procurement implications as a result of the School Organisation Plan.
Human Resources:	There are no direct HR implications as a result of the School Organisation Plan.
Property:	There are no direct property implications as a result of the School Organisation Plan.
Equalities: (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	There are no direct equalities issues as a result of the School Organisation Plan 2021-24. However, should any specific proposals for schools arise as a result of any of the processes or plans set out in the plan, then an Equalities Impact Assessment would be carried out in relation to any protected groups that could be impacted by such plans.
Risk Assessment:	Not applicable
Crime & Disorder:	This report has considered Section 17 (CDA) and the duty it imposes and there are no implications arising from it.
Customer Considerations:	The purpose of the School Organisation Plan is to support the educational interests of children and young people in Northumberland
Carbon Reduction:	It is envisaged that the methodology set out in the plan to reduce places at schools with over-provision for their community would have a positive impact on carbon reduction as it would encourage parents to choose schools within or closer to their home communities.
Health and Wellbeing:	The strategy aims to improve the educational experience and outcomes for children and young people in the county by providing appropriate provision as close to their homes communities as

	possible.
Wards:	All

Background Papers

Report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Children's Services,
12 October 2021

Report Sign Off

Monitoring Officer/Legal	Suki Binjal
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	Jan Willis
Interim Joint Director of Children's Services	Audrey Kingham
Interim Chief Executive	Rick O'Farrell
Portfolio Holder(s)	Guy Renner-Thompson

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Appendices

School Organisation Plan 2021-24 (updated)



APPENDIX ONE -
School Organisation F



School Organisation Plan 2021—2024

December 2022 Update



CONTENTS

	Foreword	4
1.	Introduction 1.1 Purpose of the School Organisation Plan	5
2.	The Northumberland Context 2.1 School Organisation link to standards and performance in education in Northumberland 2.2 Headline school population data 2.3 Schools and academies 2.4 Number of pupils on roll in schools and academies	6 6 6-9 9-10
3.	Duty to provide school places 3.1 Local Authority duties and powers 3.2 Challenges in delivering duties 3.3 Northumberland and National education policy	11 11 11-12
4.	School Place Planning 4.1 Current methodology 4.2 Managing Surplus Places 4.3 School Admissions 4.4 Home to School Transport 4.5 House building 4.6 Inter-partnership and inter-authority movement	13 13-17 18-19 19-20 20-21 22
5.	Creating places through capital development 5.1 Principles 5.2 Funding 5.3 Methods 5.4 Partners	23 23 23-24 24-25
6.	Non-mainstream provision 6.1 Special Educational Needs 6.2 Post-16 provision 6.3 Early Years provision	26-32 32 33

7.	Projections and Place Pressures by School Partnership (planning area)	
	7.1 Alnwick Partnership	34-35
	7.2 Ashington Partnerships	36-37
	7.3 Berwick Partnership	38-39
	7.4 Bedlington Partnership	40-41
	7.5 Blyth Partnerships (including Bede)	42-43
	7.6 Coquet Partnership (Amble)	44-45
	7.7 Cramlington Partnership	46-47
	7.8 Haydon Bridge Partnership	48-49
	7.9 Hexham Partnership	50-52
	7.10 Morpeth Partnership	53-55
	7.11 Northumberland Church of England Partnership	56-57
	7.12 Ponteland Partnership	58-59
	7.13 Prudhoe Partnership	60-61
	7.14 Seaton Valley Partnership	62-63
Appendices		
	Appendix 1 - Surplus Places in Northumberland by School Partnership	65-66
	Appendix 2 - Education Infrastructure Contribution Policy	66

Document Revision Information			
Version	Date	Author	Description
V 2.0	September 2021	S Aviston	Plan 2021-24
V2.1	December 2022	S Aviston	Annual refresh

FOREWORD

Although no longer a statutory requirement, the Northumberland School Organisation Plan is becoming an increasingly important document for demonstrating how the Council plans to fulfil its statutory duty to ensure that each school-age child and young person living in the county has a local school place available to them.

The plan also sets out the way schools and academies in Northumberland are organised within school partnerships that provide a structured pathway from phase to phase as children progress along their educational journey. How the council is addressing the growing needs of children and young people with special educational needs is also included in this plan. A key focus of the Council is of course the climate emergency and how school place planning is taking this into account to support the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2021-2023 is also included in this plan.

A good education gives every young person the foundation for achieving to the best of their potential. Northumberland County Council aims to give every child and young person living in the county the best possible life chances by providing the very best opportunities in education in good schools that provide well for their needs, and as close to their home communities as possible. This plan is a key element in our work to ensure this aim becomes a reality for all children and young people living in Northumberland.

Councillor Guy Renner-Thompson
Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the School Organisation Plan

The Council's Corporate Plan for 2020/21 sets out one of its key Objectives as 'Learning; We Want you to achieve and realise your potential'. While this objective is applicable to all residents within the context of life-long learning, a key feature of this vision is the desire to ensure that all children and young people in Northumberland have the same opportunities as their peers to achieve and realise their potential.

This is the second iteration of the School Organisation Plan for Northumberland and covers the period 2021-2024 and like the previous version, it supports this vision by setting out how the council will fulfil its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for all children and young people resident within the county.

Northumberland's mix of a large expanse of sparsely populated rural area and densely populated urban towns, particularly in the Southeast corner, continues to pose a challenge to finding a balance of sufficient and sustainable school places to serve the needs of these often very different types of communities. This plan provides an overview of the current and future pupil numbers in Northumberland which will assist the Council with planning the future provision of school places in the county. The plan will also be of assistance to schools and academies, parents and other stakeholders in helping them to understand how the availability of school places across the country is monitored, how the need for school places is identified and where necessary, how additional places are delivered and funded.

This School Organisation Plan contains the latest statistical information and data relating to pupils within specific school partnerships, as well as changes relating to school organisation in some areas and will be updated annually to reflect changes to data within the school year.

2. THE NORTHUMBERLAND CONTEXT

2.1 School Organisation Plan links to standards and performance in education in Northumberland

Responsibility for the School Organisation Plan lies with the School Organisation and Resources Team within Education and Skills Group, which in turn forms part of the Wellbeing and Community Health Service in Northumberland. The plan provides an analysis of the current capacity and numbers on roll in Northumberland schools and highlights any planned work to be undertaken to meet any identified need for additional places or to address surplus places. As such, the School Organisation Plan supports the Education and Skills Service in delivering the priorities set out in its Service Statement 2019/20 by:

- providing data, information and context to support school organisation initiatives that are planned to have a direct and positive impact on standards and performance in schools;
- identifying and delivering capital projects to provide additional places or enhance the schools estate that will improve the educational experience of children and young people in Northumberland.

The Education and Skills Service Priorities for 2021 are available to review [here](#)

2.2 Headline population data

In Northumberland, 96.7% of the land mass is classed as rural, with 46% of the population living in this area. The other 54% of the population live mainly in the South East area of the county. In relation to the population itself, the county has an estimated population of 320,567 (Census 2021), a 1% fall on the 2020 mid-year population estimate. According to the Office for National Statistics, the county's population is forecast to increase by 4.4% to around 339,415 between 2022 and 2043. This has changed from the forecast decrease in population set out in the previous version of this plan, although it is less than the England average which is forecast to increase by 7.8% over the same period.

However, the increase in population does not appear to be in younger age groups; the number of children and young people aged 0 to 15 living in Northumberland has been slowly but steadily declining for a significant number of years, with circa 57,500 in 2001, 55,000 in 2006 and 51,721 in 2021 (Census 2021). The birth rate in Northumberland has also declined slightly by about 0.1% overall between 2009 and 2020, with the County's General fertility rate (GFR) at 48.9 (per 1000 female population age 15-44) compared to 55.1 for England. However, there is variation at the school partnership level, which is addressed in Section 7, Projections and Place Pressures.

2.3 Schools and academies

As at September 2022, there were 167 schools, academies and free schools (not including independent schools) in Northumberland who currently educate 42,878 children and young people (January 2022 census - Nursery to Year 13); this is a fall of 2% from 44,984 recorded in October 2021 census, reported in the previous version of this document.

Categories of Schools

Schools are classified into two main categories. The first category is academies and free schools, which are funded directly by central government and where the local authority has no statutory responsibility. The second category is local authority-maintained schools, which are then further split into 4 sub-groups Community, Voluntary Aided (VA), Voluntary Controlled (VC) and Foundation/Trust schools. The local authority does have various levels of responsibilities within maintained schools, depending on the sub-category e.g., school organisation matters, funding and admission arrangements.

Academies / Free Schools

Northumberland currently has 55 academies; these schools receive their funding directly from the government, and not via the local authority. They are run by an academy trust which employs the staff. Some academies have sponsors such as businesses, universities, other schools, faith groups or voluntary groups, and in Northumberland there are currently 14 sponsored academies, 32 converter academies, and 1 free school. We currently do not have any university technical colleges or studio schools.

Maintained Schools

Maintained schools are funded by the local authority. Whereas formally they are run (“maintained”) by the local authority, delegation of powers to the Governing Body means that they have many of the same responsibilities and powers as academies. These fall into four main categories:

€ Community Schools

Community Schools are controlled by the Local Authority and are not influenced by business or religious groups. There are 72 schools in this category in Northumberland.

• Voluntary Controlled Schools

Most Voluntary Controlled Schools, but not all, are Church of England Schools; there are currently 8 schools in this category.

• Voluntary Aided Schools

These are Foundation Schools with a Religious character and in Northumberland all are Church of England or Roman Catholic Schools. There are currently 23 schools in this category.

• Foundation Schools

These are Foundation Schools without a Religious character. Some Foundation Schools acquire a Trust and are known as Trust Schools. The Governing Body owns the building (unless there is a Trust in which case the Trust owns the building and land) and is the formal employer of the staff. There are currently 5 schools in Northumberland in this category.

Numbers and types of Northumberland Schools (not inc. independents)

Phase	Community	VA	VC	Foundation/ Trust	Academy / Free School	Total
First	22	12	4	1	14	53
Primary	33	11	4	2	25	75
Middle	6	0	0	1	7	14
Age 9-18	1	0	0	0	0	1
High	1	0	0	0	4	5
Secondary	1	0	0	1	7	9
Special	7	0	0	0	2	9
Pupil Referral Unit	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	72	23	8	5	59	167

There are currently 59 academies including 1 free school in Northumberland. At least a further 2 schools are expected to join existing academy trusts in the county in 2023.

Schools closed in the last 5 years since 2017 are set out in the following table:

Schools closed	Year/Date of Closure	Reason for closure	Closure proposed by	Closure approved by
Seahouses Middle School	August 2017	Alnwick Partnership reorganisation to primary/secondary system	NCC	NCC
The Dukes Middle School	August 2017	Alnwick Partnership reorganisation to primary/secondary system	NCC	NCC
Lindisfarne Middle School	August 2017	Alnwick Partnership reorganisation to primary/secondary system	NCC	NCC
St Paul's RC VA Middle School	August 2017	Alnwick Partnership reorganisation to primary/secondary system	Governing Body	NCC
St Benedict's RCVA Middle School	August 2017	Reorganisation of Ashington RC schools to primary /secondary system	Governing Body	Schools Adjudicator
St Peter's Catholic Academy	August 2017	Reorganisation of Cramlington RC schools to primary/ secondary system	Academy Trust	Secretary of State
Acklington CE First School	August 2018	Closure of school due to viability issues	Governing Body	NCC
St Mary's CE Middle School, Belford	August 2018	Closure of school due to viability issues	NCC	NCC
Netherton First School	August 2018	Closure of school due to viability issues	NCC	NCC
West Woodburn	August 2020	Closure of school due to	NCC	NCC

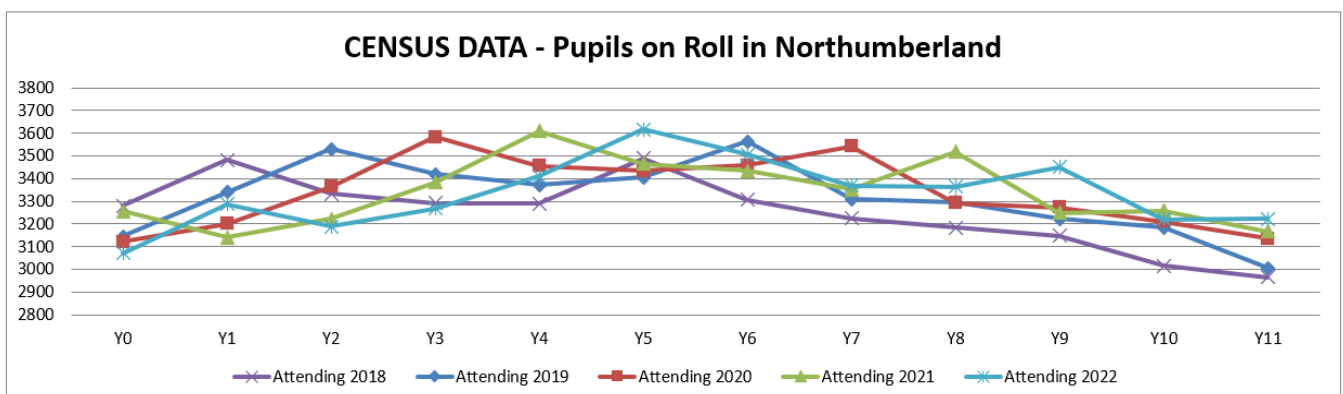
Current, future or proposed future changes to the organisation of schools in individual partnerships are set out in Section 2.

2.4 Number of pupils on roll in schools and academies in Northumberland, surplus places and inward migration

There were a total of 39,976 children and young people of statutory school age (Reception to Year 11) on roll in all types of schools (excluding Special and independents in Northumberland as at January 2022. This represents a fall of 2.5% compared to the previous year; while this level of fluctuation is not unusual over time, this is the lowest number of pupils on roll in these year groups in the past 5 years. However, this masks a considerable variation between school partnerships as some, mainly in the urban towns and villages in the South East have experienced growth in numbers due to increased birth rates and house building; there can also be considerable variation between individual schools within partnerships even in urban areas, for example when new housing is constructed or when estates mature and produce fewer children. Further information on pupil numbers and surplus places is provided in Section 4.2 and in the individual partnership sections of this document.

DfE data for 2021/22 indicates that under 7% of pupils on roll in schools from Reception to Year 11 live in neighbouring authorities, mainly coming from Newcastle, North Tyneside and Durham. These pupils are able to attend Northumberland schools as a result of surplus places in popular schools e.g. some schools in Ponteland and Hexham Partnerships are particularly popular with parents in neighbouring Newcastle and Durham authorities respectively. The numbers on roll by year group from Reception to Year 11 over the last 5 years are given in the following table:

NORTHUMBERLAND	Y0	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	TOTAL
Attending 2018	3281	3481	3333	3292	3289	3490	3306	3226	3183	3147	3015	2966	39009
Attending 2019	3145	3341	3531	3419	3372	3404	3564	3310	3296	3222	3185	3006	39795
Attending 2020	3122	3202	3364	3582	3456	3433	3457	3541	3292	3274	3210	3137	40070
Attending 2021	3255	3141	3223	3384	3609	3466	3434	3352	3519	3250	3259	3167	40059
Attending 2022	3070	3288	3189	3269	3409	3616	3506	3369	3365	3452	3221	3222	39976



3. DUTY TO PROVIDE SCHOOL PLACES

3.1 Local Authority duties and powers

Local authorities have a statutory duty under the Education and Inspections Act 1996 to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places within its area and that within such provision, parental preference, diversity and fair access are promoted. Our objective as a local authority is to work towards ensuring that there are sufficient 'good' places (as defined by Ofsted) available for all children and young people resident in the county within or as close as possible to their own communities.

This plan identifies where school places, including special school places, are required now and in the future and explains the mechanisms for providing these places. It also identifies where there are significant numbers of surplus places in the county and how some of the challenges that these pose may be addressed.

3.2 Challenges in delivering duties

The power of local authorities to influence how and where school places are provided within its area has been reducing for a significant number of years as a result of national policies. For example, local authorities have for some time been unable to open their own (community) schools, as every new school opened must now be a free school (effectively an academy).

Schools that are their own admissions authority (i.e., voluntary aided schools, academies and free schools) are able to increase their Planned Admission Numbers (PAN) without consultation, although they must notify the local authority when they do so. Therefore, one of the key roles of the Council is to maintain good working relationships with and between all types of schools to ensure that there are sufficient good school places available in the right places in the county, while balancing the desire of schools or academies to increase or reduce places into their own establishments, parental demand for places in successful schools and the impact of any changes on other schools to ensure a fair system for all.

3.3 Impact of Northumberland and National policies on school place planning

The provision of school places is not only influenced by statutory duties placed on the Council, but also by Northumberland's local policies and wider national policies.

Government policy in recent years has pushed for the conversion of ever more schools to become academies and as stated, the need for any new school identified by a local authority must be provided as a free school, which will effectively be an academy. Furthermore, where a school is judged to be inadequate by Ofsted, the school must become a sponsored academy, or in some instances, the Secretary of State may order the closure of the school. In the case of a school closure, the local authority would be under a duty to find alternative suitable school places for displaced pupils at other schools in the locality, and to manage any increased home to school transport costs if required. The overall impact of the reducing number of community and voluntary controlled schools in Northumberland means that the local authority's ability to influence where school places are created is diminishing.

The Northumberland Local Plan 2016-2036 includes the planning policies that will be used to guide and determine future housing planning applications in Northumberland, detail the scale and distribution of new housing development and include land allocations and designations, which in turn can influence the growth of pupil numbers in the county. The Northumberland Local Plan was adopted in March 2022 and can be reviewed by following this link [Northumberland County Council - Northumberland Local Plan](#).

4. SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING

4.1 Current methodology

Forecasting the number of pupil place requirements within any local authority is not an exact science and therefore presents a challenge due to changing demographics in some areas, fluctuating parental preferences and new housing developments. These issues are in addition to the potential for academies and free schools to increase or even decrease (the latter with permission from the Schools Adjudicator outside of the normal consultation process) their available pupil places outside of the control of the Council.

In Northumberland, pupil forecasting is carried out at school partnership level. At its basis, data received from the NHS on the number of children registered with GP surgeries is used. This enables the Council to match the postcodes of these newborn children to individual school catchment/Transport Eligibility areas. Where admissions authorities (such as voluntary aided schools or academies) set their own catchment area which differs from the Transport Eligibility Area set for the school by the Council, the latter is used for forecasting purposes. These catchment/Transport Eligibility Areas provide a reliable indication of how many children are likely to enter schools in Reception classes. Once actual places are taken up within the school system, the year-on-year transition of pupils through the school system is assumed.

The forecasts are further refined as pupils enter and move through the system by including a weighting (based on previous trends) at phase change points. For example, as a result of parental preference in some school partnerships additional children may historically enter schools at a particular phase in Year 5 including, while in other partnerships, there may be a trend for a proportion of children to leave the partnership at the end of a phase change to take up places at popular schools in other partnerships. Parental preference also impacts the movement of pupils in schools within their school partnerships and to other partnerships in the county. Another factor in relation to parental preference is the inward and outward flow of pupils into or from other neighbouring local authorities. The impact of housebuilding is also factored into the final pupil forecast, although only housing that has been approved or minder to be approved is included in the assessment (see para. 4.5 for further detail). The Council's calculation for pupil yield arising from housebuilding indicates there are just under 3 children generated per year group from every 100 houses built.

The Council works in partnership with schools and academy trusts to ensure that where the need for additional places is identified that suitable arrangements are put in place to address the need. The DfE collects school capacity and pupil forecasting data annually from the County Council (SCAP collection), which assists the DfE in allocating the Basic Need capital grant and in policy making relating to school place sufficiency and forecasting.

4.2 Managing Surplus Places

The definition of surplus school places is the number of school places that remain unfilled in a school compared to the total of number of places available (capacity), as measured by its available teaching and learning spaces. Surplus places are not related to the Planned Admission Number (PAN) of a school, which is the number of places a school offers in its entry class or classes i.e., Reception, Year 4 (middle), Year 7 (secondary) or Year 9 (high school).

As at January 2022, there were **9,072** surplus places in schools and academies in Northumberland (Reception to Year 13 and not including special schools), which equates to **18%** surplus places overall. However, this figure masks the considerable variation in surplus places at school partnership level, which are reviewed in Section 7 of this report. Having surplus places within an individual school is itself not necessarily a negative situation, indeed it is preferable for schools to have a minimum of around 5% surplus places in order to facilitate an element of parental preference for school places and to enable the school to have some flexibility to offer places to children who may move into the catchment area outside of the normal entry point into the school.

However, where the number of surplus places within a school begins to impact on the ability of the school to provide a broad and balanced curriculum in terms of staffing levels, as well as maintain, heat, light and clean the school building, then it can be detrimental to the educational experience of children and can threaten the viability and sustainability of individual schools. Where there is over provision of places across a whole school partnership, parents can have excessive choice and schools begin to compete for pupils. This can lead to children undertaking longer journeys by car to schools that are more popular with parents, driving past other schools within their own communities on the way and also impacting negatively on the environment. The results of excessive surplus places have in the past in Northumberland led to some schools, particularly small rural schools, becoming unviable, having to close and thereby making it necessary for all children that may have been served by that school to undertake longer journeys for their education away from to schools further from their home and village communities; in addition, this will have impacted on the environment.

There is no magic formula for calculating the right number of surplus places within Northumberland and there is no official maximum level of surplus places a local authority should aim to maintain, although the Council is challenged regularly by the DfE on its arrangements for managing surplus capacity. Northumberland County Council aims to have a 3-point approach to the management and rebalancing of surplus places in the county:

1. At a strategic level in relation to the whole county, whereby oversight of the total number of surplus places is reviewed as part of this plan as an annual reference point to inform officers, interested parties, and the DfE;
2. At school partnership (planning area) level firstly when surplus places are reviewed annually as part this plan or secondly, reviewed as part of partnership-wide school

organisation project. This often leads to specific proposals for individual schools (see below).

3. At the individual school level when specific actions are proposed to address the impact of surplus places, such as outcomes of a partnership-wide school organisation review, or where the school's viability or its ability to carry out effective staff planning impacted by excessive surplus places, or where the number of places available at a school far exceeds the needs of its own community, which is impacting the viability of other schools and the environment by encouraging increased car journeys;

Any proposals based on the approaches to rebalancing surplus places above will be driven by the following principles:

- Length of journeys to school for primary and secondary pupils to be no longer than DfE guidelines unless it is unavoidable due to specific local circumstances;
- Linked to above, decisions support schools remaining as close to pupils home communities as possible, particularly in relation to rural areas;
- Reducing impact on viability of other local schools;
- Reducing impact of car travel on the environment, specifically in relation to support of the Council's Climate Action Plan - 2021-23

At the partnership level, where pupil numbers within a whole partnership are falling year on year, there may be occasions when there is simply an over-provision of schools and the closure of one or more may be the best interests of the long-term sustainability of the whole partnership. Any proposals to remove surplus places through the closure of schools must be balanced with the desire to provide schools within reasonable distance of pupils, especially younger children. Proposals for school closures at the partnership level generally occur as a result of whole partnership educational organisation review. It should be noted that statutory legislation limits the power of local authorities to approve the closure of local authority-maintained schools only; local authorities do not have powers to close academies.

Outside of a whole partnership organisation review, will be an assessment of the impact of surplus places across whole school partnerships as part of this plan. This may lead to the reduction of the Planned Admission Number (PAN) of a particular school or schools within to a level that provides enough places to serve its local community, while offering a level of flexibility for parental preference that does not impact detrimentally on other schools. Any proposal by the Council to reduce the PAN of a school would be based on the forecast pupil numbers for that school and would be limited statutorily to community and voluntary controlled schools only and subject to necessary consultation as required by the Admissions Code 2021. While the reduction of a school's PAN would not actually remove any physical capacity from the school and therefore the 'surplus' would remain, the opportunity for schools to impact negatively on each other would be reduced and there would be considerable benefit to the environment through the reduced number of car journeys, thus supporting the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23. On the other hand, where a school has a PAN appropriate to its community but is not able to attract enough pupils to plan its staffing or

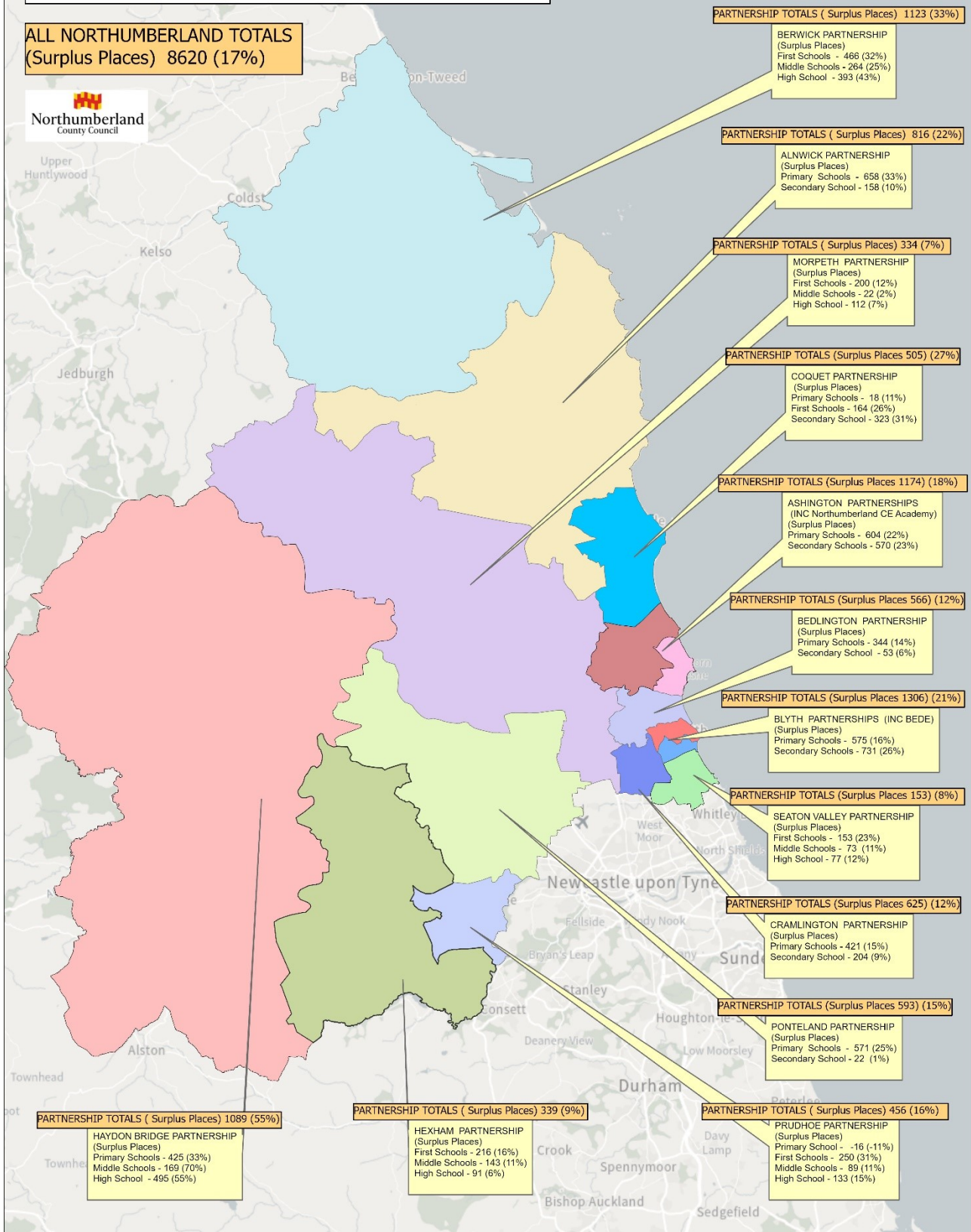
class organisation effectively due to parental preference, there may be a stronger rationale for that school to reduce its PAN, subject to their being no other negative impact such as an increase in car journeys.

Where the Council identifies that an academy or voluntary aided school has excessive surplus places to the point where it is negatively impacting on other local schools, officers will discuss the situation with our relevant partner Admissions Authorities to identify a solution. However, the Council has no powers to reduce (or increase) the PAN of academies, voluntary aided or foundation schools.

The impact of decisions made outside of the control of the Council have also had an impact on increasing the level of surplus places. For example, in the recent past, decisions taken by the School's Adjudicator and the Regional Schools Commissioner have led to an overprovision of places in certain school partnerships, which could impact on the viability of some schools. The number of surplus places by phase within each school partnerships is given at Appendix 1 attached to this report. Surplus places at partnership level are reviewed in Section 7. The following map identifies the level of surplus places in each school partnership as at January 2022.

ALL NORTHUMBERLAND PARTNERSHIPS Surplus Places (Census Data as at January 2022)

**ALL NORTHUMBERLAND TOTALS
(Surplus Places) 8620 (17%)**



4.3 School Admissions

By their nature, school admissions arrangements and school place planning are closely linked. The management, consultation and publication of school admission arrangements are a legislative requirement of all Admissions Authorities, including Academies, and guidance is set out in the new School Admissions Code 2021 which came into effect on 1 September 2021.

Northumberland County Council is the Admissions Authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools within the county. One element of legislation, set out in the Admissions Code, is that parents must be able to express a preference for a place for their child at any school, and where a place is available it must be offered, no matter where the child is resident. While this is a benefit to parents, the impact on many schools in Northumberland, particularly those in rural areas, is that they have less reliable annual intakes than urban schools and are more vulnerable to events that impact on their popularity, such as poor Ofsted judgements or a neighbouring school receiving an 'Outstanding' Ofsted judgement. This in turn can make forecasting at the individual school level more difficult.

Northumberland schools are organised within 'partnerships' to ensure a clear pathway through a child and young person's educational journey. In the remaining 3-tier partnerships, this pathway follows from first school to middle school to high school, while in the primary/secondary partnerships the pathway begins in primary school and follows on to secondary school at age 11. The Council allocates a catchment area/Transport Eligibility area to every school or academy, except in circumstances where a school or academy exists outside of the prevalent educational pathway within the relevant partnership. The catchment area/Transport Eligibility Area is a defined geographical area from which a school will expect to take children and assists the Council in ensuring that schools and academies have variable numbers of children living within it, and to assist with the organisation of Home to School transport eligibility. However, the application of parental preference and the existence of surplus places in schools means that even with catchment areas in place, there is considerable movement of children across catchment boundaries in some areas of the county as parents select to send their children to schools that are not then identified catchment school.

The catchment area/Transport Eligibility Area of the high or secondary school in any partnership contains all the feeder schools' catchments within it and is referred to as the 'greater catchment area'. The Council's oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary schools after the allocation of places to pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan and 'looked after' children are as follows:

1. Children living within the catchment area of the school.
2. Children with an exceptional social or medical reason that means that they can only attend that specific school.
3. Children resident in the greater catchment area of the school partnership who have siblings already in the school and who are expected to be on roll at the school at the

time of admission who live within the greater catchment area of the school partnership.

4. Children resident in the greater catchment area of the school partnership who are expected to be on the roll at the school at the time of admission.
5. Children who have a sibling who already attends the school and who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission.
6. Children on whose behalf preferences are expressed on grounds other than those outlined above.

Academies and voluntary aided schools are able to set their own admissions criteria, which in some cases differ from the Council's admissions criteria (for example they may set their own catchment area that differs from the Council's Transport Eligibility area) and can impact on the ability of children deemed by the Council to live within the school/academy's Transport Eligibility Area to gain a place at that school/academy.

Northumberland County Council has a very high success rate in meeting parental preference in relation to first choice of Reception places in first or primary schools and middle, high and secondary schools. For places allocated in September 2022, the percentage of first preference places met was as follows:

- **Reception First preferences allocated = 97.3%**
- **Secondary/Middle/High First preferences allocated = 97.2%**

While overall this measure is an indicator of a high success rate in meeting parental preference, it may also indicate that in some areas of the county there are high surplus places enabling parental preference to be met at this level (refer to section 4.2 Managing Surplus Places).

4.4 Home to School Transport

Northumberland County Council is responsible under legislation for the management and funding of home to school transport in the county. Generally, children of statutory school age who meet the criteria in relation to distance to school (ie who live further than 2 miles up to age 8, or 3-miles age 8 and over from their catchment or nearest school or where there is no safe walking route) are provided with transport to their catchment, nearest or nearest faith school where that is a parental preference. Pupils whose parents have expressed a preference for a school that is not their catchment, nearest or nearest faith school (where a place at a particular faith school has been allocated at the parent's request) will not be eligible for home to school transport.

In 2021/22, the Council spent almost £9m on statutory mainstream home to school transport for students in Reception to Year 11, with just over £1.5m being spent on mainstream post-16 home to school transport. In relation to students with special educational needs, in 2021/22 the Council spent just over £6m on statutory mainstream home to school transport for students in Reception to Year 11, and £1.7m on post-16 transport.

4.5 House Building

The provision of quality education is at the heart of sustainable communities and therefore is a fundamental consideration of all new housing developments. Where a new housing development is forecast to create a demand for school places in excess of those available in the catchment area of the development, the local authority will seek an education contribution from developers that reflects the likely costs of the additional places required. While contributions towards educational infrastructure had been received from developers in relation to large developments in the past, in 2017 the Council implemented an Education Infrastructure Policy to provide structure and consistency in relation to housing impact assessments. At the time of writing £17.3m of contributions set out within S106 agreements have been agreed by developers to support educational infrastructure, although the spending of this contribution is time-limited usually to 5 or 10 years from the building of the last house depending on the terms of individual agreements. The principles of the Council's Education Infrastructure Policy are included within the Northumberland Local Plan and can be reviewed by following this link [Northumberland County Council - Northumberland Local Plan](#).

In August 2020, the Government initiated a consultation 'Planning for the Future' with a view to bringing in reforms of the planning system to streamline and modernise the planning process, bring a new focus to design and sustainability, improve the system of developer contributions to infrastructure, and ensure more land is available for development where it is needed. The outcome of this consultation has not yet been published but the paper set out a proposal to revise the process by which developer contributions are secured and suggests that this process is incorporated within the overall Council Local Plan. The outcomes of this consultation and the consequent implementation of changes are still awaited.

Currently, the Council's secures educational infrastructure contributions via Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and is consistent with Northumberland County Council's obligation to ensure that every child living in the county is able to access a mainstream school place if they want one. It is accepted that there are limitations on the use of planning obligations, and these may only be used where the obligation is:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

If it is found that insufficient school places exist, an appropriate level of contribution will be calculated that takes due account of:

- The size of the development;
- Current and forecast school numbers;
- Likely pupil yield at primary and secondary level, as well as yield of pupils with Special Educational needs who may need a place at a Special School;
- The need to manage capacity and retain some flexibility in the system;

- Local and national information in relation to cost factors for the respective type of pupil places;
- Outstanding developments in the partnership area for which planning permission has already been granted.

The impact of each proposed planning application on local schools is assessed individually and the existence of surplus places in other schools in the relevant school partnership does not preclude the possibility of a request for a contribution towards educational infrastructure where the Council believes data warrants it. Likewise, the impact of housing development in neighbouring partnerships to that where a planning application is put forward will also be taken into account when predicting pupil flows; this could mean that while surplus capacity may currently exist in a school, the impact of the planning application development combined with housing development in surrounding areas could mean that additional capacity would be required at local schools within the timeframe of the build-out period and therefore developers should be requested to contribute to the costs of providing additional places or educational infrastructure. Northumberland's 'Five Year Housing Land Supply of Deliverable Sites' is used as part of the analysis of the impact of planning applications to provide a strategic view of the likely impact; this is in line with DfE requirements and recommendations.

Further information on how developer contributions are assessed and requested is available in the Northumberland County Council Education Infrastructure Policy provided at Appendix 2 of this document.

The level of approved planned housebuilding across the county over the next 5 years varies considerably between school partnerships, although generally there is less housebuilding planned in the rural West and North overall, with the majority of new housing planned for the more urban Southeast. The following table shows how many dwellings are currently planned to be constructed in each partnership between 2021/22 and 2025/26:

Partnership	No. Dwellings planned for construction 21/22-2025/26
Alnwick	777
Ashington	459
Bedlington	271
Berwick	679
Blyth and Bede combined	551
Cramlington	1,077
Coquet (Amble)	674
Haydon Bridge	105
Hexham	395
Morpeth	1,405
NCEA (Hirst, Newbiggin, Lynemouth)	437
Ponteland	241
Prudhoe	279
Seaton Valley	193

The impact of the above planned housebuilding on schools within these relevant partnerships will vary between partnerships considerably, as in some cases the number of pupils generated from new housing will simply help to stall the effect of falling pupil numbers in those areas, whereas in other partnerships additional places may need to be created. The number of houses constructed at any one time will also be a factor in the impact on schools, as some will experience 'bulge' years where expansion of accommodation for additional pupils is only required for a limited number of years. Further information on the impact on individual partnerships is set out in Section 7.

4.6 Inter-partnership and inter-authority movement of pupils

There has been a historical movement of pupils into and out of certain school partnerships, usually at phase changes, which is factored into pupil forecasting as stated in 4.1. Some of the inward flow into certain partnerships includes pupils from neighbouring local authorities' areas e.g. Durham and Newcastle, particularly into Hexham and Ponteland Partnerships respectively. As stated in section 2.4, the DfE have published data for 2021/22 on cross-border flows and this indicates 7% of pupils on roll in schools from Reception to Year 11 live in neighbouring authorities, mainly Newcastle, North Tyneside and Durham; this matches the Council's own previous data on this measure.

Although the law places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide places for children resident within their own boundary, some schools in Northumberland benefit greatly from the inward flow of out of county pupils, and indeed would not be educationally or financially viable did this not occur. Data for 2020/21 indicates that Ponteland Partnership continues to have the largest inward migration of pupils; with 637 (36% of total on roll) out of county students attending primary schools in the partnership, and 554 (43% of total on roll not including 6th form) out of county students attending Ponteland High School. The majority of these students live in Newcastle.

While this movement of pupils in and out of partnerships is generally consistent over time and therefore predictable, certain events such as a school reorganisation can trigger 'new' outward and inward flows that must be monitored in order to analyse the impact on the affected schools, such as adjustments to forecasting weightings and, if necessary, consider the need for additional places. Therefore, events such as the now-approved reorganisation of the Coquet Partnership in September 2024 onwards and the proposed changes to school structures in the Berwick Partnership (should any be approved) may impact the inward and/or outward flow of pupils in those areas.

5. CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

The Council works with schools and academies collaboratively in order to ensure that sufficient school places for children and young people living in Northumberland are available where a need is identified. Where the provision of additional places is to be met via capital development, the Council applies a number of principles to such projects:

5.1 Principles

- Where relevant, designs include flexibility to allow for curriculum development and delivery and future population growth ('future-proofing');
- Collaborating with maintained mainstream schools and academies to provide sufficient places where there is a need;
- Maximising developer contributions to ensure that appropriate investment is made in education infrastructure;
- Working in partnership with contractors to deliver quality construction and efficiency in design and procurement;
- Scheduling significant capital projects to be ready in time to meet need or demand for places;
- Support the public purse by endeavouring to ensure value for money by minimising future liabilities for suitability, maintenance and flexibility;
- Deliver school buildings that will serve local communities for several generations and are designed to be sympathetic to the local area.

5.2 Funding

Capital projects can be funded through a variety of sources depending on circumstances including whether they are stand alone projects or partnership wide reorganisations. Key funding streams are:

- Section 106 funding from new house building developments; the DfE have identified this as the primary route through which funding for additional school places required as a result of pupil yield from new housing development should be sought, with the publication of their "Securing Developer Contributions for Education, April 2019"
- Basic Need Grant funding from central government based on identification of need for places in specific schools and partnerships; in the light of the above, this would be relevant mainly in the case of rising birth rates or inward movement of populations not related to new housing.
- School Condition Allocations from central government;
- Capital contributions from individual school budgets (DFC) or through collaboration with academies that are granted funds from Condition Improvement Funding.

5.3 Methods

The Council has approved capital schemes to accommodate additional school places by:

- **Extending schools by adding classrooms** or reconfiguring existing spaces; where the need for additional places at some schools have been forecast to be permanent and not just a one-off ‘bulge year’, capital schemes have been undertaken to provide classroom extensions or reconfiguration. This has also applied where school reorganisations have taken place, such as Alnwick and Ponteland Partnerships, and additional classrooms have been required to accommodate new Year 5 and Year 6 groups.
- **Provision of new buildings;** Most recently as part of the reorganisation of the Ponteland Partnership, the option appraisal exercise for provision of accommodation to support the process has identified the provision of new shared accommodation for Ponteland High School and Ponteland Primary School as the most cost effective and educationally preferable route. The new school buildings form part of an education and leisure complex and are now under construction in compliance with Building Bulletin 103.

5.4 Working with Partners

The Council works with a range of partners to deliver suitable accommodation for additional school places:

- Headteacher and Governing Bodies
- RC and CE dioceses
- Academy trusts
- Regional Schools Commissioner, EFA and DfE
- Town and parish councils
- Housing developers
- Local communities

5.6 Capital Projects completed

Capital projects completed in the timeframe within last 18 month period include the following:

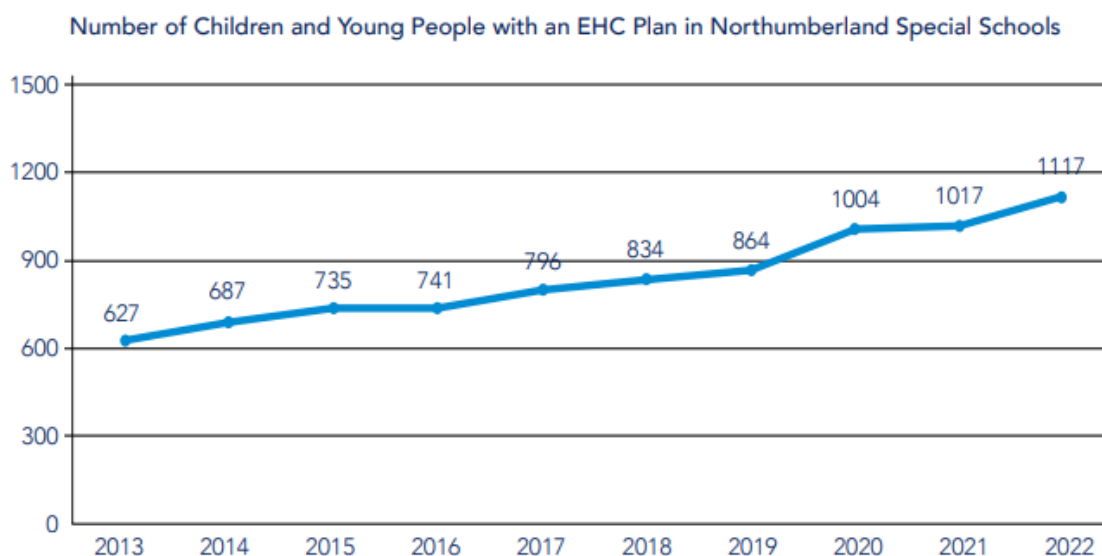
- Ponteland scheme - Successfully handed over Ponteland Schools and Leisure scheme.
- Hadrian Learning Trust buildings project completed
- 28 projects completed under the SCIP scheme, across the county, totaling approximately £3m.
- Seaton Valley Outline Business Case delivered and project now in Planning phase Programme for delivery of Mobile Classroom provision in roll-out stage.
- Relocation and expansion of Atkinson House from Seghill to Emily Wilding Davison in Ponteland
- Complex Coquet Partnership project underway
- Bedlington Station Early Years project well underway and due to be completed by January 2023
- Projects underway at KEVI, Cleaswell Hill, PRU and mobile classroom replacements

6. NON-MAINSTREAM PROVISION

6.1 Special Educational Needs

Overview

In Northumberland, the number of children and young people who have been diagnosed as having Autism, Social Emotional and Mental Health needs has been increasing, with Significant additional capacity in the county's 9 special schools being required year on year for the past 10 years, as demonstrated in the graph and table below:



School	Special School Numbers										
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Atkinson House	59	50	54	58	64	71	78	72	75	75	
Barndale House	35	37	40	36	38	40	37	46	48	59	
Cleaswell Hill	125	148	154	161	173	175	181	187	188	194	
Collingwood School and Media Arts College	104	127	142	136	136	145	144	197	201	232	
Cramlington Hillcrest	45	56	58	61	72	81	88	99	100	109	
Hexham Priory	60	65	76	77	88	96	99	113	113	120	
NCEA Castle							102	99	99	111	
NCEA Unit	98	98	98	98	98	98					
The Dales	68	72	77	76	88	89	98				
The Dales (including Ashdale)								144	148	169	
The Grove	33	34	36	38	39	39	37	47	45	48	
Grand Total	627	687	735	741	796	834	864	1004	1017	1117	

This steady upward trend in demand for special school places equates to an average increase over this period to date of 7% each year (actual variation from year to year has been between 1% and 16%). Overall, there are 78% more children and young people with an

EHCP in Northumberland in 2022 than there were in 2013. Contributing to this is the continuing increasing demand from parents for their children to be educated within special school provision both in and out of the county.

This steady upward trend is also seen in the number of SEND commissioned places in the independent sector which has also seen an increase of 93 places since 2017 (see the following table).

Independent and non-maintained SEND settings showing number of Northumberland-resident students on roll

School	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Appletree School	1	2	2	2	1	0
Azure Charitable Enterprises	0	2	3	2	2	2
Buzz School and College	0	6	20	22	25	43
Dilston College	12	6	1	1	1	0
GUST	13	28	28	26	28	29
Howard House	1	1	0	3	5	3
High Peak	0	1	1	1	1	1
ID Academy	0	0	0	3	3	5
Kirby Moor School	6	4	6	8	9	11
Nisai Virtual Academy Ltd	1	1	2	5	3	3
North East Autism Society - Thornhill Park	1	3	2	2	2	2
North East Centre for Autism - Aycliffe	2	2	1	1	1	1
Northern Counties School	18	25	23	22	21	20
Nunykirk School	10	27	45	41	46	35
Parkside House School	11	11	17	19	14	15
Peartree Project	1	1	1	1	4	4
Percy Hedley College	5	3	7	9	6	7
Percy Hedley School	27	21	23	20	17	13
Priory Fieldfare	0	0	0	1	1	0
Rosewood Independant School	0	0	0	0	13	18
Spark of Genius - Caledonian School	0	0	0	0	1	1
Spark of Genius - Harbour Point School	2	2	3	2	3	0
Talbot House School Newcastle	10	6	15	11	7	5
TOTAL	121	152	200	202	214	218

Note - Nunykirk School closed on 31 August 2022

It is also widely acknowledged nationally that there are significant financial pressures on mainstream schools in supporting SEND provision, not least due to school budget pressures and expectations on schools to fund the first £6k of support for each SEND learner with an EHCP. In particular, there has been a significant increase in the number

of children and young people who have been identified with a primary special need of autism (ASD) and/or social emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Northumberland has been successful in bidding for a special free school, the Gilbert Ward Academy, for secondary age young people who have autism and social, emotional and mental health needs which is planned to open in Autumn 2023. Looking at more recent data, as at the January 2022 SEN Census, 2,650 children and young people had EHCP plans; this is an increase of 58% since 2017.

To address the need to increase specialist provision capacity within Northumberland in a managed way, a five-year programme of proposed projects has been set out in the Northumberland [SEND Capacity and Place Planning Strategy](#). This strategy will endeavour to ensure that the right type of specialist provision places are created in the right areas of the county, at the right time. The strategy sets out the methodology for forecasting SEND places and provides a forecast for each school partnership over the next 5 years. The strategy also sets out high-level ideas and proposals for meeting the need for additional capacity and the accompanying timetable for consultation in school partnership areas. Work in relation to the strategy has already begun, with the creation of a satellite site of Barndale House Special School being approved to go ahead in Amble with effect from September 2024 - the 50-place provision created would be for students with primary needs in SEMH, ASD, MLD and SLCN.

The proposed increase in specialist provision will of course require capital funding and indications on the potential cost of this provision and the funding streams are also set out in the strategy. As for this School Organisation Plan, the SEND Capacity and Place Planning Strategy will be updated annually to reflect changing needs or alternative proposals.

6.2 Post-16 provision

Local authorities are required to ensure that all young people in its area continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday. The Council has broad duties to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training. Specifically, these are to -

- secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people in our area who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19 to 25 and an Education and Health Care Plan is maintained. This is a duty under the Education Act 1996. To fulfil this, the Council needs a strategic overview of the provision available in the county and to identify and resolve any gaps in provision;
- provide support that encourages, enables or assists all young people aged 13-19 and between 19 and 25 for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to participate in education or training under section 68 of the Education and Skills Act (ESA) 2008.

In Northumberland, all high and secondary schools and academies have sixth form provision. The Council also seeks to support this duty by providing improved accommodation for sixth form students in high and secondary schools e.g. the new building for Ponteland High School

includes state of the art accommodation for sixth form. Furthermore, the Council approved a new Post-16 Transport Policy implemented for 2018/19 which provides free transport to eligible students to enable them to access the closest relevant learning to their home address, although this of course has an ongoing impact on the Council's Home to School Transport budget.

6.3 Early Years provision

The Council is committed to ensuring that young children can access high quality early education and care in a range of provision in order to create a solid foundation on which to build and go on to succeed at school and in later life. The local market for early years provision is mainly dominated by the private and voluntary sector which varies in provision size, quality and type, although there are a significant number of schools and Children's Centres who equally deliver good quality similar early years provision within the county.

All schools and Ofsted-registered early years providers must adhere to the EYFS, which sets the standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old and which they are inspected against. The Council is committed to supporting early years provision across Northumberland.

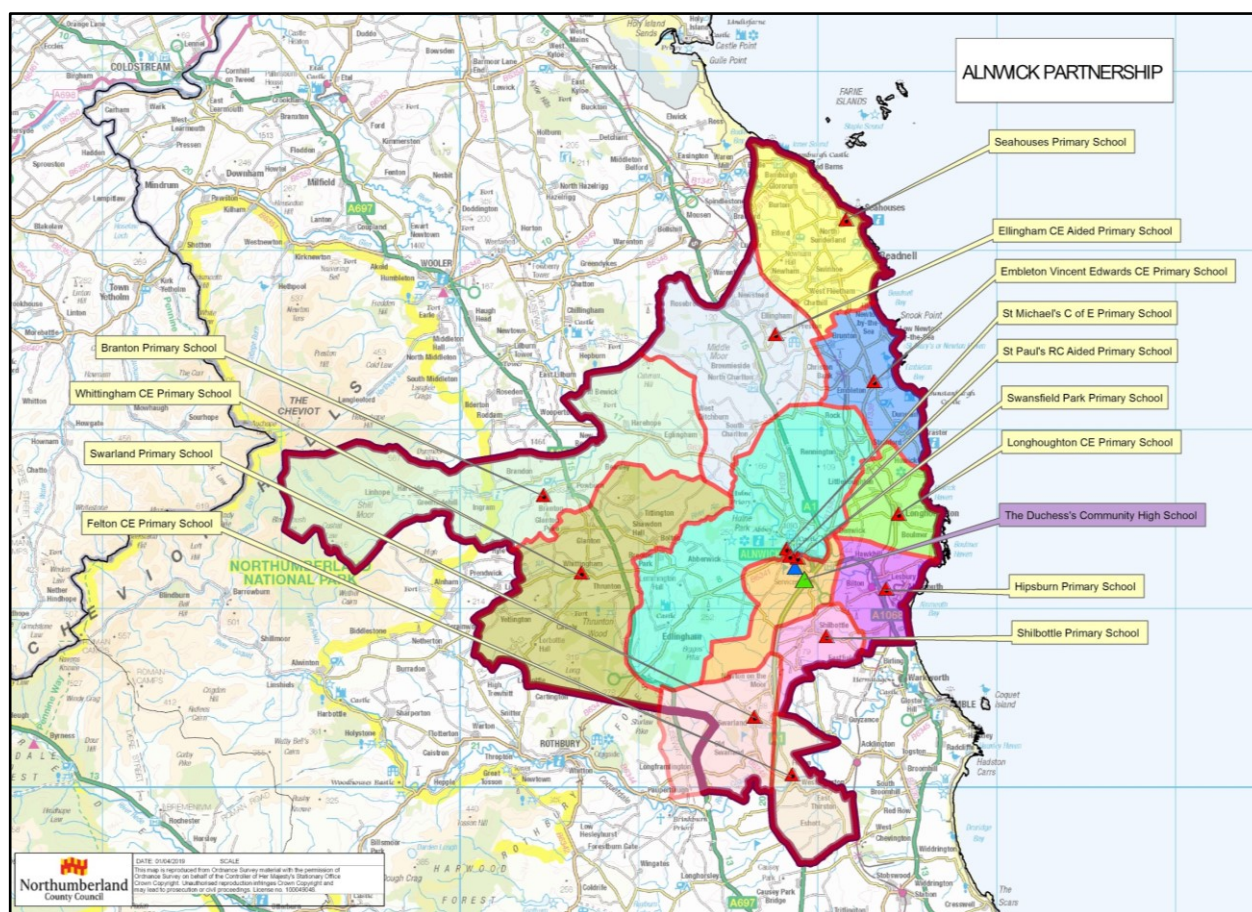
Early years education and care is delivered by 377 settings in Northumberland is delivered via:

- 174 Childminders (of which 132 deliver EYFS)
 - 95 groups offer Full and sessional Day Care, including 8 which offer out of school clubs (funded education)
 - 93 schools offer wrap around care
 - 16 Children's Centres
 - 52 Home Carers
 - 2 Creche

Of the above, 227 PVI's deliver the EYFS via funded entitlement, and 108 schools also deliver the EYFS.

7. SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS (PLANNING AREAS)

7.1 Alnwick Partnership



The Alnwick Partnership is organised in the primary/secondary structure and is formed from the following schools:

- Ellingham CE Primary
- Seahouses Primary
- Longhoughton CE Primary
- Shilbottle Primary
- St Michael's CE Primary
- Swarland Primary
- Felton CE Primary
- St Paul's Catholic Primary
- Branton Primary
- Whittingham CE Primary
- Hipsburn Primary
- Embleton Vincent Edward's CE Primary
- Swansfield Park Primary
- The Duchess's High School

The majority of pupils who live in the Alnwick Partnership attend schools within the partnership, although significant numbers do not attend their own catchment school. Overall, the number of pupils being born in the Alnwick Partnership has been declining slowly over a number of years, although there are indications that decline could be beginning to plateau. There is some housebuilding in Alnwick over the next 5 years which will yield around 3 of 4 pupils in each year group in each of these years. Alnwick Partnership does benefit from cross-border flows of pupils into school both at primary with 9% of pupils crossing from neighbouring partnerships but even more at secondary phase where the percentage rises to 26%. As a result, the overall level of surplus places in Alnwick Partnership is 21%. While there is some housebuilding planned to be constructed in the greater Alnwick catchment over the next five years, its impact will be limited to a small number of schools and is only likely to reduce the impact of surplus places rather than require additional places to be created.

The majority of pupils crossing partnerships into Alnwick reside in Berwick and Coquet Partnership. Surplus capacity within the partnership has been impacting on schools in the primary phase initially, with some individual schools being impacted more than others. Therefore, in order to assist schools with managing their staffing plans and organisation of classes going forward, consultation on the reduction of PANs in a small number of schools is being undertaken as part of the current annual consultation on admissions arrangements for September 2024; these proposed reductions would be to relevant approval by the Council's Cabinet.

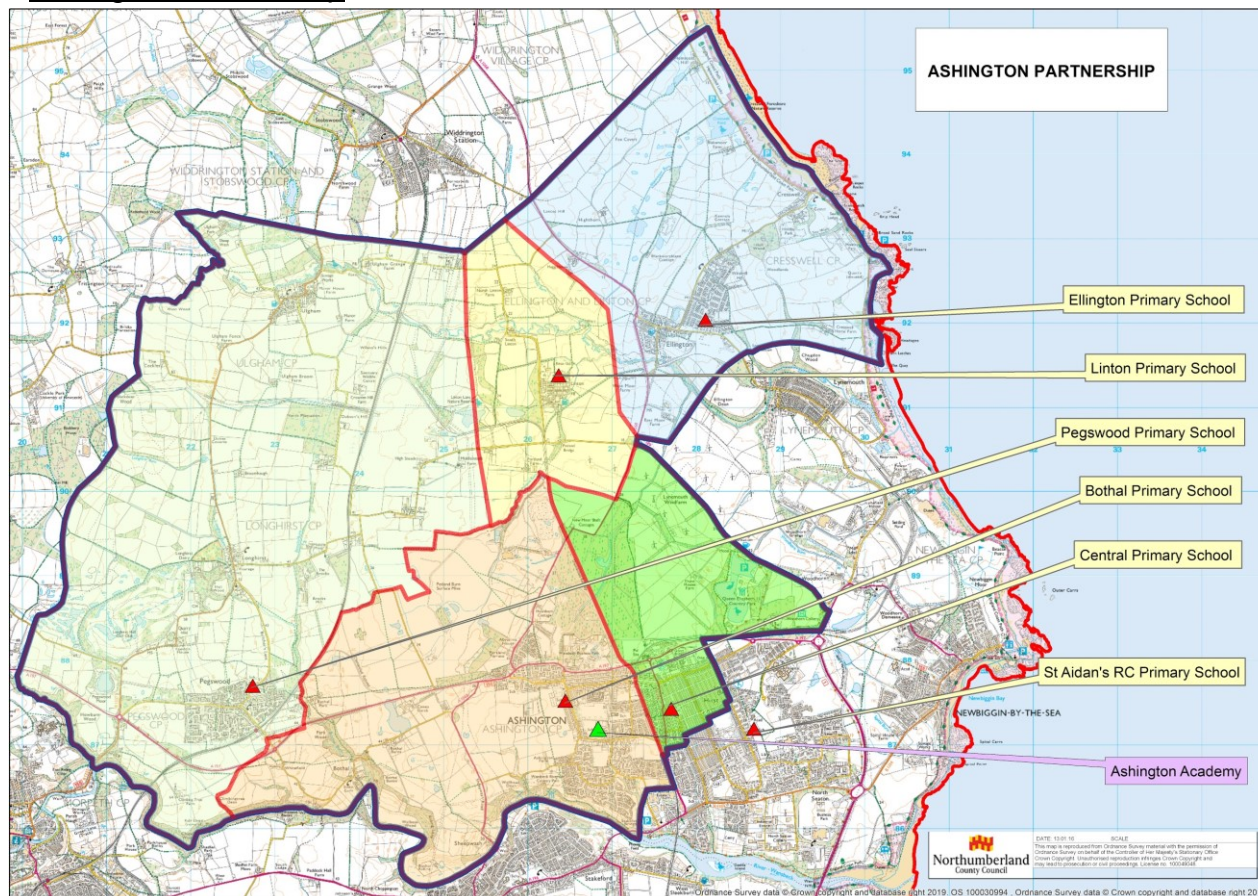
The Duchess High School continues to retain around 85% of the students living in its catchment area, and around 24% of students on roll live in neighbouring partnerships; less than 1% of students on roll live out of county. However, even if all of the secondary age students residing in The Duchess's catchment area attended the school, there would still be surplus places (even allowing for the planned housebuilding) and this enables significant in-flow from other neighbouring partnerships, mainly Berwick and Coquet. As a result, consultation on a reduction of The Duchess's PAN for intakes in September 2024 is currently taking place, again subject to approval by the Council's Cabinet.

The pupil forecast table below demonstrates that the primary phase will continue to have surplus places for the foreseeable future. As stated, there are sufficient places in the secondary phase at The Duchess for in-catchment children, as the forecast below includes 'out-of-catchment' children who would not necessarily be offered a place once the school reaches its PAN. Furthermore, consultation is currently taking place on proposals to change the organisation of schools in the Berwick Partnership (see para. 7.3) which could result in the expansion of the Alnwick Partnership greater catchment area.

Final Forecasts															NOR TOTALS
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
Actual Jan 2022	166	210	190	168	222	193	205	216	250	260	240	261	129	137	2847
2023	175	165	211	191	171	211	194	238	222	267	260	239	151	112	2808
2024	173	177	170	217	198	166	216	229	249	241	270	263	139	132	2838
2025	157	178	184	177	226	194	172	255	241	270	245	274	151	121	2843
2026	162	159	178	185	179	213	193	197	261	255	269	243	155	131	2779
2027	167	164	156	176	184	166	211	220	199	275	252	265	138	134	2708
2028	165	167	163	156	177	173	164	243	225	211	274	250	152	120	2638
2029	162	164	165	162	156	166	171	190	249	239	209	272	144	132	2579
2030	160	160	164	161	164	147	166	199	195	265	239	209	158	125	2512
PAN TOTALS	287	287	287	292	292	292	292	250	250	250	250	250	250	150	3,679

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

7.2 Ashington Partnership



The Ashington Partnership is organised in the primary/secondary structure and includes the following schools:

- Bothal Primary
- Central Primary
- Ellington Primary
- Pegswood Primary
- Linton Primary
- St Aidan's RCVA Primary
- Ashington Academy

GP birth data for Ashington continues to indicate a slightly downward trend in numbers of children being born in the greater catchment area, although some schools have a more significant trend downwards than others. 34% of pupils who attend schools in the primary phase in Ashington reside in neighbouring partnerships, mainly the NCEA partnership, which given its proximity to Ashington is not surprising.

Some primary schools in the Ashington Partnership have suffered from drift at the end of Year 4 .e.g Pegswood Primary, as many parents choose to send their children to popular schools in the Morpeth Partnership, where the number of school places is in excess of the current local population. The significant level of house building planned for Morpeth town over the coming period begins to impact on surplus places in schools is expected to result in fewer places being available for children outside of the Morpeth Partnership and Ashington

schools will retain more of their catchment children. As a result of the difficulty in being able to effectively manage staffing plans and class organisation due to uncertainty around pupil numbers, Pegswood Primary was approved to reduce its PAN from 40 to 30 with effect from September 2023.

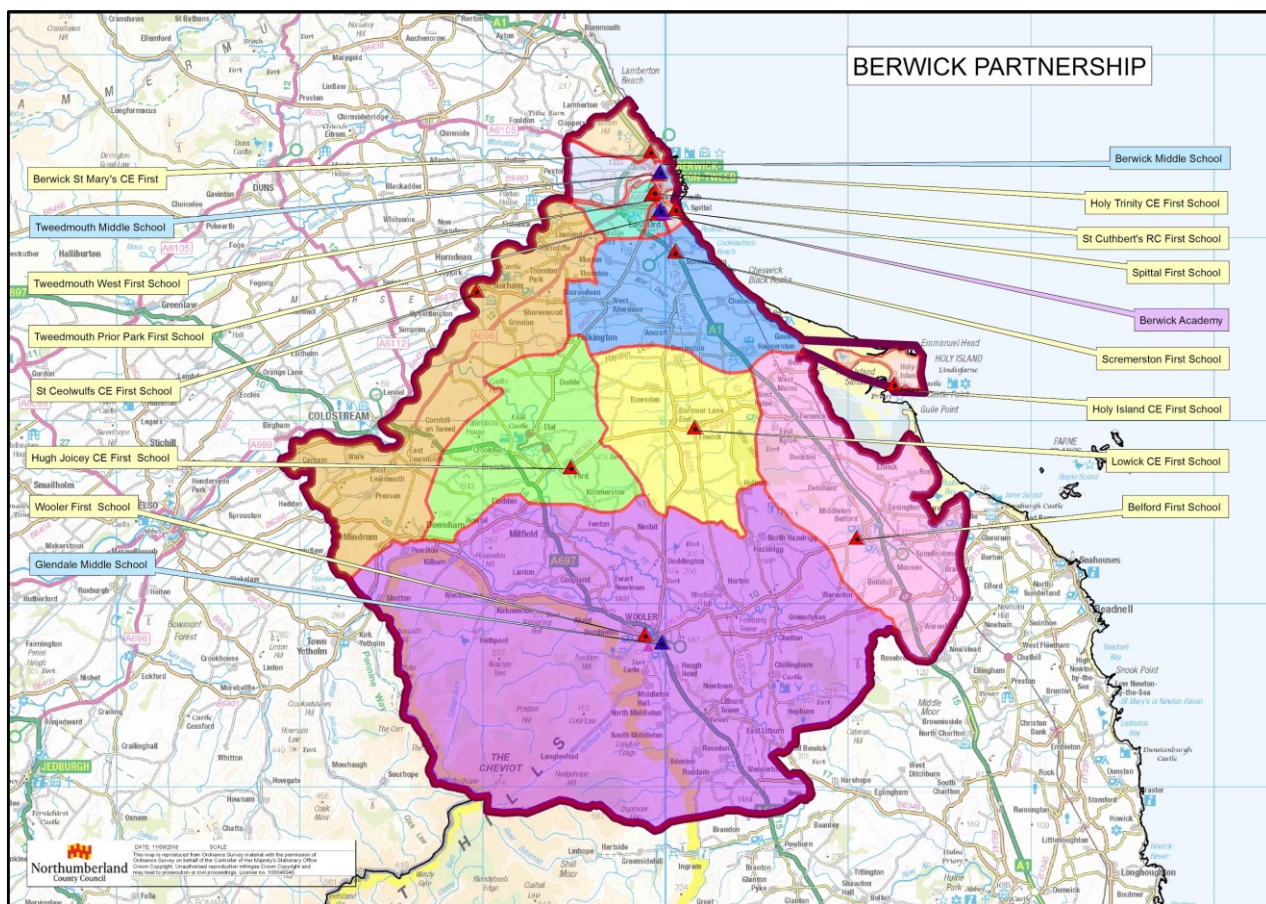
Ashington Academy is beginning to attract more catchment pupils and given the larger cohorts of pupils living in the catchment who will be entering secondary phase in the near future, this is a potential concern with regard to the number of places the academy is offering at entry, which is now below its actual capacity of 210.

Overall, the number of surplus places in Ashington Partnership match the County figure of 18%.

Final Forecasts																NOR
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TOTALS	
Actual Jan 2022	242	241	248	248	274	273	267	184	172	196	165	170	53	37	2770	
2023	257	243	240	245	249	268	275	198	178	162	187	158	53	41	2753	
2024	231	260	244	240	248	246	273	207	195	171	157	182	50	41	2745	
2025	206	234	261	243	242	245	250	205	203	186	165	152	56	38	2685	
2026	202	208	231	256	242	235	245	185	198	190	176	157	46	43	2615	
2027	228	204	207	228	257	237	237	183	179	186	181	168	48	35	2577	
2028	224	230	203	204	228	250	238	176	177	169	177	173	52	37	2537	
2029	218	226	228	200	204	222	252	177	171	166	160	169	53	40	2487	
2030	215	220	225	225	201	199	224	188	172	161	158	154	52	41	2434	
PAN TOTALS	318	308	308	308	308	308	308	180	210	210	210	210	150	150	3,486	

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

7.3 Berwick Partnership



The Berwick Partnership is almost wholly organised within the 3-tier system with one exception and is formed from the following schools:

- Berwick St Mary's CE First
- Tweedmouth West First
- Tweedmouth Prior Park First
- Holy Trinity CE First
- St Cuthbert's RCVA First
- Scremerston First
- Spittal First
- Norham St Ceolwulf's CE First
- Hugh Joicey CE First
- Wooler First
- Lowick CE First
- Holy Island CE First
- Belford Primary
- Tweedmouth Middle School
- Berwick Middle School
- Glendale Middle School
- Berwick Academy

Birth data for the partnership indicates a fall in pupil numbers for the foreseeable future. There is almost no inward flow of pupils into Berwick, with only just over 1% coming into the partnership; these pupils come mostly from out of county.

First schools are generally popular with pupils within their own catchment, but as the schools do not benefit from inward flows of pupils, levels of surplus places in this phase are high at 32%. Significant numbers of pupils in the partnership also leave the middle schools in the partnership to join schools in neighbouring partnerships to the south of the catchment and to join the Eyemouth High School in Scotland, which has recently had a new building. Consequently, there are 25% surplus places in the middle schools.

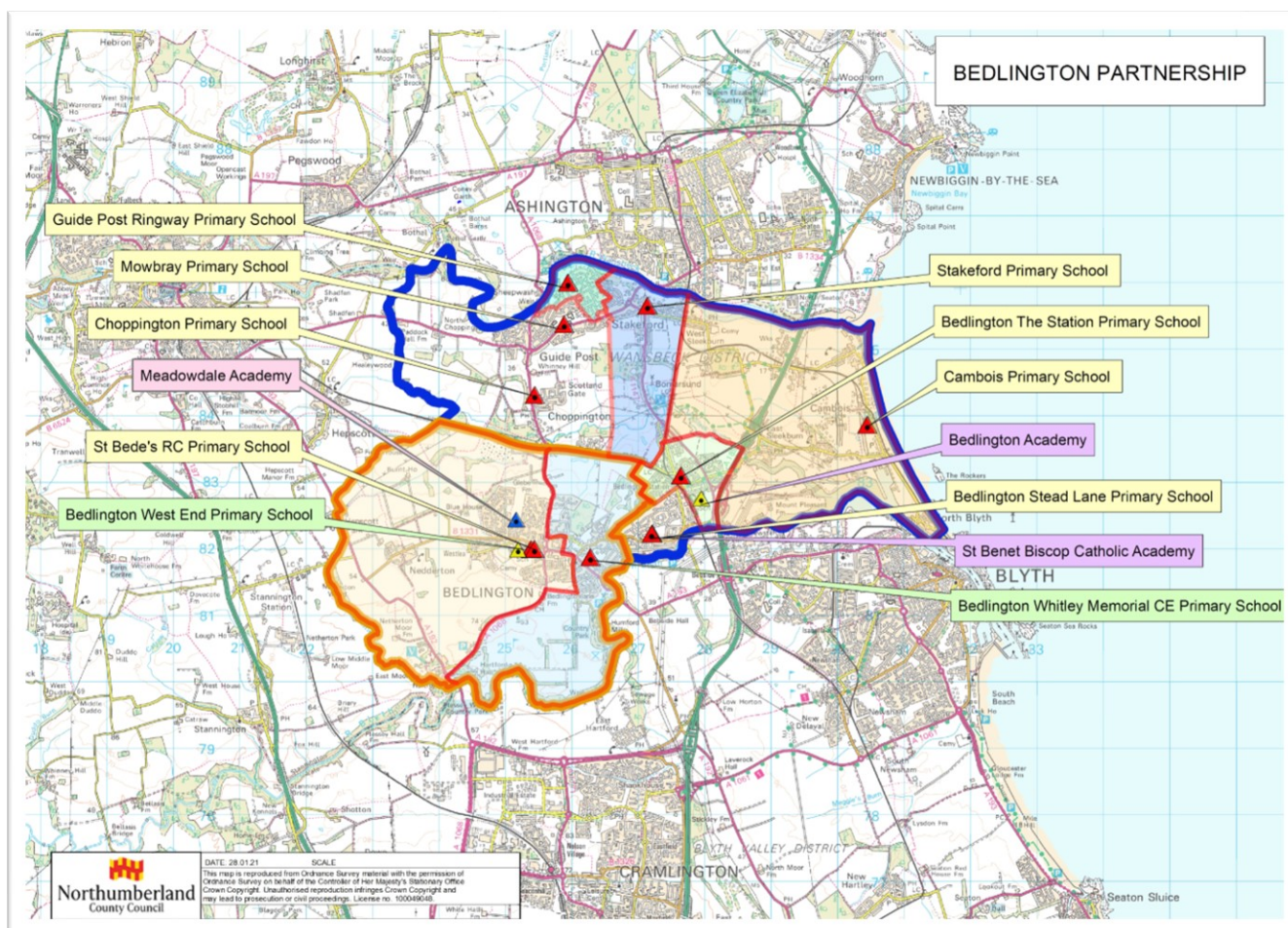
Berwick Academy continues to try to recover from the Requires Improvement as judged by Ofsted in January 2016, although the number on roll has risen since the previous version of this document. The independent school Longridge Towers is also located in the Berwick greater catchment and the Council has historically arranged for children resident on Holy Island to be educated there from middle school age, which means they do not go on to join Berwick Academy in Year 9. Berwick Academy currently has 43% surplus places, a slight reduction since the last version of this document, while the partnership as a whole has 33% surplus places. This is reflected in the pupil forecast below.

Final Forecasts															NOR
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TOTALS
Actual Jan 2022	182	205	183	188	220	230	228	194	170	166	145	120	51	41	2323
2023	166	183	206	182	186	212	228	198	182	145	163	137	50	37	2275
2024	167	170	188	208	183	183	213	201	189	158	145	157	57	37	2255
2025	167	173	176	191	211	181	185	190	193	166	159	142	64	42	2239
2026	149	172	175	175	190	204	180	162	178	166	163	152	56	47	2168
2027	166	152	170	171	171	181	199	155	150	151	160	152	60	41	2080
2028	162	169	151	167	168	163	177	172	143	127	146	150	61	44	2000
2029	161	165	170	149	165	161	161	153	161	122	124	138	61	45	1936
2030	160	164	166	168	148	159	159	140	144	137	120	118	56	45	1884
PAN TOTALS	293	293	293	293	293	301	301	271	271	225	225	225	150	150	3,584

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

As a result of the £39.9 capital funding for Berwick school buildings identified within the within the medium-term capital plan, consultation on structures of school organisation is currently underway in the partnership in order to ensure that this funding is invested in a viable and sustainable school system, including addressing the fall in pupil numbers. A final decision on school structures is expected in Summer or early Autumn 2023.

7.4 Bedlington Partnership



Bedlington Partnership became wholly primary/secondary in September 2020, after having a mixed economy of provision for several years. The schools are as follows:

- Bedlington West End Primary
- Whitley Memorial CE Primary
- St Bede's Catholic Primary (academy)
- Mowbray Primary
- Guidepost Ringway Primary
- Stakeford Primary
- Choppington Primary
- Bedlington Stead Lane Primary
- Bedlington Station Primary
- Cambois Primary
- Meadowdale Academy (primary)
- Bedlington Academy
- St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy

The partnership has 2 secondary schools located within it, Bedlington Academy which serves the partnership area and St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy, which serves the RC community in the Southeast of the county, being the only RC 11-18 school in the county. Just under half of its intake of pupils feed in from the RC primaries in the Southeast (and a

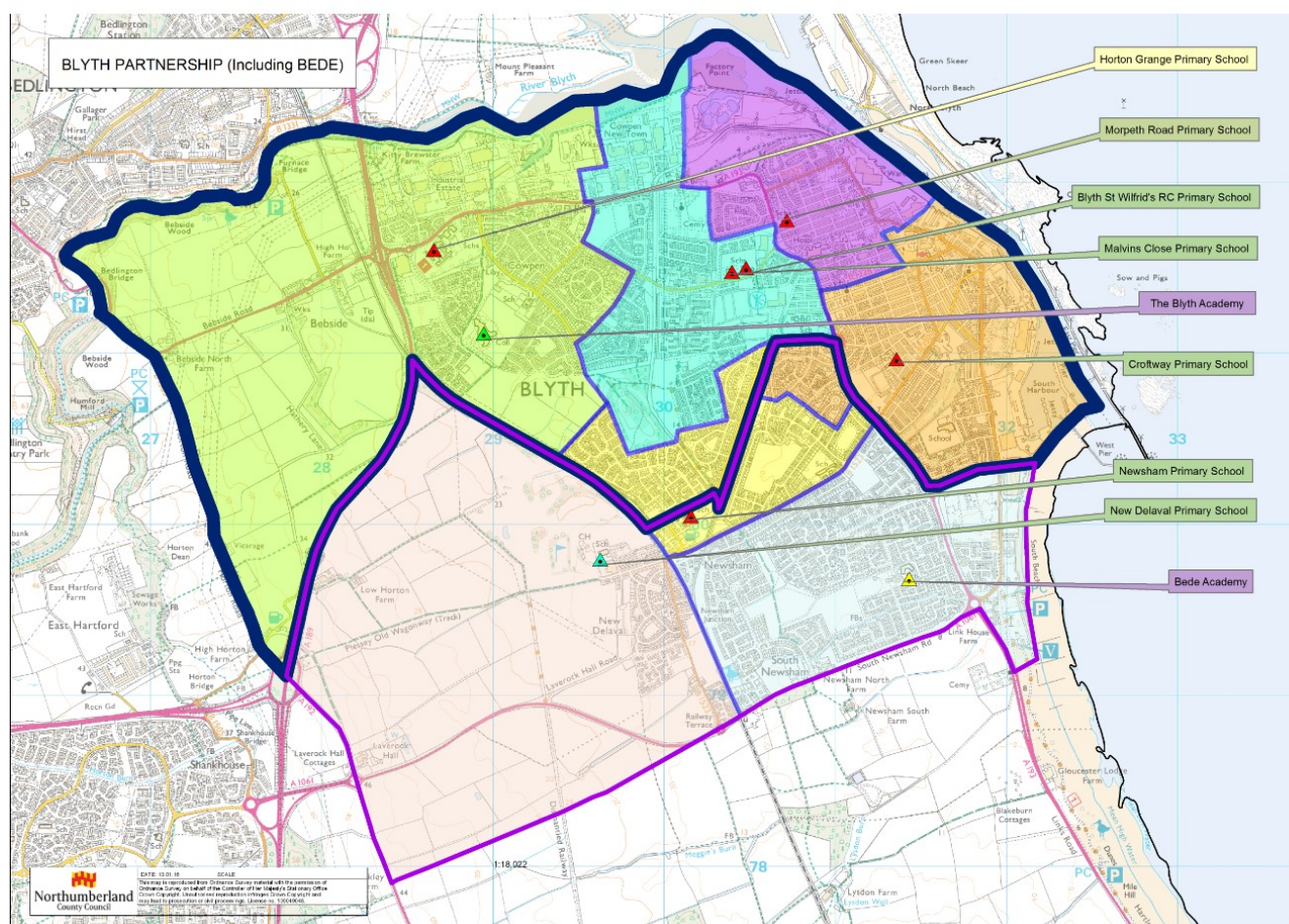
small number from further afield), with the remainder of the pupils residing in the Bedlington area. Experience of other reorganisations in the county indicate that it will take 2 or 3 years for the new arrangements to become embedded in Bedlington.

The birth rate in Bedlington has been falling for a number of years and the current surplus places of 22% are predicted to increase in the short-term. While there is very little approved housing development in the town over the next five years, there is more planned in the longer term which at least may be able to reduce the continuing fall in numbers, although there may be localised impact on some primary schools. As in all other cases, surplus places at the partnership level would not preclude requests for education infrastructure contributions from developers, should local impact on schools be identified.

Final Forecasts															NOR
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TOTALS
Actual Jan 2022	262	269	278	298	305	327	289	375	365	341	349	339	99	89	3985
2023	265	262	275	280	303	306	330	363	375	358	329	338	104	84	3974
2024	251	267	270	278	286	306	310	416	365	370	347	321	103	88	3978
2025	250	253	275	273	284	288	310	391	418	359	359	338	98	88	3984
2026	241	252	259	276	277	286	291	388	391	410	347	348	103	83	3953
2027	255	243	258	261	281	279	288	364	389	384	396	337	106	87	3927
2028	253	256	249	260	265	282	281	361	365	381	371	384	102	90	3900
2029	250	255	262	250	264	266	284	352	361	358	369	360	117	87	3836
2030	250	252	261	264	254	265	268	356	353	355	346	358	109	99	3790
PAN TOTALS	300	467	467	467	467	353	353	458	488	360	360	360	360	360	5,620

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

7.5 Blyth Partnerships (including Bede)



Blyth has two partnerships, Blyth Partnership and Bede Partnership, which as two of the County's most urban partnerships covering the same town are more effectively considered together in relation to school place planning. Blyth was the second area to be reorganised in the primary/secondary structure in Northumberland since 2008. The town has the following schools:

- Horton Grange Primary
- Morpeth Road Primary Academy
- St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary Academy
- Malvin's Close Primary Academy
- Croftway Primary Academy
- Newsham Primary
- New Delaval Primary
- Bede Academy (all-through)
- The Blyth Academy

Two of the primary schools in Blyth feed to both Blyth Academy and Bede Academy (all-through). Of the nine schools and academies within the partnerships, six are academies with

St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary became part of the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust in December 2020.

Increasing birth rates and the impact of some inward flow appear to have peaked and there has been a slight reduction in births overall within the partnership increased in recent years, but now appear to be steadying, although this masks some variation across individual school catchment areas. There is additional housebuilding in the Blyth and Bede Partnerships over the coming five years, but given the number of places now available in the partnership, it is envisaged that this will be sufficient to cater from demand from any additional pupils generated from new housing.

Overall, there now appear to be sufficient pupil places at primary level for local children with the majority of Blyth pupils staying in the town for their education. While there is some movement of pupils between catchment areas at primary phase in Blyth, there is a relatively low level of inward flow, with less than 1% coming into Blyth schools out of catchment at primary level and 5% coming into the secondary academies.

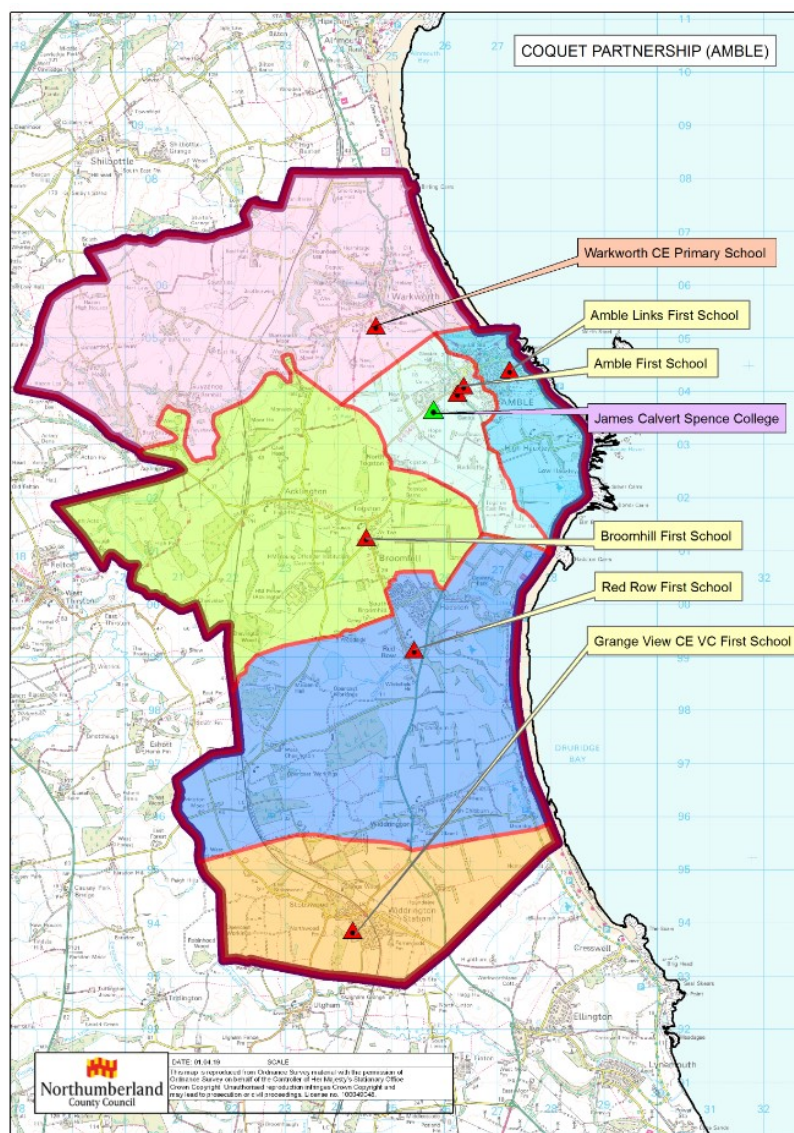
Based on January 2022 data, Blyth Academy continues to attract around 46% of students in its catchment area. Although not deemed necessary to accommodate local children in Blyth, Bede Academy increased its planned admission number into Year 7 from 105 to 134 (not including 90 pupils transferring from the primary element of the academy) from September 2019.

Given the retention of pupils at primary phase and at Bede Academy, the level of surplus places in Blyth is slightly above the county average at 21%.

Final Forecasts																NOR
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TOTALS	
Actual Jan 2022	399	422	434	426	431	453	430	383	376	401	345	350	104	95	5049	
2023	446	401	414	435	422	425	446	387	386	369	397	342	112	93	5075	
2024	397	453	398	420	436	421	423	406	394	383	370	398	109	100	5109	
2025	383	400	446	401	418	432	417	383	410	389	381	369	126	97	5052	
2026	368	385	389	444	394	409	422	371	382	400	381	374	116	112	4946	
2027	398	371	377	389	439	387	402	378	373	374	395	377	119	103	4882	
2028	398	400	364	378	386	433	382	362	381	367	371	392	120	106	4839	
2029	388	400	394	365	375	381	427	344	364	375	363	368	125	107	4775	
2030	387	390	393	395	362	370	375	384	346	358	371	360	117	111	4720	
PAN TOTALS	510	465	465	465	465	465	465	464	345	345	345	345	300	275	5,719	

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

7.6 Coquet Partnership (Amble)



The Coquet Partnership currently has 6 first schools and one age 9-18 school as follows:

- Amble Links First
- Amble First
- Broomhill First
- Red Row First
- Grange View CE First
- NCEA Warkworth CE Primary
- James Calvert Spence College (JCSC - age 9-18)

Following extensive consultation, in November 2022 the Council approved the reorganisation of the Coquet Partnership to a 2-tier (primary/secondary) structure of schools; the first phase of implementation will begin in September 2024 when first schools become primary and retain their Year 4's as they become Year 5, while in September 2025 they will retain their Year 5's as they become Year 6. In September 2025, James Calvert Spence College (JCSC) will also reduce its age range to 11 to 18 and will take students into Year 7 only from that

point. This also includes circa £33.5m investment to improve JCSC buildings and support the reorganisation to primary/secondary.

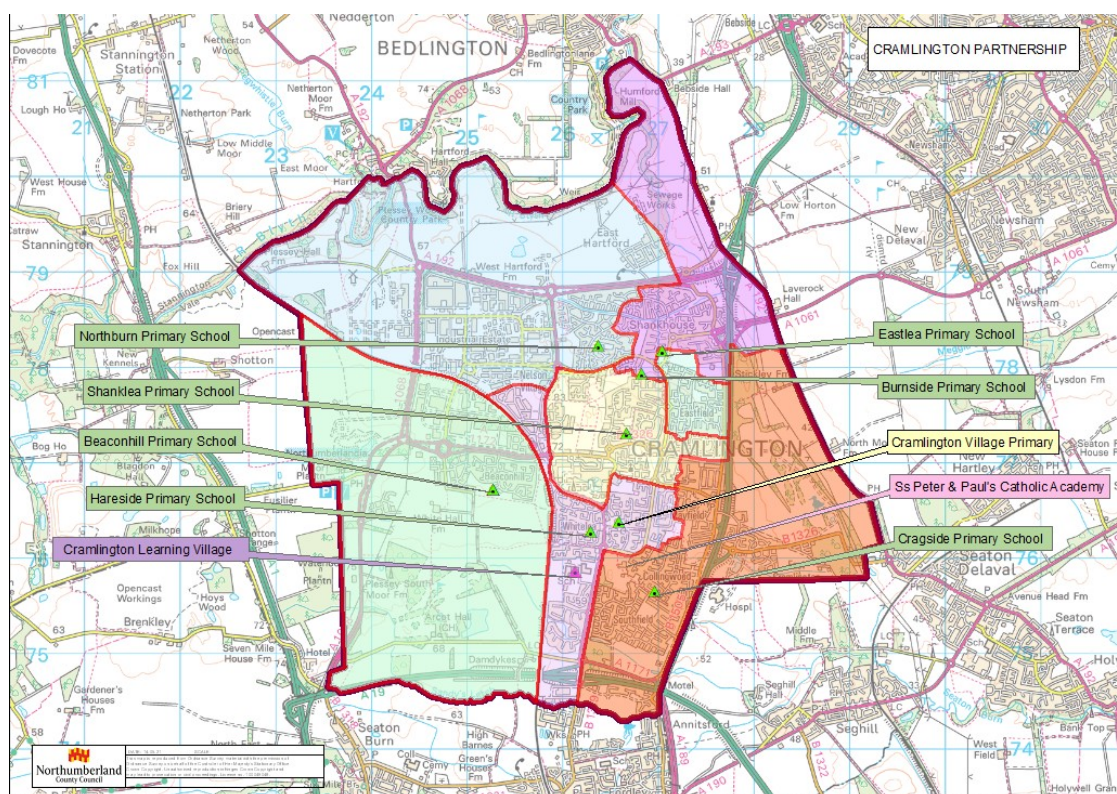
Birth data for Coquet Partnership is relatively steady, although this masks some variation in capacity at the individual school level, e.g at the first and primary phase, some schools are more popular and attract pupils from other catchments. Most pupils at first school phase attend school in the Coquet catchment, whereas only 66% of secondary age pupils attend James Calvert Spence College (JCSC), with other pupils attending neighbouring partnership schools, mainly The Duchess High School in Alnwick.

There is also very little inward flow of pupils into the Coquet partnership, with only 2% of pupils at first school and secondary phase residing in other partnerships. There is some housebuilding planned within the partnership locally over this forecast period which will impact on a small number of schools, but due to parental preference there is sufficient capacity for pupils within their own catchment schools for the foreseeable future. As a result of relatively high surplus places at JCSC, overall surplus places in the partnership are at 27%, but it is envisaged that this figure will reduce as a result of additional students being retained within the partnership following reorganisation.

Final Forecasts															NOR
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TOTALS
Actual Jan 2022	126	119	105	112	112	116	107	98	96	101	94	88	39	30	1343
2023	121	125	118	103	109	104	116	95	95	95	102	91	44	28	1347
2024	117	123	127	119	103	104	107	105	94	97	98	101	46	32	1373
2025	107	120	126	128	120	100	108	98	106	97	101	99	49	33	1392
2026	102	110	120	124	126	112	101	97	96	106	99	99	47	36	1375
2027	116	105	110	118	122	118	112	89	94	96	106	96	46	34	1361
2028	113	118	104	107	114	112	117	99	86	93	95	103	45	33	1338
2029	110	115	117	101	103	105	111	103	95	84	92	92	48	32	1310
2030	106	110	111	112	96	94	103	96	97	92	82	87	43	35	1264
PAN TOTALS	157	163	163	163	163	141	141	120	120	120	120	120	90	90	1,871

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

7.7 Cramlington Partnership



Cramlington Partnership was the first partnership in Northumberland to be reorganised to the primary/ secondary system in 2007 and consists of the following schools;

- Northburn Primary
- Shanklea Primary
- Beaconhill Primary
- Hareside Primary
- Eastlea Primary
- Burnside Primary
- Cragside Primary
- St Peter and St Paul's RC Primary Academy
- Cramlington Village Primary
- Cramlington Learning Village (CLV - academy)

Most pupils living in Cramlington in the primary phase attend one of the town's schools, but there is much cross-over between partnerships. 10% of pupils on roll at the schools reside in neighbouring partnerships or out of county.

Cramlington Learning Village (CLV) is the feeder secondary academy and is a popular choice both within its own greater catchment with around 87% of catchment pupils attending, while 11.5% of pupils on roll attend from neighbouring partnerships and from out of county. CLV currently has a PAN of 350, the largest in the county, and is predicted to be oversubscribed in Years 7 in September 2023. CLV has chosen to allocate places over its PAN in this year group to allow for educational continuity for children out of catchment currently in its feeder primaries and therefore the Council is supporting this bulge year through the provision of additional classrooms.

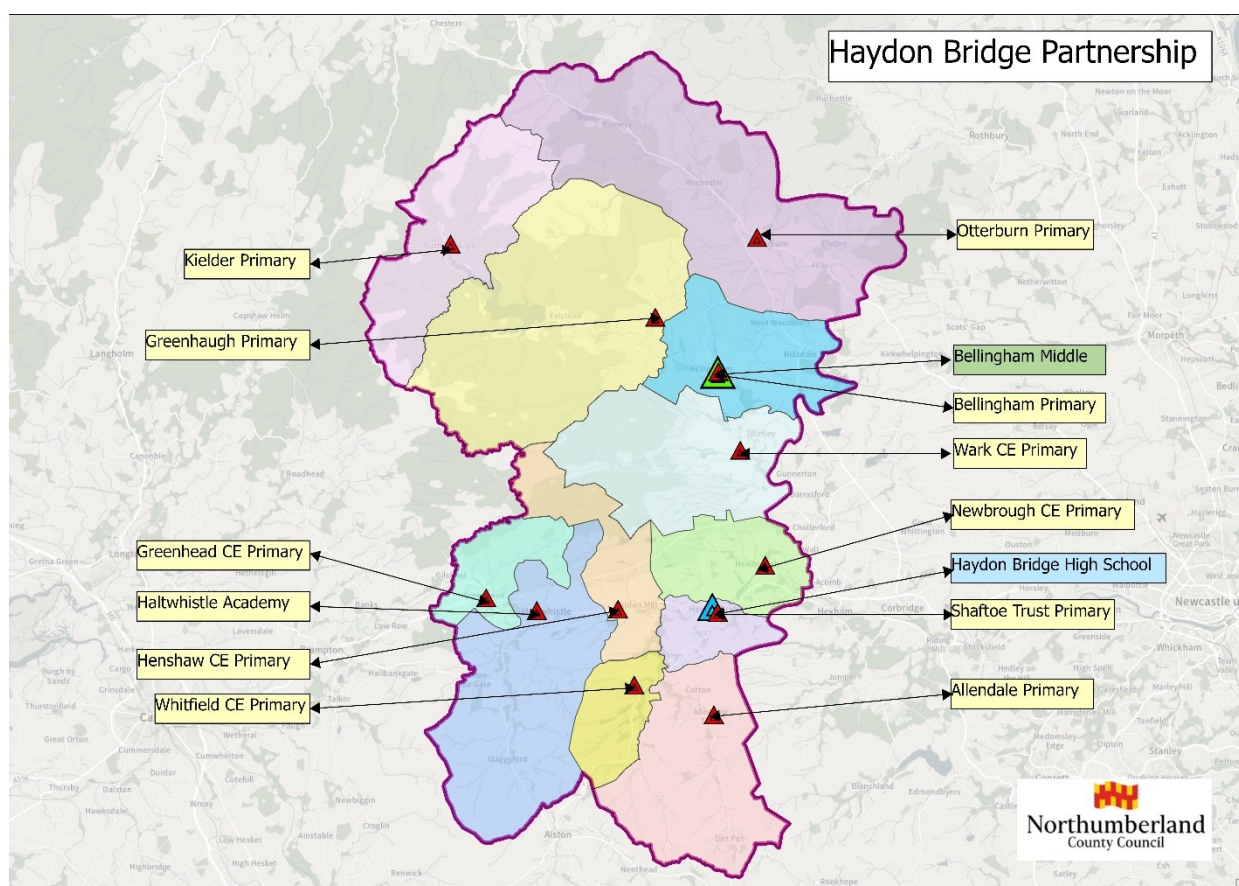
As a result of considerable house building in the partnership, there are a number of Section 106 agreements in place to provide additional places. However, many of the estates in the town are maturing and birth rate has been decreasing in recent years, therefore pupil yield from new housing is not having any impact on the availability of pupil places. There is considerable scope for families living in Cramlington to have their first choice of primary school as a number of schools currently have much higher PAN than is required for the number of children living in their catchment. While it is envisaged that an additional form of entry will be required at Beaconhill Primary at some point, and there may be a need for a new school to serve the Arcot development site, there are still far more places in the primary schools than are required by the local community. Therefore, in order to balance the number of places available in schools to the needs of their communities, consultation is currently taking place on a proposal to reduce the PAN in one of the partnership's community schools for the September 2024 intake, with a view to consultation on the reduction of other community/voluntary schools' PANs taking place in the coming years. These proposals would be subject to approval by the Council's Cabinet.

As a result of the popularity of schools in Cramlington with parents living in neighbouring partnerships and in North Tyneside, surplus places are one of the lowest levels in the county at 13% overall although this has increased slightly from last year.

Final Forecasts																NOR TOTALS
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
Actual Jan 2022	323	365	329	346	310	395	362	351	347	354	326	346	143	167	4464	
2023	336	325	370	334	349	311	397	358	351	343	352	325	159	128	4438	
2024	329	343	334	381	343	356	318	397	363	353	346	356	149	142	4512	
2025	303	336	353	345	389	349	362	319	402	364	355	350	161	134	4522	
2026	301	310	340	358	347	391	350	358	319	398	361	354	156	144	4486	
2027	319	307	313	344	360	348	391	345	357	314	394	359	158	140	4450	
2028	317	324	309	316	345	360	347	385	343	351	311	391	161	141	4402	
2029	313	322	328	313	318	346	360	343	384	339	348	309	177	144	4344	
2030	310	318	326	333	316	319	348	356	342	380	337	347	139	158	4330	
PAN TOTALS	390	390	390	390	390	390	390	350	350	350	350	350	250	200	4,930	

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

7.8 Haydon Bridge Partnership



With the exception of Bellingham Middle School, Haydon Bridge Partnership is now organised as primary/secondary provision effective from September 2019. The partnership consists of the following schools and academies:

- Allendale Primary
- Whitfield CE Primary Academy
- Henshaw CE Primary
- Greenhead CE Primary
- Shaftoe Trust Primary
- Newbrough CE Primary
- Kielder Primary
- Wark CE Primary
- Greenhaugh Primary
- Otterburn Primary
- Bellingham Primary
- Haltwhistle Academy
- Bellingham Middle School and Sports College
- Haydon Bridge High School

Significant capital investment in the school buildings estate was approved to support the move to full primary/secondary organisation, including at HBHS and Haltwhistle Academy (primary) which relocate to the former middle school site in the village. While the Council

had approved the closure of Bellingham Middle School as part of the overall changes in the partnership, this was overturned by the School's Adjudicator following an appeal and the middle school remains open within a primary/secondary system in the rest of the partnership.

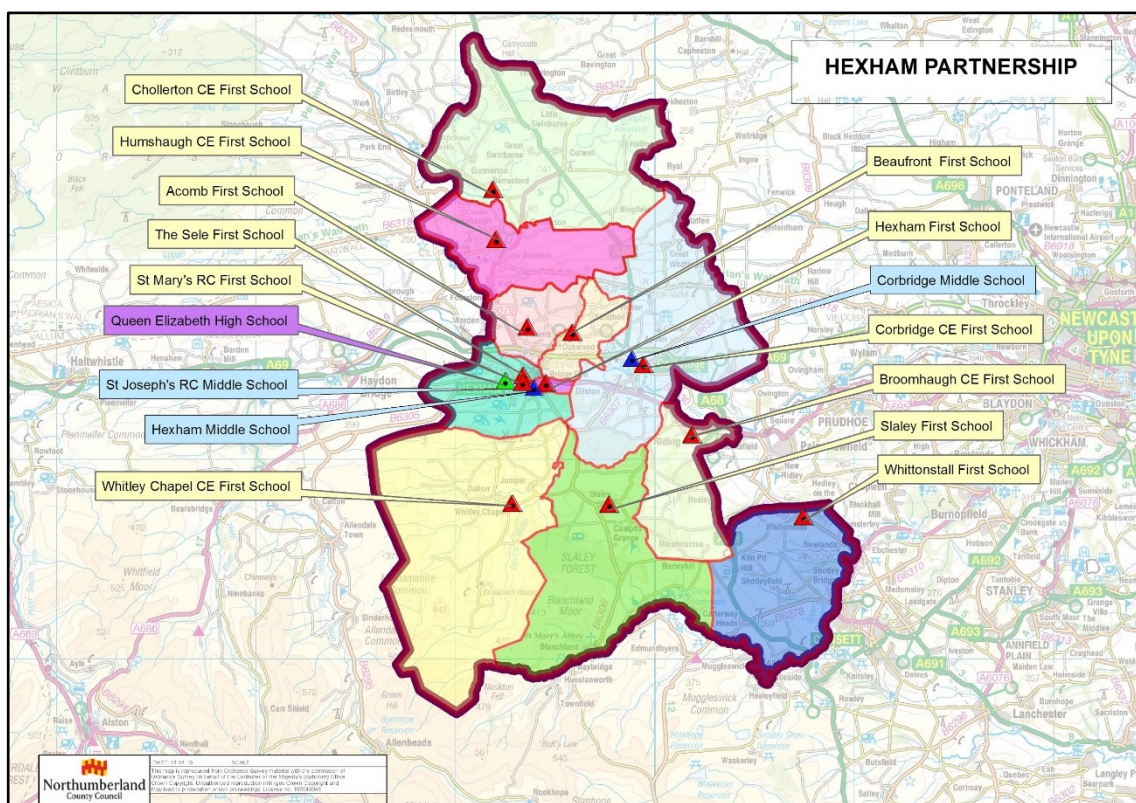
There is very little inward flow into Haydon Bridge Partnership, with only 3% of pupils living in other partnership or out of county. However, since the reorganisation of the remainder of the partnership and the capital investment in the school, pupil numbers are now beginning to increase going into Year 7 and it is envisaged that Haydon Bridge High School will become more popular due to its reputation and recovering Ofsted grade.

Birth rates in this partnership fluctuate over time due its rural nature, and therefore surplus places vary. Currently surplus places are in the partnership as a whole remain high at 45% and with very little housebuilding it is not expected that this figure will change much over the forecast period.

Final Forecasts															
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	NOR TOTALS
Actual Jan 2022	151	129	107	121	145	115	121	78	92	82	62	69	31	29	1332
2023	125	152	138	107	119	122	112	96	74	88	81	59	36	18	1327
2024	128	127	164	139	106	101	119	89	92	72	88	78	31	21	1353
2025	114	129	136	164	137	90	99	96	86	89	72	85	40	18	1356
2026	99	115	138	136	161	115	87	78	90	82	87	68	43	23	1323
2027	123	100	123	137	133	135	111	69	74	86	80	83	35	25	1313
2028	118	124	107	123	135	112	131	88	65	71	85	77	43	20	1298
2029	116	118	133	106	120	113	108	104	84	62	70	81	39	25	1280
2030	113	116	126	132	104	101	110	86	98	80	61	66	42	23	1259
PAN TOTALS	191	201	201	201	201	261	261	180	125	120	120	120	150	100	2,432

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

7.9 Hexham Partnership



Hexham Partnership is organised within the 3-tier system and consists of the following schools and academies:

- Chollerton CE First
- Humshaugh CE First
- Acomb First
- The Sele First
- St Mary's Catholic First (academy - part of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Trust)
- Whitley Chapel CE First
- Beaufront First
- Hexham First
- Corbridge CE First
- Broomhaugh CE First
- Slaley First
- Whittonstall First (academy – part of Tynedale Trust)
- St Joseph's Catholic Middle (academy - part of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Trust)
- Hexham Middle Academy (Hadrian Trust)
- Corbridge Middle
- Queen Elizabeth High Academy (Hadrian Trust)

With the exception of 2 or 3 atypical years, over the past 15 years or so the birth rate in the Hexham Partnership has been in steady decline in common with its neighbouring partnerships. However, due to the popularity of some schools and the ability to feed into popular middle and high school, significant numbers of pupils from outside of the catchment

area take up places in particular schools which supports their viability, including from out of county. 6% of pupils on roll at first schools in the partnership reside out of county, while 11% reside in other Northumberland partnerships. At the middle school phase, 8% of pupils on roll live out of county, while 20% live in other Northumberland Partnerships. At high school level, while again 9% of pupils live out of county, 25% of pupils on roll live in other Northumberland partnerships.

As a result of the popularity of the schools, there are only 13% surplus places overall, although this masks considerable variation between individual schools. Therefore, while there are sufficient places at the partnership level, there are a small number of schools that may be impacted by the planned additional housing development over the forecast period and therefore could be identified to require infrastructure contribution where appropriate.

On the other hand, some schools in the partnership have very few children being born in their catchment areas which has led to high levels of parental choice at first school level. While parental choice is not in itself an issue, where this leads to large numbers of children being transported by car significant distances past catchment and other schools, this impacts on both the sustainability of more local schools to a child's residence and has a negative impact on the environment through unnecessary and long car journeys across the partnership. As for other partnerships in the area, future proposals will be brought forward in the partnership to consult on the reduction of PANs in certain community and voluntary school catchment areas where the PAN no longer meets its community needs. This is in the light of the sustainability of local schools and in support of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan to reduce car journeys and increase walking, cycling and the use of public transport, with a view to balancing the needs of schools' communities with their wider impact on each other and the environment.

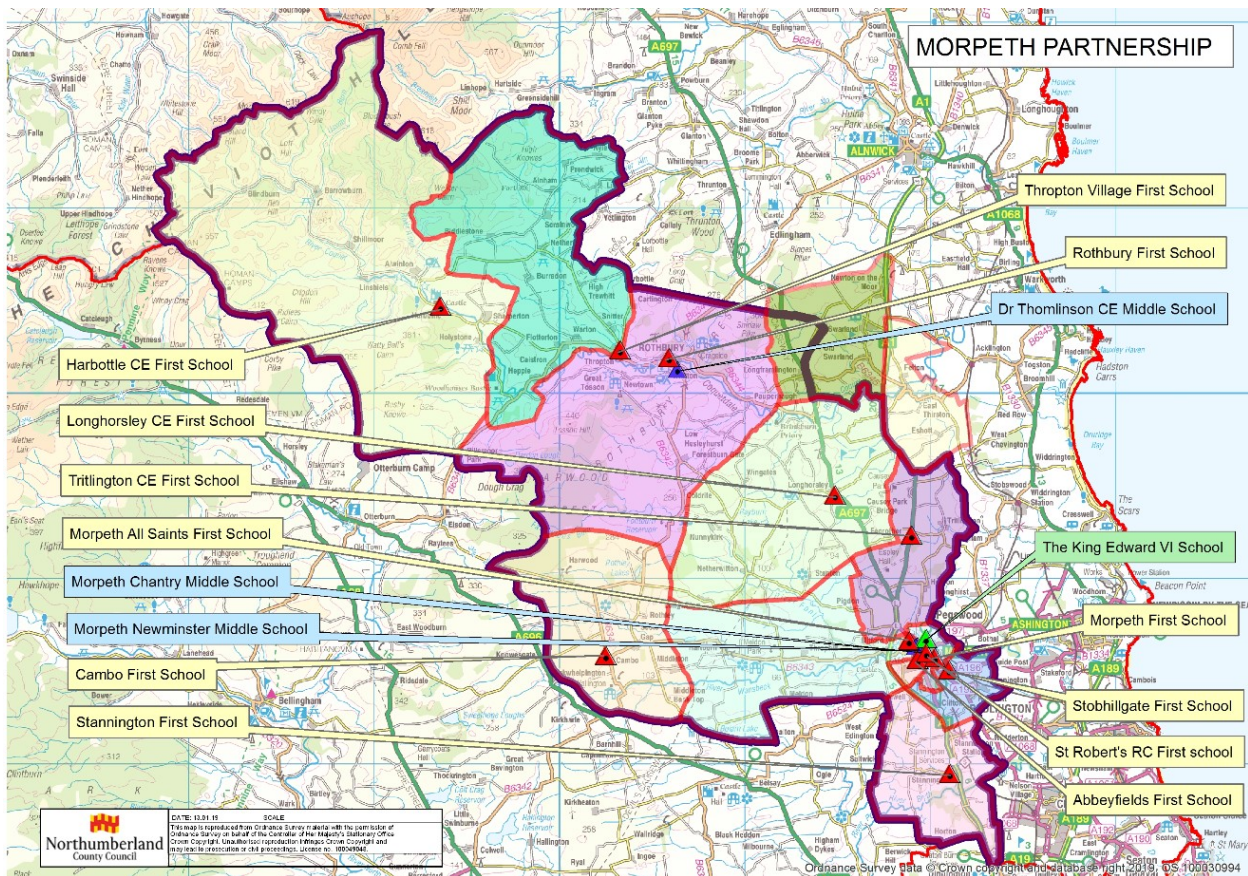
The reprovision and refurbishment of buildings for Hexham Middle and Queen Elizabeth High School (Hadrian Trust)(middle and high) has now been completed.

Final Forecasts															NOR
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TOTALS
Actual Jan 2022	190	234	215	243	228	270	263	289	282	305	310	304	216	204	3553
2023	214	194	239	219	244	261	278	272	292	289	306	308	203	215	3534
2024	181	222	201	246	222	281	272	291	278	302	293	307	206	203	3503
2025	171	186	227	205	248	255	291	282	295	286	305	292	203	205	3453
2026	154	176	188	230	204	281	261	300	284	301	286	301	192	202	3360
2027	182	158	179	190	230	233	289	270	303	290	302	283	199	192	3300
2028	179	186	160	181	190	261	239	298	272	309	290	299	188	199	3251
2029	172	183	188	162	180	216	268	246	300	278	309	287	199	187	3177
2030	171	175	186	191	162	206	222	278	248	308	278	307	192	198	3123
PAN TOTALS	274	274	274	274	274	330	324	324	324	306	306	306	250	250	4,090

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number



7.10 Morpeth Partnership



Morpeth Partnership is organised within the 3-tier system and consists of the following schools and academies:

- Harbottle CE First (3-Rivers Trust)
- Thropton Village First (3-Rivers Trust)
- Tritlington CE First
- Morpeth All Saints First
- Cambo First
- Stannington First
- Rothbury First
- Morpeth First
- Stobhillgate First (3-Rivers Trust)
- St Robert's Catholic First (Bishop Bewick Trust)
- Abbeyfields School (3-Rivers Trust)
- Longhorsley St Helen's CE First
- Dr Thomlinson's CE Middle Academy (3-Rivers Trust)
- Newminster Middle Academy (3-Rivers Trust)
- Chantry Middle Academy (3-Rivers Trust)
- King Edward VI High Academy (KEVI)

Morpeth Partnership schools, particularly those located in and around Morpeth Town, are some of the most popular in the county. While the schools retain the majority of pupils in the greater catchment, there have been significant surplus places for a number of years and therefore this has allowed parents in Morpeth to have a greater choice of local school, as well

as surplus places being readily taken up by pupils from neighbouring catchment areas. 22% of pupils at first schools, 20% of pupils at middle schools and 20% of pupils at high schools on roll live in neighbouring partnerships. As a result, there are only 4% surplus places overall in the partnership.

While birth rates have been lower than the capacity of the schools, the influx of children from out of catchment into Morpeth town until more recently has not been problematic. However, in recent years there has been a surge in house building activity in Morpeth town and the surrounding locality which is scheduled to continue for at least the period of this forecast. Over time, it is expected that the pupils yielded from these new houses will take up a significant level of the surplus places and that in terms of population, theoretically there are enough school places in Morpeth schools for children and young people residing in the Morpeth Partnership.

As explained, surplus places in Morpeth town schools in particular are taken up by children and young people from outside of the catchment area and this is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Therefore, children and young people moving into the new houses in Morpeth Town have difficulty in securing a place at a local school, particularly in the middle school phase, where this occurs outside of the normal admissions round. Compounding this situation, is the impact of the 3 Rivers Academy Trust Admissions Policy which gives priority to children who have been in a first school feeder school for at least 2 years for places in the middle schools and priority to children who have been in the middle schools for at least 2 years for places at KEVI in order to preserve educational continuity.

The impact of the change in admission arrangements has seen parents residing outside of the Morpeth catchment area applying for places in the Morpeth first schools, rather than waiting until the middle school phase, in order to ensure their children meet the 2 year criterion stipulated within the 3 Rivers Admissions Policy. This has led to fewer places being available for in-catchment children as they move into the partnership area. A reduction in the PANS of some first schools in the partnership where the PAN is considerably larger than is needed to serve the needs of its community would assist in reducing the pressure on places at the town's middle schools further down the educational pathway. However, as the Council is not the admissions authority for all schools in the partnership, an agreement would be needed with the relevant admissions authorities to undertake consultation on this proposal.

The Council carried out works to provide additional accommodation for an additional 30 places in Year 5 at Chantry Middle Academy for September 2018 to accommodate in-catchment children moving into the new housing in Morpeth Town. In September 2021, additional places were provided at Newminster Middle School while Chantry Middle School has increased its PAN as a result of a large cohort of pupils currently in Year 4 in feeder schools. Funding from the Council was already in place for additional accommodation at Newminster following the previous need for expansion at Chantry, while the 3 Rivers Trust has project managed delivery of the additional accommodation. Further larger year groups came into the 2 town middles in September 22 and pupil indicates that this will continue at least until September 2023.

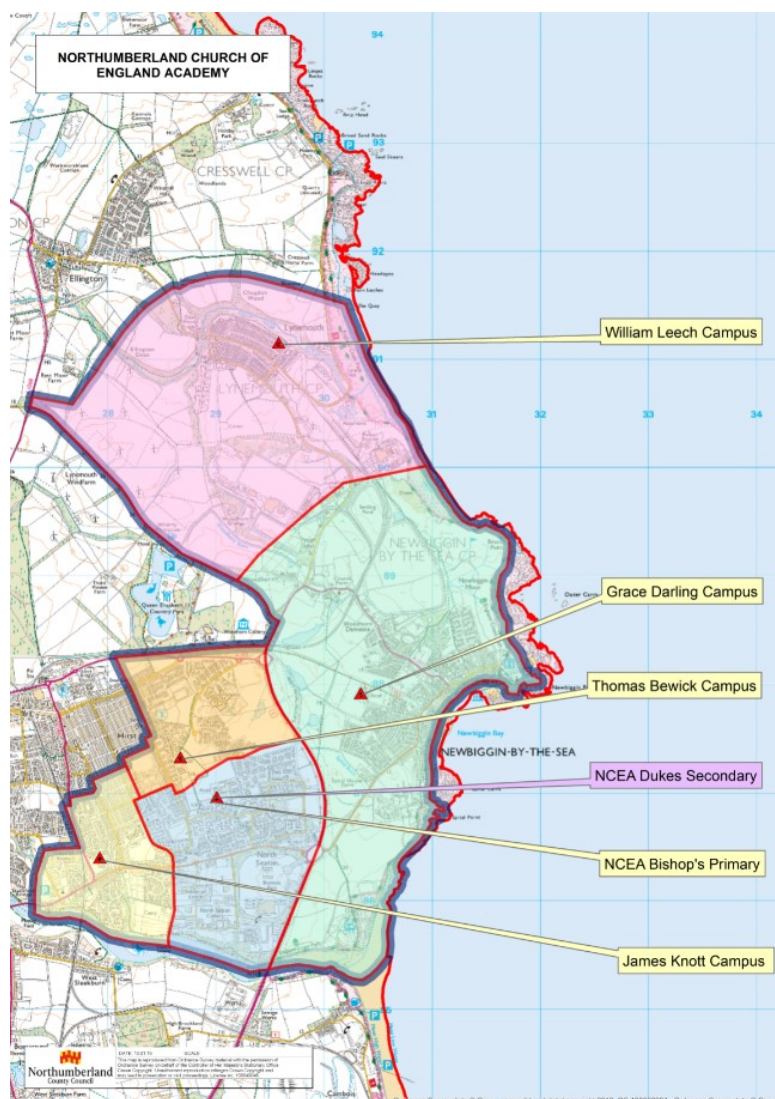
Given the larger year groups entering the town middle schools from 2021, the Trust has recognised that additional accommodation will need to be made at the KEVI site ahead of their arrival and this will be planned between the Council and the Trust ahead of their arrival at the academy.

Over time while it is expected that the number of children attending Morpeth town schools in particular from out of catchment will reduce significantly due to the take up of places by in-catchment children, there will be a bulge in numbers moving through the secondary phase for the foreseeable future, and in practice the PAN at KEVI will be capped at its current level of 320 places therefore reducing the number of out of catchment children. The reduction of places available in the Morpeth Partnership for out of catchment children over time will be beneficial to neighbouring partnerships, particularly in Ashington and Bedlington as they will be able to retain more local children in the schools in those partnerships.

Final Forecasts															NOR
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TOTALS
Actual Jan 2022	301	294	302	288	298	366	311	318	346	326	320	326	227	188	4211
2023	245	304	302	306	288	322	365	312	317	353	325	317	230	209	4197
2024	257	254	319	313	313	318	328	372	318	331	359	329	224	212	4245
2025	249	268	271	333	323	348	328	337	380	333	339	365	227	206	4307
2026	256	260	278	277	337	351	349	329	338	389	334	337	246	210	4291
2027	263	264	265	280	276	360	347	346	325	342	385	328	226	227	4235
2028	253	270	268	265	277	293	355	344	342	328	337	378	222	209	4141
2029	253	260	277	271	264	297	291	354	341	347	326	333	260	204	4078
2030	253	260	268	281	272	285	296	291	353	349	346	323	229	240	4046
PAN TOTALS	327	327	327	327	327	316	316	346	316	320	320	320	250	250	4,389

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

7.11 Northumberland Church of England Academy Partnership



The Northumberland Church of England Academy was established as an all-through, 3-11 provision in 2009, including primary provision on sites in Hirst, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Lynemouth. NCEA's Josephine Butler Campus in Hurst included provision for secondary, primary and a specialist unit for SEND. The NCEA Trust has disaggregated its all-through provision into distinct phases of education as follows:

- NCEA Bishop's Primary
- NCEA Grace Darling Primary
- NCEA Thomas Bewick Primary
- NCEA William Leech Primary
- NCEA James Knott Primary
- NCEA Duke's Secondary School
- NCEA Castle School (special)

NCEA Warkworth CE Primary also forms part of the NCEA Trust, but for pupil place planning purposes the Council includes it within the Coquet (Amble) Partnership of schools.

Birth data in the catchment area of NCEA fluctuates slightly up or down year to year, but is generally fairly steady and is one of the few partnerships in the county where there is no trend of falling pupil numbers. However, NCEA Bishop's Primary schools retain 48% of its catchment pupils, although this is somewhat ameliorated by the 15% of pupils on roll who cross over to NCEA from neighbouring partnerships. Likewise, NCEA Duke's Secondary retains only 58% of catchment pupils, but again 15% of pupils on its roll live in other partnerships. The partnership currently has 14% surplus places overall, which is below the county average of 18%.

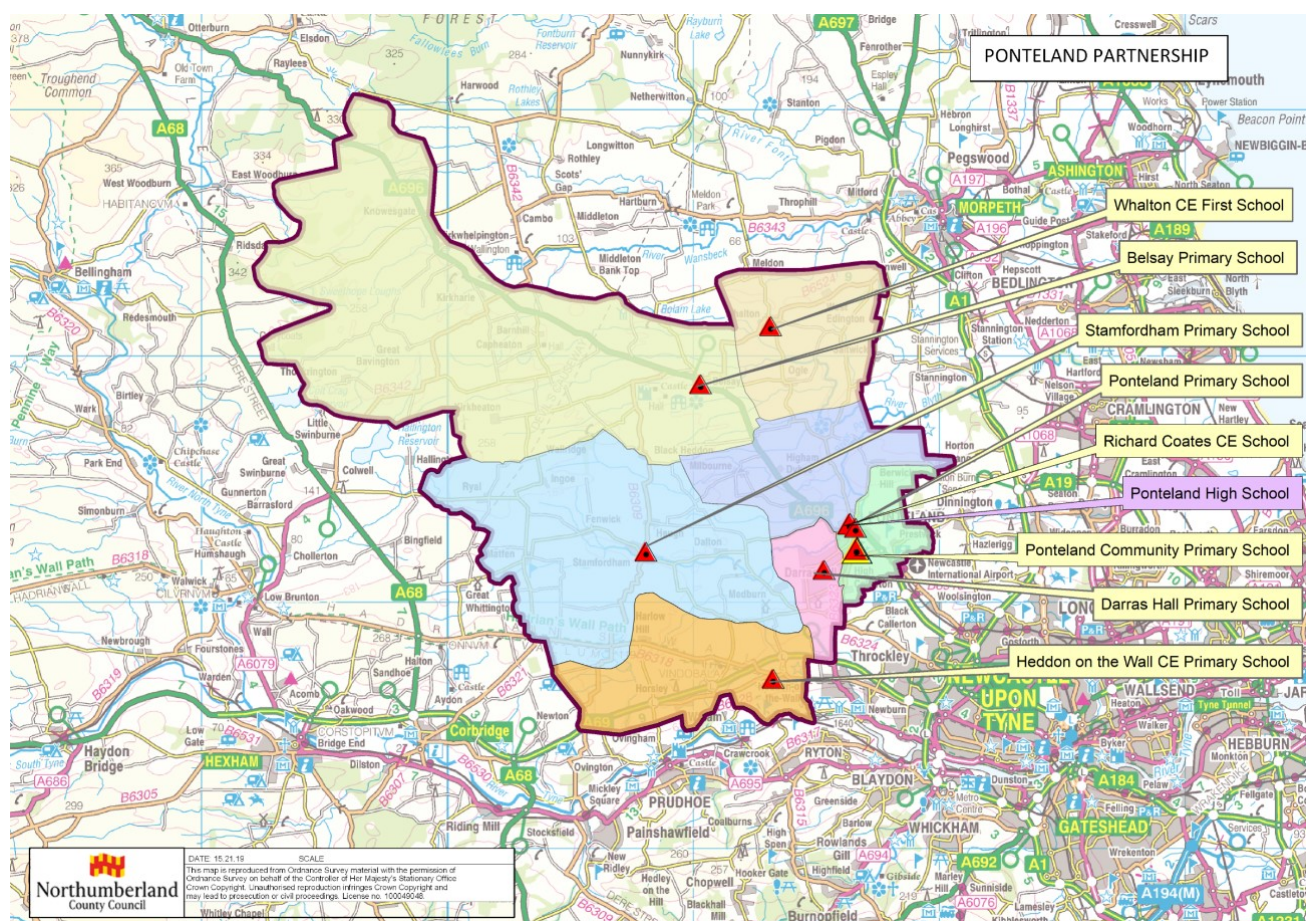
However, schools in NCEA suffer from a domino effect created in neighbouring partnerships with popular schools e.g. surplus places in Morpeth schools are filled by pupils living in Ashington, which then creates surplus places for pupils living in NCEA to take up. Therefore, over time it is expected that as children arising from new house building in Morpeth take up places that otherwise would have been taken up by Ashington pupils, the latter will then be retained in Ashington Schools and there will be fewer places available in that partnership to pupils living in the NCEA partnership. There is also some additional housebuilding planned to be constructed in the partnership over the next 5 years, which together with the envisaged push-back of pupils from other partnerships may require additional places to be created.

Therefore, bearing the above in mind, the impact of new proposed housing development in the NCEA partnership will be assessed at the local school level and where appropriate a contribution towards education infrastructure will be requested.

Final Forecasts															
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	NOR TOTALS
Actual Jan 2022	175	167	182	188	196	179	182	188	190	189	169	146	50	30	2231
2023	190	173	163	183	187	195	177	185	187	185	182	164	54	34	2259
2024	158	191	172	167	185	189	195	183	187	185	181	180	61	37	2273
2025	151	158	189	175	168	186	189	201	184	184	180	178	66	42	2252
2026	181	150	152	187	172	165	181	190	197	177	176	173	65	45	2212
2027	171	181	146	152	185	170	162	183	187	191	169	170	63	44	2173
2028	171	170	177	147	151	184	168	165	182	183	184	165	62	44	2154
2029	171	171	177	178	146	151	182	171	164	178	177	180	61	43	2150
2030	170	171	167	178	177	145	149	185	170	160	172	172	66	42	2123
PAN TOTALS	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	2,940

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

7.12 Ponteland Partnership



The reorganisation of Ponteland Partnership to the primary/secondary system was completed in September 2019 with Ponteland High School became an 11-18 secondary school. Ponteland Community Academy (formerly middle) also became a primary school in September 2020. The following schools and academies form the Ponteland Partnership:

- Whalton CE Primary
- Belsay Primary
- Stamfordham Primary
- Ponteland Primary
- Richard Coates CE Primary
- Darras Hall Primary
- Heddon-on-the-Wall St Andrew's CE Primary
- Ponteland Community Primary
- Ponteland High (secondary)

Ponteland High and Belsay, Ponteland, Richard Coates, Darras Hall and Heddon-on-the-Wall St Andrew's Primaries form the Pele Trust, while Ponteland Community Academy is a stand-alone multi-academy trust. Stamfordham and Whalton CE Primaries continue to be local authority maintained schools.

The Council has invested £57m in buildings, including schools and a new leisure centre, to support the reorganisation and to upgrade community facilities. This has included brand new accommodation for Ponteland High, Ponteland Primary and Ponteland Leisure on Callerton Lane into which they moved in October 2020.

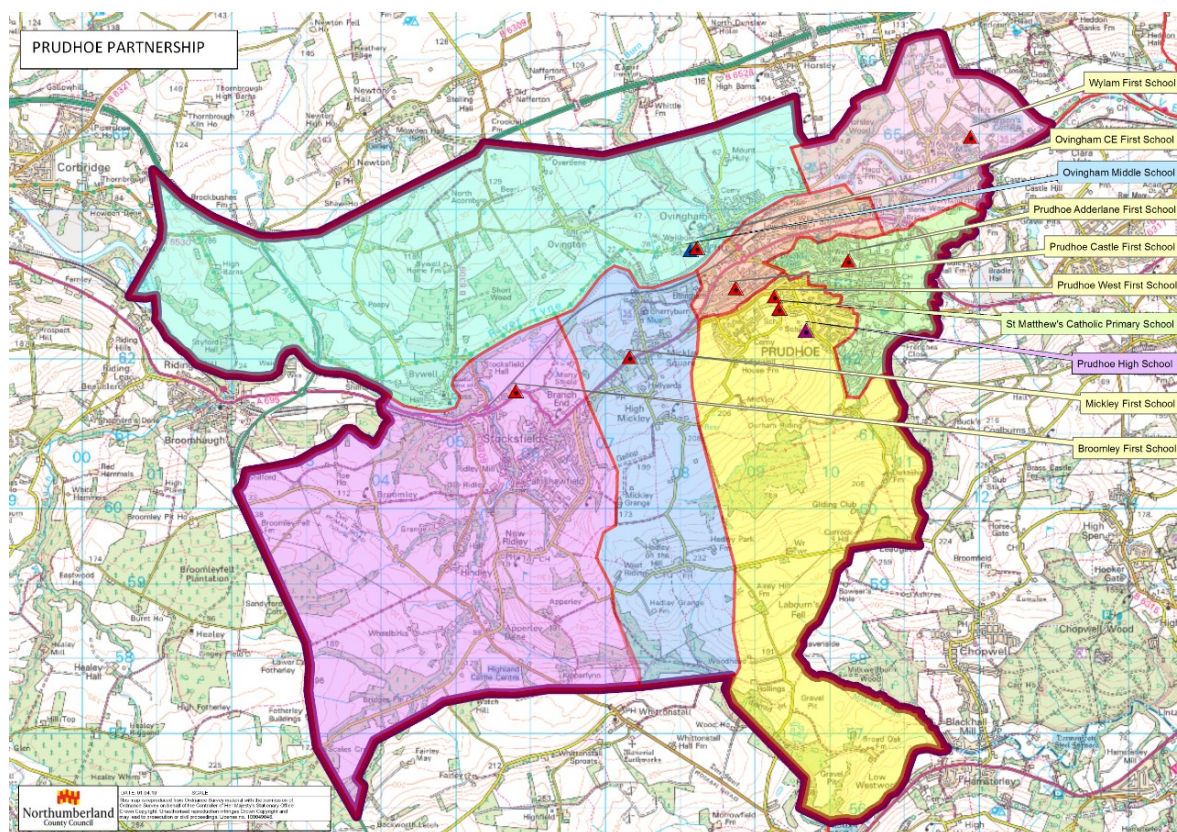
The birth rate in Ponteland Partnership has declined slowly for a number of years but there are now signs that it is plateauing. Schools therefore have considerable surplus places after their own catchment children have been allocated, and these are willingly taken up by pupils in neighbouring partnerships but mostly by pupils in neighbouring authorities. January 2020 data indicates that at the primary phase, 36% of pupils on roll in Ponteland Partnership schools reside out of county, while this rises to 43% in the secondary phase. However, as two primary schools that were former middle schools remain in their larger provision, there are still technically 15% surplus places in the partnership.

The Council is aware of the impact on neighbouring authority schools of excessive numbers of their catchment children drifting into Ponteland schools and therefore there would be no plans to increase provision at maintained schools unless it was to satisfy demand for Northumberland Children. Therefore, while generally the surplus capacity indicates there are sufficient places across the partnership, some individual schools may be impacted by the planned housing development over the next five years, which although minimal could require additional places to meet local growth; in these cases it will be appropriate to request an education infrastructure contribution from the relevant developer.

Final Forecasts																NOR
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TOTALS	
Actual Jan 2022	229	255	232	243	252	258	288	254	246	253	257	271	144	153	3335	
2023	231	237	269	244	255	277	262	240	240	232	253	255	151	133	3278	
2024	239	241	252	282	258	282	282	240	240	228	234	253	142	140	3316	
2025	210	249	255	266	283	283	283	243	238	227	229	233	140	131	3269	
2026	183	218	259	265	277	281	281	241	238	223	225	225	128	129	3173	
2027	218	190	229	272	278	280	280	240	238	224	222	222	125	118	3137	
2028	216	226	200	240	280	280	280	240	238	224	224	220	124	116	3109	
2029	213	224	238	210	252	281	281	241	238	224	224	222	122	114	3085	
2030	208	221	236	250	221	277	281	241	238	224	224	222	124	113	3079	
PAN TOTALS	250	250	250	280	280	430	430	510	542	272	272	272	200	150	4,388	

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

7.13 Prudhoe Partnership



Prudhoe Partnership is organised in the 3-tier system, with one exception. They are all academy schools as follows;

- Wylam First (Tynedale Trust)
- Ovingham CE First (Tynedale Trust)
- Prudhoe Adderlane First (Wise Trust)
- Prudhoe Castle First (Tynedale Trust)
- Prudhoe West First (Wise Trust)
- St Matthew's Catholic Primary (Bishop Wilkinson Trust)
- Mickley First (Tynedale Trust)
- Broomley First (Tynedale Trust)
- Ovingham Middle (Tynedale Trust)
- Highfield Middle (Tynedale Trust)
- Prudhoe High School (Tynedale Trust)

The birth rate in the Prudhoe Partnership continues to decline steadily, although not dramatically. This has enabled a significant amount of inter-catchment movement of pupils, as parents have been able to exercise their parental choice with ease due to the level of surplus places schools. There is very little inward movement from out of county pupils (unlike into some Hexham schools), with only 6% of pupils coming from other partnerships and out of county into the first school phase, 6% of pupils in the middle phase and 9% of pupils in the high school phase. While the overall level of surplus places is 14% in the partnership, there

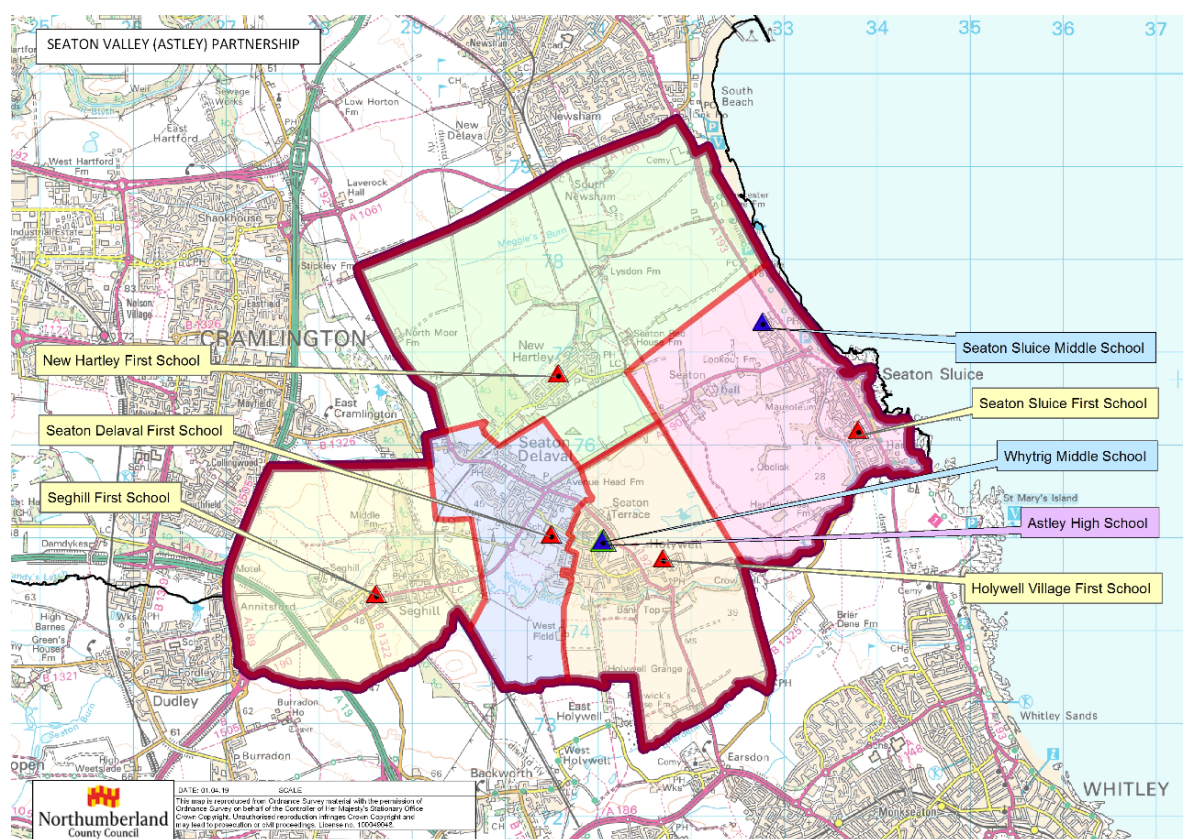
is considerable variation within individual schools, some oversubscribed schools and some with significant surplus places.

As a result, while there are sufficient places available in Prudhoe schools in general, the impact of planned housing development on individual schools will be assessed to ensure that contributions towards education infrastructure are requested when there is an identified need.

Final Forecasts															
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	NOR TOTALS
Actual Jan 2022	165	199	177	197	201	187	218	177	170	200	192	181	108	96	2468
2023	161	169	198	178	197	199	190	202	179	166	201	191	105	99	2435
2024	169	167	170	200	179	197	204	178	206	177	169	202	111	97	2425
2025	137	175	167	172	202	179	202	191	181	203	179	169	116	102	2377
2026	134	142	173	167	171	199	181	186	192	176	203	177	97	107	2307
2027	153	139	141	173	167	169	202	168	188	187	177	202	102	89	2255
2028	151	158	137	141	173	165	172	187	169	183	188	176	116	94	2211
2029	148	155	157	138	141	171	167	159	189	165	184	187	101	107	2169
2030	144	153	154	157	138	139	174	155	161	184	166	183	108	93	2110
PAN TOTALS	251	251	251	251	251	242	242	216	216	220	220	220	150	150	3,131

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

7.14 Seaton Valley Partnership



Seaton Valley Partnership is organised in the 3-tier system and includes the following schools:

- New Hartley First
- Seaton Delaval First
- Seghill First
- Seaton Sluice First
- Holywell Village First
- Seaton Sluice Middle
- Whytrig Middle
- Astley High

The number of children being born in the Seaton Valley Partnership does fluctuate from year to year but overall numbers remain fairly steady, while the data indicates there are sufficient places to accommodate those children at all phases. does not indicated that there are is a downward trend in numbers as in other partnerships. However, within the partnership there has been a change in demographics in relation to individual schools, with the Seaton Delaval area experiencing a growth in the birth rate in recent years, and schools in the Seaton Sluice and Seghill area experiencing a fall in the birth rate. However, as a result of increased scope for parental choice due to surplus places in some schools in the partnership, the PAN of Seaton Delaval has been reduced to 30 from 45 for the September 2023 intake to better reflect the number of children who apply for a place at the school and enable the school to better manage its staffing structure.

There are currently only 7% surplus places across the partnership. There is not a significant number of pupils attending these schools from out of catchment and given the partnership's proximity to North Tyneside there is a small element of cross-border flow both ways. However, in relation to Astley High, 24% of students (not sixth form) attend from neighbouring partnerships, mainly the Blyth and Bede catchment areas, li Seaton Sluice Middle where 25% of children live outside of the partnership.

As a result, it is not envisaged that any additional capacity is required in any schools in the partnership for the foreseeable future. While there is minimal housebuilding planned over the next 5 years, the impact of any proposed housing development on an individual school will be assessed in line with the Council's Education Infrastructure Policy.

Final Forecasts																NOR
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TOTALS	
Actual Jan 2022	116	130	148	134	142	162	138	141	158	150	142	136	67	67	1831	
2023	132	117	129	148	134	144	169	149	141	158	154	139	76	57	1847	
2024	139	134	117	130	150	137	151	183	150	142	163	152	77	65	1890	
2025	114	142	133	118	131	153	144	164	184	150	147	161	84	66	1891	
2026	132	116	140	134	118	133	159	155	164	184	155	144	89	72	1894	
2027	127	134	114	140	134	120	139	172	155	164	189	151	79	76	1894	
2028	129	129	132	114	140	136	125	149	171	155	168	185	83	68	1885	
2029	128	131	127	132	115	142	141	134	149	171	159	165	102	71	1868	
2030	126	130	129	127	133	116	148	152	134	149	176	156	91	87	1855	
PAN TOTALS	165	161	161	161	161	175	139	139	139	150	150	150	100	70	2,021	

Key: PAN - Planned Admission Number

SURPLUS PLACES BY SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Alnwick Partnership (January 2022)

	Primary	Secondary
Surplus Places	658	158
% Surplus Places	33%	10%

Ashington Partnerships (inc NCEA Academy (January 2022)

	Primary	Secondary
Surplus Places	604	570
% Surplus Places	22%	23%

Bedlington Partnership (January 2022)

	Primary	Secondary
Surplus Places	344	53
% Surplus Places	14%	6%

Berwick Partnership (January 2022)

	First	Middle	Secondary
Surplus Places	466	264	393
% Surplus Places	32%	25%	43%

Blyth Partnership (inc Bede) (January 2022)

	Primary	Secondary
Surplus Places	575	731
% Surplus Places	16%	26%

Coquet Partnership (January 2022)

	Primary	First	Secondary
Surplus Places	18	164	323
% Surplus Places	11%	26%	31%

Cramlington Partnership (January 2022)

	Primary	Secondary
Surplus Places	421	204
% Surplus Places	15%	9%

Haydon Bridge Partnership (January 2022)

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Surplus Places	425	169	495
% Surplus Places	33%	70%	55%

Hexham Partnership (January 2022)

	First	Middle	High
Surplus Places	265	105	-31
% Surplus Places	16%	15%	-2%

Morpeth Partnership (January 2022)

	First	Middle	High
Surplus Places	200	22	112
% Surplus Places	12%	2%	7%

Ponteland Partnership (January 2022)

	Primary	Secondary
Surplus Places	571	22
% Surplus Places	25%	1%

Prudhoe Partnership (January 2022)

	Primary	First	Middle	High
Surplus Places	-16	250	89	133
% Surplus Places	-13%	23%	11%	15%

Seaton Valley Partnership (January 2022)

	First	Middle	High
Surplus Places	153	73	77
% Surplus Places	23%	11%	12%



Northumberland County Council

FAMILY & CHILDREN'S OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5TH JANUARY 2023

Northumberland Children and Adults Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP) Annual Report September 2021 – August 2022 Safeguarding Children in Northumberland

Report of Joint Interim Directors of Children's Services, Graham Reiter and Audrey Kingham

Cabinet Member: Guy Renner Thompson, Lead Member for Children's Services

Purpose of Report

This report sets out Northumberland's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA) for children and young people. The safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, the Integrated Care Board and Police) are required to publish a yearly report, setting out what they and relevant agencies have done as a result of the MASA. The purpose of the report is to ensure transparency for children, families and practitioners about the activity agencies have undertaken and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended:

1. To note and comment on the contents of the report.

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the 'Living and Learning' priority included in the Northumberland County Council Corporate Plan 2021-24, and the commitment to providing sustainable support to children and families and supporting the most vulnerable in our society, including children and young people.

Key Issues

Relevant local organisations and agencies have a duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure that they consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out their functions. The responsibility for this coordination rests with the three safeguarding partners who have a shared and equal duty to make arrangements

for agencies to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area.

A transitional year began in April 2022, since which time the safeguarding partners have been developing joined-up arrangements with our Safeguarding Adult Board to develop an integrated Northumberland Children and Adult Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP) over the coming year whilst working towards streamlining and reducing duplication across Northumberland's strategic partnerships.

A suite of measures enables the partnership to monitor impact and progress against the partnership's priorities:

- **Overarching Priority - The impact of Covid-19** has continued to amplify safeguarding risks to children and young people. Its impact is therefore considered within all our priorities.
- **Mental Health; Suicide, Self-Harm, Social Media Impact/Bullying.** Demand for mental health services has increased amongst healthcare providers and there are challenges to the workforce's capacity to meet it (30% increase in referrals to CYPS tier 3 between July 2021 and June 2022 compared to same period the previous year)
- **Neglect.** This continues to be a stubborn issue in Northumberland and the wider region. The trends tell us that recorded neglect remains prominent within the lives of vulnerable children and young people in the county. It continues to be the most frequently cited category in child protection plans and is often identified as a factor in those entering care.
- **Safeguarding children under 1 year old including non-accidental head injuries and co-sleeping.** The under 1s are the most vulnerable and therefore proportionately more represented the further through the safeguarding system they travel. They therefore continue to be a priority focus for the partnership.
- **Impact of Domestic Violence on children (2018-2020) - including Child to Parent Violence and Abuse (CPVA) (2020-2023).** As with neglect, the police data repeatedly tells us that domestic abuse is a significantly prevalent factor in our work with vulnerable children and young people.
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB).** Whilst this was not originally identified as a priority, emerging evidence of significant risk has required further analysis and focus by the partnership.

Learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

The Safeguarding Practice Review Group (SPRG) collates the findings from local children's safeguarding practice reviews (LCSPRs), evaluates the learning/findings, and

provides further audit and scrutiny to gain a broader view of the findings on behalf of NCASP.

There have been 3 rapid reviews this year and no LCSPRs initiated during this reporting period. Ongoing work and actions have continued in relation to previous reviews.

- There have been 2 rapid reviews undertaken relating to suspected child suicide although neither met the criteria for a formal LCSPR, one of these involved a child placed out of the area.
- The SPRG undertook a learning review during this year where neglect featured, and the action plan is currently being monitored.
- A Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) undertaken this year was asked to consider any learning relating to a child which will be included as an appendix report.

Background

The aim of the annual report is to outline:

- Evidence of the impact of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work, including outcomes for children and families, from early help to looked-after children and care leavers.
- An analysis of areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities.
- Evidence of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the reporting period, or planned to be taken, to implement the recommendations of local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including resulting improvements.
- Ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision.
- A review of the use of restraint in Northumberland's secure children's home.

The data and analysis presented in this report demonstrates that the partnership has met its statutory duties and agencies have delivered safe and effective frontline services that strive to safeguard children and young people. There is evidence of improvements and effective partnership working despite the context of increasing pressures and risks from the pandemic and the subsequent economic environment that may negatively impact on children's health and well-being going forward.

Implications

Policy	The Annual Report 2021-22 demonstrates the extent to which the functions of the NSSP, as set out in the national statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) are being effectively fulfilled.
Finance and value for money	No direct implications.
Legal	The Annual Report 2021-22 evidences how NCASP arrangements meet the statutory duty to prepare and publish an Annual Report demonstrating how partners safeguard vulnerable children and young people. In accordance with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018). The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 confirm that the matters within this report are not functions reserved to Full Council.
Procurement	No direct implications.
Human Resources	Safeguarding investigations can in some circumstances lead to disciplinary action against staff. Safeguarding training is mandatory for all staff working in Northumberland County Council.
Property	No direct implications.
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	This is an information report so does not require an EIA. Referral statistics suggest that the gender and ethnic balance of safeguarding referrals broadly match those of the care management caseload.
Risk Assessment	Management of risks in individual cases is a core element of safeguarding. There are various multi-agency risk assessment groups including Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and the Missing Slavery, Exploited and Trafficked Group (MSET).
Crime & Disorder	Northumbria Police are members of the NCASP as are the Safer Northumberland Partnership, and there is close joint working to ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken where it is thought that a crime may have been committed.
Customer Consideration	There is a continuing need to ensure that children and young people are adequately protected from the risk of abuse or

	exploitation and children and young people in need are offered the services to maintain their health and development
Carbon reduction	No direct implications
Health and Wellbeing	Promoting the safety, welfare, health and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people is the primary function of the NCASP and its work.
Wards	All

Background Papers

Northumberland Children and Adults Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP) Annual Report 2021-22

Report Sign Off

Paula Mead NCASP (formerly NSSP) Safeguarding Scrutiny and Assurance Chair

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Northumberland
County Council



NORTHUMBRIA
POLICE



North East &
North Cumbria



NCASP

NORTHUMBRLAND CHILDREN AND ADULTS
SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP

**NCASP Annual Report September 2021 – August 2022
Safeguarding Children in Northumberland**

Foreword by the Independent Scrutiny and Assurance Chair

Since April 2022, our children and adult safeguarding partnerships' have been transitioning toward an integrated Northumberland Children and Adults Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP). The transition period continues until April 2023 therefore this will be the final 'standalone' children's yearly report.

Over the past year, the impact and fall-out from Covid-19 on our community has been significant. The evidence in this report demonstrates that safeguarding partner's and relevant agencies continued to respond, despite increasing demand, to deliver safe services, offering families and children support whilst managing the associated risks. The partnership therefore continues its focus of the impact from the pandemic on families, children and young people's health and well-being, and the substantial consequences of isolation on safeguarding.

It is within this context that NCASP continues to focus on driving quality, frontline practice around protection, prevention, exploitation and extra familial harms. Independent challenge and scrutiny of data, audit and intelligence, including a focus on the lived experience of children and young people, is analysed in this report, identifying the achievements but also the stubborn challenges for the partnership. The learning and improvement cycle continues, with work ongoing to measure the impact of services on children's outcomes.

I want to extend my gratitude to our partners who have provided the information collated within this report. The service pressures experienced by agencies and, particularly on front-line workers, are not underestimated. I would like to express my appreciation and sincere thanks for the commitment and innovation all partners have shown over this last year.



NCASP Independent Safeguarding Scrutiny and Assurance Chair

<u>FOREWORD BY THE INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY AND ASSURANCE CHAIR</u>	2		
<u>1. INTRODUCTION</u>	5		
1.1 MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS (MASA) FOR 2021-2022	6		
1.2 INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY	7		
<u>2. WHAT NORTHUMBERLAND'S MASAS HAVE ACHIEVED AT A GLANCE</u>	8		
<u>3. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES; ACHIEVING OUR OBJECTIVES</u>	9		
3.1. ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS AND IMPACT.	9		
1. UNDERSTANDING HOW COVID-19 AND ASSOCIATED LOCKDOWNS HAVE IMPACTED ON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	9		
3.2 PERFORMANCE PRIORITY DASHBOARD	31		
<u>4. DEALING WITH RISK & LEARNING FROM SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE</u>	36		
4.1. WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT FROM CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEWS?	36		
<u>5. QUALITY OF PRACTICE AND PARTNERS ASSURANCES; HOW EFFECTIVELY ARE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE BEING SAFEGUARDED IN NORTHUMBERLAND?</u>	37		
5.1 THE INTEGRATED CARE BOARD (ICB)	37		
5.2 NORTHUMBRIA POLICE	38		
5.2.1 PRIORITY 1. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH INCLUDING SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE.	38		
5.2.2 PRIORITY 2. NEGLECT	38		
5.2.3 PRIORITY 3. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN UNDER 1YEAR OLD – INCLUDING NON-ACCIDENTAL HEAD INJURIES AND CO-SLEEPING	39		
5.2.4 PRIORITY 4. IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN AND CPVA	39		
5.2.5 CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION	39		
5.3. LOCAL AUTHORITY	40		
5.3.1 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE (CSC)	40		
5.3.2 EDUCATION	41		
5.4 CAFCASS SECTION 11 SUBMISSION TO SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS	43		
5.4.1 QUALITY ASSURANCE	44		
5.4.2 FEEDBACK FROM CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	44		
5.4 NORTHUMBRIA HEALTHCARE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST.	45		
5.5 CUMBRIA, NORTHUMBERLAND, TYNE AND WEAR (CNTW) MENTAL HEALTH TRUST	46		
5.6 NORTHUMBERLAND DOMESTIC ABUSE LOCAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD (DALPB)	46		
<u>6. FOCUS ON THE CHILD'S EXPERIENCE OF SERVICES AND EMBEDDING IT IN PRACTICE</u>	47		
6.1 YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS AND OPINIONS ABOUT THE SERVICES THEY RECEIVE	47		
6.1.1 WHAT WE ARE DOING WELL	47		
YOUNG PEOPLE REPORTED THAT THEY FELT LISTENED TO BY THEIR WORKER/S AND THAT THEIR WORKER/S CARED FOR THEM AND WERE THERE FOR THEM. THEY VALUED AND TRUSTED THESE RELATIONSHIPS;	48		
6.1.2 WHAT WE NEED TO DO BETTER	49		
SUMMARY	50		
PROGRESS TO DATE	50		
<u>7. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT</u>	52		
<u>8. A REVIEW OF THE USE OF RESTRAINT IN KYLOE HOUSE SECURE CHILDREN'S HOME.</u>	54		
8.1 OFSTED INSPECTION MARCH 2022.	55		

<u>9. INDEPENDENT SCRUTINEER'S CONCLUSIONS</u>	<u>56</u>
9.1 DOES NCASP ADD VALUE TO SAFEGUARDING IN NORTHUMBERLAND?	56
<u>APPENDIX 1. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>APPENDIX 2. NCASP MEMBERSHIP</u>	<u>59</u>
<u>APPENDIX 3 – NCASP STAFFING AND BUDGET</u>	<u>60</u>
<u>APPENDIX 4. NORTHUMBERLAND CONTEXT (MARCH 2022)</u>	<u>61</u>

1. Introduction

This report deals with two distinct periods in the development of the Northumberland Safeguarding Strategic Partnership (NSSP), which replaced the Local Safeguarding Board (LSCB) in August 2019 as required by the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

The narrative in this report sets out the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) for children and young people. However, a transitional year began in April 2022, since which time the safeguarding partners have been developing joined-up arrangements with our Safeguarding Adult Board to develop an integrated Northumberland Children and Adult Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP) over the coming year. The NSSP governance structure has been retained during this period whilst working towards streamlining and reducing duplication across Northumberland's strategic partnerships. The work is led by the Executive Board which includes the three safeguarding partners; Northumberland Local Authority, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG; an Integrated Care Board (ICB) from July 2022) and Northumbria Police, as well as senior representatives from CNTW mental health trust, NHCFT hospital trust, and the Independent Scrutineer.

For the avoidance of confusion, the safeguarding partnership will be referred to as NCASP throughout this report.

Outcomes measuring impact and/or added value of these integrated arrangements is being monitored through a prospective evaluation framework which will report in the next annual report.

To ensure transparency for children, families and practitioners about the activity undertaken, the safeguarding partners are required to publish a yearly report setting out what they, and relevant agencies, have done as a result of the arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice. In other words what value these provisions have added in terms of impact.

An audit¹ to assess how effectively Safeguarding Partners yearly 2019-20 reports were compliant with requirements set out in Working Together 2018 was undertaken on behalf of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. The contents and structure of this report reflect these recommendations therefore the report will include;

- evidence of the impact of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work, including outcomes for children and families, from early help to looked-after children and care leavers
- an analysis of areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities
- evidence of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the reporting period, or planned to be taken, to implement the recommendations of local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including resulting improvements

¹ Analysis of Safeguarding Partners' Yearly Reports 2019-20. What Works for Children's Social Care. May 2020

- ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision
- a review of the use of restraint in Northumberland's secure children's home.

1.1 Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) for 2021-2022

Relevant local organisations and agencies have a duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure that they consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out their functions. The responsibility for this coordination rests with the three safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, Police and the ICB) who have a shared and equal duty to make arrangements for agencies to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area.

A North and South of Tyne Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) reports annually to the Health and Well-Being Board. The annual report is discussed at NCASP and provides evidence that influences the partnership's priorities and planning.

NCASP sub-groups drive operations through their agreed workplans; these governance arrangements and membership are set out in Appendix 1. Governance Structure and Appendix 2. NCASP Membership

The budget and expenditure are set out in Appendix 3 – NCASP Staffing and Budget

Northumberland's demographics are summarised in Appendix 4. Northumberland Context .



1.2 Independent Scrutiny

An Independent Scrutineer provides assurance through critical challenge to the partnership, and analysis of its strengths and areas for development in order to hold the safeguarding partners and the relevant agencies to account.

There are a number of context-appropriate methods to achieve the scrutiny function. These have included our responses to emerging concerns, for example audits were commissioned to interrogate issues including extra-familial harm (HSB) and responses to anonymous referrals.

Challenges and responses raised between partners are explicitly logged in the partnership meetings minutes.

A multi-agency audit tool provides assurance to ensure partners, including Primary Care, are compliant with Section 11 of the Children Act, 2004. Schools, Northumberland college and alternative education providers complete Section 175 safeguarding standards audits that are monitored and reviewed annually in September aligned with updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance.

Ofsted conducted a JTAI in 2019 examining the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements for dealing with criminal and sexual exploitation. Progress of the associated action plan was monitored by the partnership with all actions now complete.

Work has begun with the six Tyne and Wear local authority areas to establish a consistent and collaborative regional approach to independent scrutiny by establishing a protocol to share good practice and shape practice improvements. A consistent methodology and operating framework will be developed based on the Bedfordshire Six Steps (checklist) model with regional reporting into the Tyne Wear & Northumberland Strategic Partnership (TWNSP).

To ensure the independence of the assurance and impact of the partnership's work outlined in this report, it has been prepared by the Independent Scrutineer and will be made widely available for scrutiny to the Health and Well-Being Board and the Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It will then be published on the [NCASP Website](#).

2. What Northumberland's MASA's Have Achieved at a Glance

Page 112

Our multi-agency responses to children at risk of criminal & sexual exploitation and MDS has been strengthened through a joint children/adults CSE strategy and delivery plan, and a completed JTAI action plan

Delivery of a multi-agency Neglect Summit to tackle and prevent neglect resulting in a partnership plan to be monitored and evaluated over 2022-2023

Tangible progress developing integrated children and adult 'Think Family' safeguarding arrangements. Strengthening governance, streamlining and reducing duplication

The voice of the child found its way into our performance reporting so that NCASP can understand lived experience better (HRBQ survey findings)

Northumberland County Council successful in White Ribbon Accreditation, agreeing a three-year action plan aimed to ending violence against women
<https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/organisations>

SEND inspection and OFSTED focussed visit; Planning For and Achieving Permanence, cite evidence of improvements

3. Strategic Priorities; Achieving our Objectives

During this reporting period, partners met for two development sessions to examine children and adult safeguarding arrangements whereby children and adult safeguarding priorities were reviewed and it was concluded there was a synergy. It was agreed to continue focus on current priorities while acknowledging the need to be agile and responsive to emerging risks.

These are demanding times; the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact and exacerbate the challenges of day-to-day life for many people in the wider North East with exceptional levels of poverty driving dramatic rises in child protection intervention and the number of children in care². This therefore remains an overarching priority for the partnership. It is within this environment

that NCASP provides leadership, oversight and quality assurance of safeguarding in Northumberland. The Quality Improvement and Performance (QIP) subgroup monitors and reviews a range of multi-agency, qualitative and quantitative measures enabling NCASP to monitor impact and inform the safeguarding partners planning.

A suite of measures to monitor progress against the five priorities were agreed in September 2021. The results were shared with the QIP in June 2022 and in an analysis session that followed. The findings from that quantitative and qualitative work, informed by the discussions about impact, took place at the analysis session.

This was the second analysis session and as the suite of information is still coming through, it is premature to provide complete assurance about impact, however the report provided judgements on what is working well and which areas need improvement.

² North East Submission to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care. July 2021

3.1. Analysis of Progress and Impact.

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
<p data-bbox="96 675 136 858" style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 114</p> <p data-bbox="107 339 421 371">Overarching Priority</p> <p data-bbox="152 416 472 1038">1. Understanding how COVID-19 and associated lockdowns have impacted on safeguarding children and young people – including, but not limited to, increased service demand, access to health services, understanding impact, and multi-agency responses to it</p>	<p data-bbox="506 339 2092 411">The impact of Covid-19 has continued to amplify the risks to children and young people; its impact is therefore considered within all our priorities.</p> <p data-bbox="506 499 622 531">Context:</p> <p data-bbox="506 576 2130 687">Children’s Social Care: For the period July 2021- June 2022, the volume of referrals received by children’s social care has remained stable compared to the same period in the previous year (2919 and 2953, respectively). Over the same period, the number subject to a child protection plan increased from 342 to 403.</p> <p data-bbox="506 735 2130 959">Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT: There has been a reduction in the number of safeguarding alerts to NHCFT, down by 29 to 314 in quarter 1 (25 of the 29 were in the Community). There were fewer child MASH information requests to NHCFT in quarter 1, reducing from 106 to 65. This is directly attributable to the TUPE of the 0-19 service to Harrogate FT in October 2021. The health visiting and school nursing service, by the nature of their work, represented a high volume of referrals. Despite the resulting reduction in referrals, an increase in complexity and a resource intensive response needed to safeguard children has been reported by the service.</p> <p data-bbox="506 1007 2136 1158">Police: The periods of lockdown meant variation on the reporting of crime, which was anticipated. Post COVID data has in a lot of areas returned to pre-pandemic levels. Increases have been seen in the submission of referrals into the MASH, however it is not clear if this is a reaction to coming out of lockdown periods or greater awareness of processes, it is thought to be a combination of both.</p> <p data-bbox="506 1206 2096 1278">What Worked well: Police officers adapted to the restrictions brought about by COVID. As an emergency response this did not change the requirement to attend incidents within allotted timescales.</p> <p data-bbox="506 1326 2123 1390">What Didn’t work well: Assessing safeguarding requirements remotely to truly understand what was going on behind closed doors. Capturing the voice of children.</p>

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 115</p>	<p>From the available data there is no doubt that the pandemic has had a negative impact on children and young people, though the longer-term fall-out from this is not yet clear. Only by listening to the voices of children will this be understood moving forward.</p> <p>Any trends/ hotspots should be picked up within the MASH to enable early intervention and prevention to be put in place. This relies on partners sharing information in a timely fashion, and professional curiosity. Further capture of the voice of the child is required.</p> <p>The number of Covid-19 cases at the beginning of 2022 placed pressure on services and there was a potential for more children to be off school. The partnership responded to these challenges by reviewing our Covid-19 response plans and assuring ourselves that risks of harm were mitigated;</p> <p>Processes</p> <p>A system was in place to monitor those children and young people with Child Protection Plans. There is an information sharing agreement for children open to a Social Worker, where school attendance/absence is shared with Children’s Services, and visits prioritised.</p> <p>Two audits were undertaken with positive findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children known to Social Workers and not attending school in the past year • Front Door contacts and referrals from families re. neglect/physical abuse with no further action were found to be assessed appropriately <p>More than 357 children are being electively home educated in Northumberland. There is an approved Children Missing Education (CME) process in place which is subject to Ofsted scrutiny and contact with families is maintained by Education Welfare.</p> <p>Schools provide monthly reports to the Local Authority on children not in school. This list is monitored by a multi-agency group, so there is a partnership approach in getting these children back into school. Children’s Services regularly share information with schools re. lists of children who are open to a Social Worker to support effective information sharing</p>

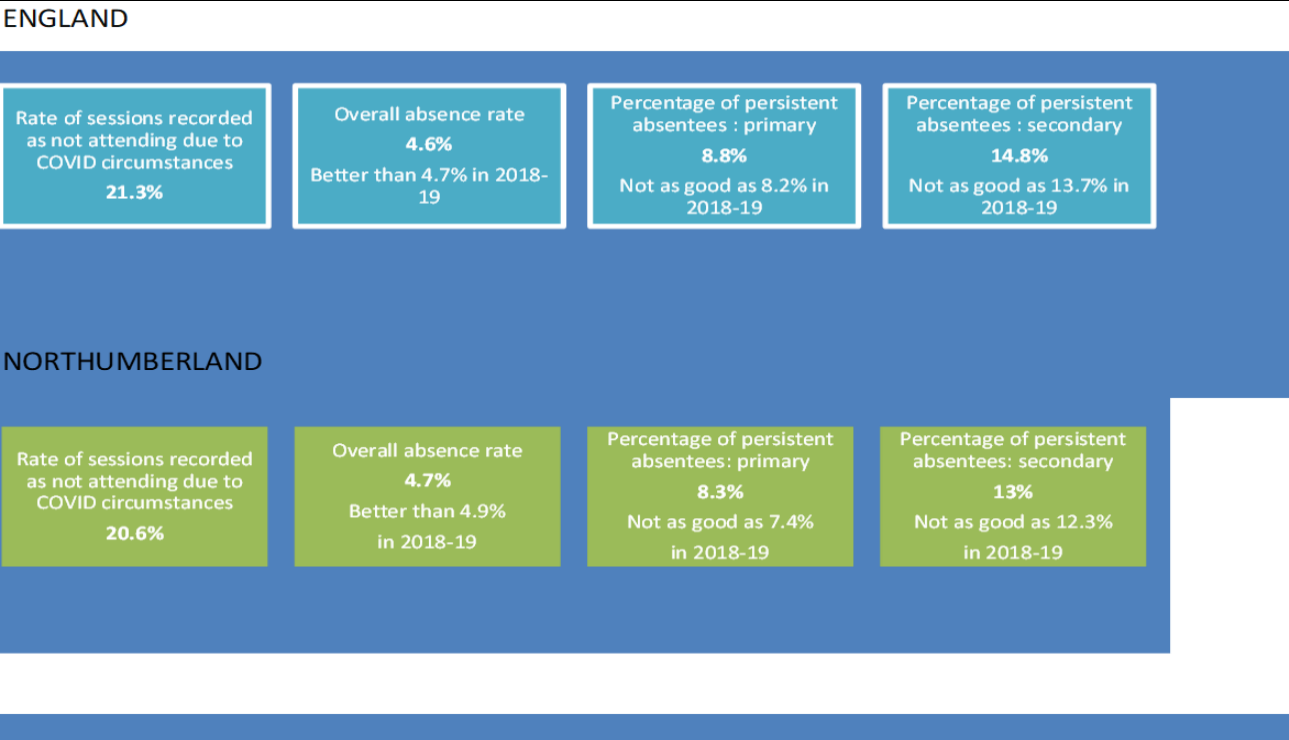
Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
Page 116	<p>Regular core group/Team Around the Family meetings for those children open to social work and early help to oversee and coordinate interventions and support with information sharing processes in place.</p> <p>MASH review completed and revised processes were put in place from 10/1/22 to further enhance timeliness and multi-agency involvement in decision making through the MASH.</p> <p>The multi-agency tracking panel for children at risk of missing education meets monthly and shares information about individual children so that action can be taken</p> <p>Children’s Social Care (CSC) provided the partnership with assurance that robust oversight and support was in place for Looked After Children.</p> <p>Health Visitors provided a full face to face service, so all vulnerable children were seen throughout the lockdowns. The universal Healthy Child Programme continues. A Health Visitor representative attends the MASH, to strengthen partnership working. Health Visitors and School Nurses attend the Primary Care Supporting Families meetings. Midwives review antenatal bookings monthly.</p> <p>Family Hubs are now being developed, facilitating effective multi-agency working, including through co-location where possible as Primary Mental Health, Midwifery and Health Visiting colleagues are now working alongside Early Help professionals in the Hubs.</p> <p>GPs were provided with additional guidance during lockdown re. risks to virtual consultations and advice on professional curiosity. Information and support continue with daily contact and advice available for GPs, if concerns are noted, by the CCG safeguarding Team. Safeguarding training is delivered to GPs virtually. CCNs have been shared with Primary Care throughout Covid.</p> <p>Police continue working ‘business as usual’. The Think Family approach has been reiterated and the multi-agency approach to CCNs continues.</p>

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 117</p>	<p>New Domestic Abuse Strategy in place.</p> <p>SIRS (Sharing Information Regarding Safeguarding), noted nationally as an example of emerging good practice, is ongoing with GP's/midwives.</p> <p>Immobile Babies Policy is in place, however further assurance was sought from all agencies re. their plans to highlight for the frontline the issue of bruising in immobile babies following a recent learning review</p> <p>Strong processes are in place re. exploitation e.g., MSET, identifying hot spots, targeted youth work, and responses around missing.</p> <p>An audit has been completed re. triage work and there were positive findings.</p> <p>Work continues to reinforce professional curiosity, triangulation of evidence and challenge. Signs of Safety continues to be rolled out.</p> <p>Face to face multi-agency training re. working with resistant and hostile parents was commissioned but put on hold due to pandemic, but was reinstated in May.</p> <p>Through the implementation of agency reports, the partnership now has a better understanding of the prevalence and factors impacting on children and young people not being in school, and the importance of promoting good school attendance being everyone's business.</p> <p>School attendance</p> <p>Northumberland learners experienced better school attendance than the national average, but persistent absence is still high. There are still some non-returners to school following the pandemic, but they are being worked with through early help and the virtual school.</p> <p>The national headlines suggest this is an issue across England and levels of school attendance had not returned to where they were. Whilst that was originally underpinned by anxiety from parents about children returning to school, it has become something different although there is a sense among professionals that poverty and the cost-of-living crisis may be impacting.</p>

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
Page 118	<p>Good attendance at school provides routine and stability for children. It has not been restored in the way that we had hoped and have a high number in Northumberland of ‘persistent absences’ where their attendance is less than 90%. The Virtual Head reported however, we are on the right trajectory and is targeting some secondary schools where levels are high and the families are requiring significant levels of support to get this stabilised.</p> <p>National developments In addition to the education-related work, audits were commissioned in Children’s Social Care following the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes in Solihull and Star Hobson in Bradford. The partnership received assurance that eyes were on children during the period of COVID, however responses to further lockdown related issues are being incorporated into business continuity arrangements.</p> <p>What are the data telling us;</p> <p>School attendance: the DfE has published a statistical release for the academic year 2020-21 regarding school attendance and it shows that school attendance in Northumberland is not yet back to pre-pandemic levels (2018-19), but is moving in the right direction and compares well with the national averages in the measures shown:</p>

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
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Page 119



The information from Education Welfare school visits is that persistent absence (PA) in the primary phase is currently between 24% and 30%, with overall attendance between 92% and 95%. And in the secondary phase PA is between 26% and 49% with overall attendance between 89% and 91%.

There are still too many children not in school full time, the reasons for which are varied but the majority may be related in some way to child or parental anxiety. This is a lingering legacy of the pandemic. Several strategies are in place to improve school attendance that are gradually having a positive impact. Integrated arrangements between Early Help and Education Welfare are working well.

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 120</p>	<p>In the last quarter there were three significant developments regarding school attendance that are expected to accelerate improvement;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Virtual School Headteacher now has an extended duty to promote the education of children with a social worker. Northumberland has taken a project approach to this with 4 key workstreams, one of which is school attendance. The guidance was refreshed by the DfE in June with a greater emphasis on school attendance, so it is now a national priority. 2. The Schools' Bill is introducing new requirements for local authorities and parents to do with elective home education and children missing education. During the new academic year, a Children Not in School register will be set up that contains details of all children who are electively home educated (identified by their parents) and children who are not in school full time (e.g. on part-time timetables, in alternative provision, flexi schooled). The DfE will collect this data centrally each term, beginning in October 2022. 3. In May the DfE published new guidance – <i>Working together to improve school attendance</i>. There is a deliberate echo in the title of the statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, in <i>Working Together</i>. The approach now taken to school attendance is very much about safeguarding, and asking if children are not in school then where are they and are they safe. The guidance is extensive and will give the Education Welfare access to all schools, not just maintained schools, and requires Northumberland to develop and implement a multi-agency Attendance Strategy. The focus is on managing school attendance by preventing, intervening and targeting. <p>Children missing education: the CME process was suspended when schools closed during the pandemic and was replaced by the arrangements set out in the original Children Not in School review. Once schools opened fully again the process resumed to identify, track and provide assurance that children not in school are appropriately safeguarded.</p> <p>The number of children being tracked through our CME process, identified as at risk of missing education, increased during the year but almost halved by the end of the last quarter to 598 children. If school attendance is poor then it is right that more children are tracked until they return to school, so the data demonstrates that the process was working and children were being identified by schools and services. The lower number in July is also due to Year 11 no longer being included as they had left school by then.</p>

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
Page 121	<p>The CME tracking panel reviewed its Terms of Reference this year and during the last quarter themed panels were introduced e.g. focus on children with a social worker; focus on children with anxiety issues. This targeted approach has started to have some success. In September 662 children were being tracked, 290 were referred to the CME tracking panel, and by July 257 had returned to school full time.</p> <p>The number of children in alternative provision and on part time timetables increased during the year and by the last quarter the use of part time timetables had almost doubled. Being in alternative provision is the most common reason for CME. Although the majority of those children on part time timetables are now engaging in some education when previously they had not, the trend and number of children (currently at 105) is high for Northumberland and needs to reduce. This will be addressed through the CME tracking panel in September.</p> <p>Elective home education: the number of children being electively home educated (EHE) in Northumberland continued to rise throughout the year and is at the highest level recorded.</p> <p>The total number of children known to be EHE by July 2022 is 357, which is a reduction from the peak figure of 423 earlier in the academic year once the year 11 leavers have been taken off. 221 children became EHE from September 2021 to July 2022, and 63 returned to school places. There has been a rise in the number of families agreeing to annual visits from Education Welfare Officers, and this is encouraging.</p> <p>A review of EHE cases is currently underway to identify more specifically the reasons why parents in Northumberland choose to home educate their children. This is aligned with national developments and is preparation for new requirements, such as the Children Not in School register, that will emerge during the new academic year.</p> <p>Work in all 3 areas is ongoing and captured as priorities in the Virtual School Improvement Plan 2022-23, that links to the CSC Continuous Improvement Plan. Making attendance everyone’s business – a multi-agency approach.</p> <p>Disabled children and young people</p> <p>Headline findings from the multi-agency audit of disabled children and young people who had been subject to a child protection enquiry;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good evidence that children were safer and happier following the input from services following a child protection enquiry • better consideration of environmental factors than in a previous audit 3 years ago and prior to the pandemic • The main recommendation for improvement was that wider use of the ‘harm matrix’ could improve assessment and planning in cases where there has been previous safeguarding service involvement.

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
<p>2. Mental Health; Suicide, Self-Harm, Social Media Impact/Bullying</p>	<p>What are the data telling us</p> <p>Demand for mental health services has increased further amongst healthcare providers and there are challenges to the workforce’s capacity to meet it (30% increase in referrals to CYPS tier 3 between July 2021 and June 2022 compared to same period the previous year). Performance on seeing urgent referrals within 24 hours has declined in the last 2 quarters (87% and 76%, respectively) but there is a sound understanding of why this was the case (largely due to families cancelling appointments). With regards to suicide, it is difficult to categorise how many referrals come in for attempted suicide because generally it is captured within depression, anxiety or self-harm. In terms of outcomes, there has been 1 suicide of a Northumberland child / young person between July 2021 and June 2022 (there was also a case involving a young person from Nottinghamshire). Children’s Social Care data indicates that mental ill health and emotional ill health have increased in prevalence during the last year, both in real terms and percentage terms.</p> <p>Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear (CNTW): Data was reported to the partnership in April 2022, specifically in relation to the Children & Young Peoples Service (CYPS). It was then agreed they would drill down into the data to focus on referrals for CYP presenting in crisis or with self-harm. CNTW have identified all those CYP referred to the PLT (Psychiatric liaison team) / UCT (Universal Crisis Team) from April 2021 – June 2022. Within this period 792 CYP have been referred into the UCT following an episode with PLT or direct referrals into the crisis service. An average of 49.8% went on to receive home-based treatment within UCT. The remaining 50.2% CYP’s needs were met by the most appropriate service to meet their needs in line with the THRIVE model. All referrals into PLT instigate a referral into UCT unless they already have a care co-ordinator with CYPS MH / LD Pathway to CYPS for 7 day follow ups. Referrals to UCT fluctuated during the period, being higher in the spring and reducing in the summer (but with an increase in late summer) and levelling off in the autumn and winter. A snap shot of data was taken to understand the referrals in January 2022 – March 2022 (47 CYPS / 81 UCT), where the referral reason has been self-harm or in a crisis. Of these, 39 were categorised as being in crisis and 89 as self-harm. Females accounted for 102 of the 128 referrals and CNTW have identified that they continue to seek support sooner whereas males continue to present later in the crisis phase.</p>

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact										
Page 123	<p>The geography of Northumberland and referrals from the areas remain consistent, with higher numbers coming from the central and south east of the county (90 out of 125), factors being higher socioeconomic deprivation and a larger, more densely populated area.</p> <p>Self-harm can mean many things and it is important for providers to understand this and what can enable CYP to access support prior to being in a crisis phase. 47 case records have been reviewed from a CYPS perspective;</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="506 483 1675 730"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="506 483 1093 523">CYPS referrals coded and Self harm</th> <th data-bbox="1093 483 1675 523">Number of CYP (47)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="506 523 1093 603">Self-Harm (cutting, Burning, ingesting substances)</td> <td data-bbox="1093 523 1675 603">30</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="506 603 1093 643">Suicidal ideation (thoughts / ligatures)</td> <td data-bbox="1093 603 1675 643">9</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="506 643 1093 683">Overdose</td> <td data-bbox="1093 643 1675 683">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="506 683 1093 730">Hallucination (wrongly coded)</td> <td data-bbox="1093 683 1675 730">1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Common themes also associated with the above CYP whom self-harm include ongoing difficulties with relationships, bullying, exam stress, return to education following summer break, autism and trauma.</p> <p>NHCFT: There was a slight increase in safeguarding referrals (+5) with category of self-harm and a decrease (-17) with category of mental health. This coincides with a decrease in safeguarding referrals this quarter. Although NHCFT have seen a decrease in referrals, the complexity and involvement in cases is noticeable. As referrals are only given 1 category it may be that both parental mental health and substance misuse are present in some cases and the shift is due to recording practice. NHCFT will keep this under review this next quarter to identify if any additional action is required.</p> <p>Police: The police report that the impact of the pandemic has seen a rise in mental health issues across all age-groups. Statutory Partners adapted well to the restrictions with meetings moving online which is continuing.</p> <p><u>Processes in place to identify and respond to themes and trends.</u></p> <p>QIP's work has improved the partnership's understanding of self-harm and the factors underlying it through production of a more granular data set from CNTW.</p>	CYPS referrals coded and Self harm	Number of CYP (47)	Self-Harm (cutting, Burning, ingesting substances)	30	Suicidal ideation (thoughts / ligatures)	9	Overdose	7	Hallucination (wrongly coded)	1
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Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
Page 124	<p>CNTW continue to interface with colleagues within NHCFT from a PLT perspective but also with PMHW's and Talking Matters. A weekly clinical Interface meeting is in place between UCT / CYPS and PMHW and school health to ensure children's needs are met by the most appropriate service. This is also a forum where they identify themes and trends and enable them to co-ordinate bespoke pieces of work targeted at specific groups for example a group of girls same age from 1 high school all presenting at NSECH with self-harm (WEST). An increase in overdoses from 1 school of 12-13 year olds (Central). Along-side this there is a monthly operational interface between CNTW and PMHW's this again is an opportunity to explore themes and trends, identify and coordinate training and there is a clear defined pathway to ensure CYP receive the most appropriate service to meeting a CYP's need following presenting in a crisis.</p> <p><u>Points for further discussion at Quality, Improvement & Performance (QIP)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing working within CNTW around incident reporting safeguarding vs self-harm to potentially support with data collection. • Work around males and seeking support. • LA information – voice of the child <p>The 2021 Health & Behaviour-Related Questionnaire received a good response rate of around a third out of 9,000 pupils, year groups 6, 9 and 11 in 5 secondary schools and 29 middle and primary schools having participated. This lived experience data tells us that, unsurprisingly, a significant proportion of pupils said that life during coronavirus had affected their mental health and wellbeing, and this was more the case for girls than boys (31% of boys and 56% of girls in the secondary phase). The issue of child sexual abuse in schools has been reviewed within Northumberland's safeguarding arrangements and the questionnaire asked related questions about that, revealing that 30% of boys and 46% of girls said someone has posted or sent them hurtful, unwanted or nasty comments on the internet, and 28% of Year 11 girls said they had been asked to post pictures of themselves that are inappropriate.</p> <p>Further issues raised by the results relating to potential safeguarding concerns include; 74% primary pupils but only 25% of secondary pupils think their school takes bullying seriously. 37% of Year 9 girls have hurt themselves at some point. 61% of Year 11 girls said that life during covid has affected their mental health and wellbeing. 66% of Year 9 lesbian, gay, bisexual pupils would keep a problem to themselves compared with 53% of the overall Year 9 sample.</p>

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 125</p>	<p>26% of Young Carers in Year 9 said they felt less safe at home because of increased family tensions during COVID restrictions/lockdown compared with 11% of the overall Year 9 Sample.</p> <p>62% of Year 11 lesbian, gay, bisexual pupils have deliberately hurt themselves compared with 36% of the overall year 11 sample.</p> <p>30% of Year 11 pupils living in single parent families have had sex compared with 22% of the overall Year 11 sample.</p> <p>Year 6 pupils who experienced shouting and arguing at home are more likely to say they have felt less safe at home since Covid.</p> <p>Secondary pupils who smoked cigarettes are more likely to have used e-cigarettes, know someone who uses drugs and get drunk when they drink alcohol, compared with secondary pupils who haven't smoked.</p> <p>Year 11 pupils who have used drugs are more likely to have tried smoking, had sex, deliberately hurt themselves and usually miss breakfast compared with Year 11 pupils who haven't used drugs.</p> <p>The Senior Mental Health Lead Coordinator is contacting all schools that took part in the survey to give them the opportunity to feedback on how they are using their reports, and to offer support if necessary.</p> <p>Data which is relevant will be included in Northumberland's Children & Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy.</p> <p>NCC and partner agencies to direct activity where needed to address concerns from the Survey</p> <p>Activity to be planned on how to share the HRBQ findings wider with children and young people.</p> <p>Understanding how to promote better engagement, so that the survey results reflect a more significant picture going forward i.e. providing an assurance of countywide opinion.</p> <p>There is general agreement amongst healthcare providers that they were seeing more instances of self-harm. Publicly available data shows that hospital admissions as a result of self-harm of 10-24 year old Northumberland residents have increased, from an average of around 240 per year between 2014/15 and 2016/17 to around 470 per year between 2019/20 and 2020/21, whereas there has only been a slight increase seen nationally in that period. In Northumberland, the latest data shows that 90% of the hospital admissions as a result of self-harm amongst 10-24 year olds involved those aged 15 plus. The data from the</p>

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact								
	H-RBQ triangulated the view that self-harm was a significant issue with 25% of boys and 38% of girls saying they have deliberately hurt themselves at some point.								
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 126</p> <p>Neglect</p>	<p>What are the data telling us</p> <p>The trends from July 2020-June 2021 and July 2021-June 2022 tell us that recorded neglect remains prominent within the lives of vulnerable children and young people in the county. It continues to be the most frequently cited category in child protection plans (83% between July 2021 and June 2022) and is often identified as a factor in those entering care (65% of admissions in July 2021 – June 2022).</p> <p>Given the relatively high figures in cases that are firmly in the system and at the sharp end, it is safe to say that the prevalence of neglect within the most concerning cases continues to be high in Northumberland. The question has been raised about whether we are effectively capturing the emotional side of neglect in our work and whilst it is captured at the referral stage in CSC (and reported to QIP), it was agreed that data is based on initial judgements at the onset of involvement and the QIP would discuss if something more focused should be introduced, or whether this can be sourced from audit work.</p> <p>In cases worked on previously by CSC where neglect had been identified as a factor, 10% that came back into the safeguarding system also identified neglect as a factor. This is an encouraging indicator that the initial work round neglect is effective in the majority of cases.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="640 994 2029 1198"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Cases categorised as neglect that had previously been categorised as neglect</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>% of CSC cases where neglect is a factor that had previously been referred to CSC (for any reason)</td> <td>62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>% of CSC cases where neglect is a factor that had previously been referred to CSC with neglect as a factor</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>% CPPs categorised as neglect starting within 2 yrs of previous CPP categorised as neglect</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The data told us that there had been a slight increase in Child Protection Plans (CPP) starting in the year due to ‘neglect’ that were repeat plans within 2 years categorised as neglect (from 8.8% to 10%). Reducing this should provide encouraging signs about the impact that partners’ collective interventions are having on those children. Whilst numbers are relatively small, this is still a useful indicator of the effectiveness of work done on the initial CPP and it is something we would want to see reduce.</p>	Cases categorised as neglect that had previously been categorised as neglect		% of CSC cases where neglect is a factor that had previously been referred to CSC (for any reason)	62%	% of CSC cases where neglect is a factor that had previously been referred to CSC with neglect as a factor	10%	% CPPs categorised as neglect starting within 2 yrs of previous CPP categorised as neglect	10%
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Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 127</p>	<p>NHCFT: There has been a reduction in referrals with category of harm from neglect this quarter (-27) and 20% of referrals account for neglect compared to 28% the previous quarter.</p> <p>Police: There has been an increase in the number of offences against children categorised as child neglect, which increased from 46 to 62 (35%).</p> <p>What is the qualitative intelligence telling us. The planned multi-agency audit of neglect was delayed in order to follow the Neglect Summit (May 2022). It is expected this piece of work will provide depth to determine the impact of partners’ work on frontline practice, and consequently on the lives of children and young people. Whilst this audit work will be key to determining impact, there are positive overviews in relation to other activities. For instance, training that has been completed by the 0-19 service for the Home Environment Assessment Tool (HEAT). The QIP heard it has been appropriately integrated into professional’s home contacts alongside the existing individual health needs assessment, and also impacts on the priority to safeguard under 1s. Neglect is a theme discussed within the safeguarding supervision groups inclusive of all children who reside within the family home.</p> <p>The multi-agency Neglect Summit was held in May attended by 325 staff from the partnership. Agencies created action plans describing how they would improve practice in relation to identification, intervention and review of neglect. Attendees reported a positive effect on their understanding of the impact of neglect.</p>
<p>Safeguarding children under 1 year old including non-accidental head injuries and co-sleeping</p>	<p>Assurance has been provided to the partnership around quality of practice delivered in relation to safeguarding under 1s.</p> <p>What are the data telling us The data tells us that under 1s continue to be proportionately more represented the further through the safeguarding system they travel. For instance, over the last year, around 10% of referrals were for those aged under 1, yet the proportion of all CP Plans starting where the child was under 1 was around 17%. This is not unexpected as immobile babies have significant vulnerability. However, this has decreased when comparing the most recent year with the previous one and significantly so in the most recent quarter (April 2022 – June 2022); 17% of all CP plans started were aged under 1 compared to 23% the previous</p>

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
Page 128	<p>year. A small number of these CP plans (5%) were re-plans within 18 months of the previous plan ending and there were just 2 CP re-plans where the second plan began before the child’s first birthday, a picture that we would want to see continue.</p> <p>CP plans for under 1s are taking longer to end in the most recent quarter. 41% of those ending lasted less than 6 months compared to 46% the previous year. More ended in the 6-12 month period (47%) than the previous year, but fewer lasted longer than 12 months (12%) compared to 15%. It is unclear why there has been an increase, is the increase because babies were already in the court arena? Whereas between July 2020 and June 2021, 29% ended in the first 3 months, this reduced to 25% in the most recent year. This may suggest better processes are in place for moving work into court and will be interrogated in the next audit on safeguarding under 1s.</p> <p>Data from the Healthy Child Programme tells us that in over 90% of cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mothers receive a first face-to-face antenatal contact with a Health Visitor at 28 weeks or above • Mothers receive a face-to-face New Birth Visit <u>within</u> 14 days by a Health Visitor • Children receive a 6-8 week review • Children receive a 12 month review by the time they turned 15 months <p>There is a process for follow up with families for any contact missed within the timeframe. Antenatal and primary visit contacts by health visitor include key elements relevant to the priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health needs assessment, including domestic abuse and maternal mental health • Safe sleeping • ICON³ - about helping people who care for babies to cope with crying. • Home Environment Assessment Tool (HEAT) <p>For families who transfer into the service, the first contact includes a health needs assessment and HEAT, and age appropriate/relevant information.</p> <p>At each routine Health Professional contact, relevant elements are reviewed and outcomes noted. At any time, when an issue is raised, targeted support and contact is offered.</p> <p>ICON – 96.1% is recorded at primary visit (10-14 days).</p>

³ I – Infant Crying is normal. C- Comforting methods can help. O- its ok to walk away. N – never, ever shake a baby

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
Page 129	<p>A CSC pre-birth team was created in September 2022 with key partnership links to further strengthen the timeliness and responses where unborn children are deemed to be at risk of significant harm</p> <p>What is the qualitative intelligence telling us</p> <p>A multi-agency audit of safeguarding under 1s. completed, focusing on decisions and actions taken at the point of referral and the following positive impacts were found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no cases where children were left unsafe • The actions from referrals made a difference • Appropriate and proportionate actions on referrals were made in all the cases audited • Good information sharing between agencies <p>Areas for improvement were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In half the cases the reason for referral was unclear • In nearly half of cases the vulnerability and history of involvement was not considered to inform decision making • For the vast majority, there was no engagement with the father but that could have occurred later on in the case which was not looked at as part of the audit • The referrals were not always accessible to the auditors <p>A more in-depth, multi-agency audit will be scheduled to give a wider understanding of the multi-agency working for this priority.</p> <p>SIRS (sharing information regarding safeguarding) is being embedded in Northumberland and having a positive impact with cases being identified due to safeguarding information being shared that was held by the fathers' GP. It was highlighted that there were 11 or 12 cases where safeguards have been put in place whereas before this process was implemented that would not have happened, showing that this early prevention model works.</p> <p>There have been positive evaluation findings in relation to a specific training package developed to address this priority (called Vulnerable Babies) which addresses potential safeguarding concerns from conception, including substance use in</p>

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
	<p>pregnancy. Local procedures and referral routes are specifically referenced in the training which is co-facilitated by staff from NCC and CCG/ICB. Positive impact of this training on professional practice was seen with 83% of the 38 attendees scoring a maximum of five in response to the question about the impact of the training on professional practice, and 17% scored 4. Quotes from delegates included that they found the focus on the following areas really useful: ICON; the Myth of Invisible Men; information about the SIRS process; understanding local data – especially about substance use in pregnancy; and holistic consideration of all elements of vulnerability.</p>
<p>Impact of Domestic Violence on children (2018-2020) - including Child to Parent Violence and Abuse (CPVA) (2020-2023)</p>	<p>Assurance has been given to the partnership on quality of practice delivered in relation to CPVA.</p> <p>What are the data telling us</p> <p>As with neglect, the police data repeatedly tells us that domestic abuse is a significantly prevalent factor in our work with vulnerable children and young people. There was a 32% increase in the number of domestic abuse incidents between July 2021 and June 2022 and the corresponding period the previous year, accounting for a 33% increase in the number of victims. Triangulating this, there was a 25% increase in violence against the person incidents.</p> <p>Despite the increase in incidents, the proportion that were repeats was 1.2% fewer and there were fewer MARAC cases discussed. There was a less marked increase in the number of incidents involving children (7%) than the population as a whole, but an increase all the same, this period being the first in 3 years where there were no lockdown restrictions. The proportion of domestic abuse victims aged 16/17 remained similar to the previous year (1.9%). The proportion of domestic abuse incidents with children involved that ended in arrest reduced significantly (by 22%). Where cases were more advanced at the “sharp end”, there has been an increase in children entering care where domestic abuse was a factor: 28% compared to 24% in the previous period, and the real numbers in the last 2 quarters were relatively high (19 and 14, respectively).</p> <p>NHCFT: A decrease has been seen in domestic abuse in quarter 1 22/23 with less referrals to MARAC and this follows increases in the previous 3 quarters.</p> <p>The numbers of referrals made due to concerns regarding child to parent violence and abuse (CPVA) have slightly decreased in quarter 1 22/23. CPVA is fully embedded within training and supervision opportunities to promote identification and robust responses. There have also been small increases in both Criminal and Sexual Exploitation concerns.</p>

Page 130

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
Page 131	<p>Harrogate District FT: In terms of impact around Domestic Abuse women’s voices are captured at an early stage, as 0-19 practitioners are asking the question, and using the risk of identification checklist. This enables us to be more confident that victims are being protected.</p> <p>Finally, the developing intelligence about our healthy relationships work showed that 80% of children experiencing parental conflict went on to have an early help assessment, a child in need or a child protection plan, demonstrating that the thresholds for intervention by this programme feel appropriate.</p> <p>What is the ‘soft’ intelligence telling us The qualitative information received included findings from the multi-agency audit of CPVA and the use of CCNs amongst GPs. A multi-agency CPVA audit was undertaken 18 months ago. This recent audit evidenced positive improvements across agencies regarding the identification of CPVA, the use of the CPVA risk identification checklist and CPVA pathway since then.</p> <p>The CPVA audit told us what worked well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A much broader understanding of CPVA • good identification and use of the checklist by all agencies • training is embedded • voice of the child is captured • improved use of the CPVA non-violent resistance offer • use of the CPVA pathway has improved • evidence of discussion between adult and children’s social care <p>What needs to improve;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure GP records and coding updated to reference CPVA • Ensure information re CPVA shared with school/education provider • Understanding of the role of males in the household for all agencies

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
<p>Page 3</p>	<p>Whilst we would like to see a decrease in prevalence, we are not at that point on “the curve” yet; we are more at the “identification” stage. We are seeing an increase in identification, and that is encouraging and demonstrates the impact of training and the tools/pathway provided.</p> <p>With regards the use of CCNs amongst GPs, the ICB audit found that most GP responders report that CCNs were discussed at safeguarding meetings and multidisciplinary team meetings which was good awareness raising for GPs. It was felt that this reflected positively on the large amount of training of GPs around domestic abuse and CPVA.</p> <p>Maternity services are now asking about domestic abuse at every contact which did not happen previously. In terms of impact around Domestic Abuse per se, patients are being seen in a timelier way and their voices captured at an early stage, staff are using the risk of identification checklist and in general, being upskilled. The impact is we can be more confident victims are being protected.</p>
<p>Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)</p> <p>Whilst this was not originally identified as a priority, emerging evidence of significant risk required further analysis by the partnership</p>	<p>Processes</p> <p>Northumbria Police’s Prevention Through Education Team have undertaken a campaign raising awareness about the sharing of self-generated indecent images among children. During the summer term, the team visited 15 Northumberland schools to deliver this topic to 1206 pupils. These included 7 middle schools, 3 high schools, 4 SEN schools and 1 PRU, with most children who received the input being in year 8. Five of these sessions included a contribution from a member of our Paedophile Online Investigation Team (POLIT) giving an insight into what can happen to these indecent images once they are shared digitally. Feedback from schools was that the inputs were timely, shocking, well-pitched and exactly what the students needed to make them realise the consequences of sharing indecent images.</p> <p>What are the data telling us</p> <p>A multi-agency audit was undertaken to establish Northumberland’s baseline position using the HSB self-assessment tool developed by the NSPCC (in partnership with ‘research in practice’ and Durham University). The findings revealed a mixed picture with largely effective multi-agency assessment and responses to children and young people displaying HSB, with gaps in the availability intervention/prevention programmes and in some areas of workforce development.</p> <p>A deep dive casefile audit was subsequently completed by a range of service representatives including: Front Door/Assessment Team (children’s social care), Northumberland Adolescent Service (children’s social care), Youth Justice Service, Education,</p>

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
Page 133	<p>Northumbria Police, CYPS, Early Help and CQC. Findings show that cases entering the criminal justice system receive a more holistic assessment and have more consistent access to support services like CYPS, AIM assessments are not used consistently in cases where charges are not brought, there are gaps in preventative programmes across the region and there is a lack of professional curiosity in navigating conversations of HSB</p> <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionals write about children in a child first way, considering the child's needs and not focussing on the offence in isolation. • Arrests for offences were timely and good use of 'Operation Harbinger' was found – an initiative to reduce time spent in custody and ensure staff are appraised of wider mental health, speech and language, learning needs which would impact time spent in cells and ability to engage in interview etc. • CCNs were timely and identified risk to the victim as well as siblings. Aggravating factors noted by Police allowed triage to understand and address wider support needs like alcohol use. • Chronologies are well used but did not always consider early help information. • Prevention work with schools is a theme in the audits – this is identified only on an increase in CCNs for specific schools. • When cases enter the youth justice service, they consistently have AIM assessments – these are holistic and identify robust risk management strategies. • Young people have been supported to remain in or return to school with multi-agency plans and support. <p>Limitations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RUI (Released Under Investigation) is misused and means children are left in a state of limbo for too long, with limited safeguarding around them. Bail Conditions would allow safeguarding to be addressed and would provide reassurance for victims. This would also trigger regular reviews from Police. • Professionals make judgments based on limited information and without assessment or understanding of wider risk/influence i.e. 'out of character'.

Priorities 2020-2023	What We Are Doing and Its Impact
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 134</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a theme around lack of professional curiosity with this subject. Specifically, that we do not consider wider environmental factors or take time to understand the ‘why’ behind behaviours. Several audits identified that professionals either do not speak to the child about the HSB or there is a significant delay in doing this (2 months). This causes hypothesis to be formed on incomplete information. In some cases, there is a reliance on parents to share their understanding of why children have displayed HSB. • Issues navigating contact records has been identified as a potential risk of ‘missing’ information for those unfamiliar with EHM/ICS. Contact records are described as ‘disjointed’ in nature and ‘difficult to follow’. • Additional needs (diagnosed mental health or learning disabilities) were identified but not routinely shared. This was not the case for cases in the criminal justice service. <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police to consider comms regarding the use of Bail Conditions in cases where this would provide additionality. • Information sharing between social care and health services to be reviewed for cases HSB. A multi-agency pathway would support this. • There is a need for intervention programmes/services to work with this cohort prior to a charge decision. This is a regional gap since NSPCC provision moved out of Newcastle. • AIM pathways and policy information needs to be delivered to social care team managers. AIM3 assessments should be used consistently and not just in cases with CJS involvement. This will support more holistic assessment of HSB generally. Each locality has an AIM3 trained social worker to support this process. • Staff should receive training in HSB to enable them to feel confident navigating difficult conversations with children who display these behaviours. <p>The Criminal & Sexual Exploitation Sub-Group are leading on this area of work for the partnership</p>

3.2 Performance Priority Dashboard

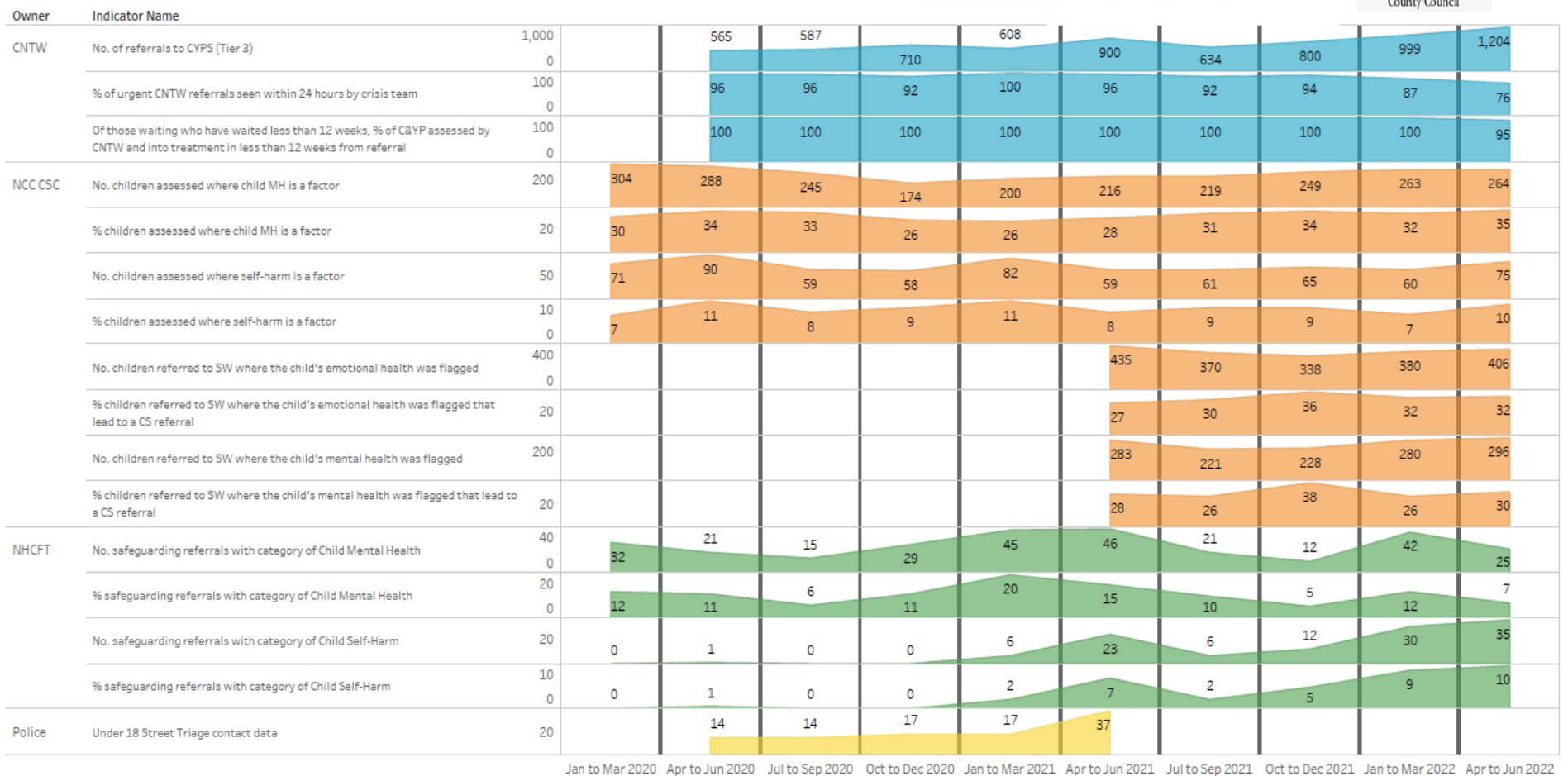
Performance data, both qualitative and quantitative, measuring progress against the NSSP’s priorities, has been set out and analysed in Section 3.1 within each of the priority areas. The dashboard below presents a summary of these data.

NSSP Priority dashboard - End of June 2022



Priority 1: Mental health, self-harm and suicide (includes social media and bullying)

Data from: CCG - CNTW - NCC Ed - NCC CS - NCC EH - NHCFT - Police



NSSP Priority dashboard - End of June 2022



Priority 2 Neglect

Data from: CCG - CNTW - NCC Ed - NCC CS - NCC EH - NHCFT - Police

Owner	Indicator Name	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	
NCC CSC	No. children referred to CS where Neglect is a factor	0					367	410	383	402	394	
	% children referred to CS where Neglect is a factor	0					16	22	19	18	17	
	No. children referred to CS where Educational Neglect is a factor	0					16	20	33	34	47	
	% children referred to CS where Educational Neglect is a factor	0					1	1	2	2	2	
	No. children referred to CS where Emotional Neglect is a factor	0					136	140	135	135	116	
	% children referred to CS where Emotional Neglect is a factor	5					6	7	7	6	5	
	No. children referred to CS where Medical Neglect is a factor	50					52	28	52	61	37	
	% children referred to CS where Medical Neglect is a factor	0					2	1	3	3	2	
	No. children referred to CS where Nutritional Neglect is a factor	0					28	27	38	40	32	
	% children referred to CS where Nutritional Neglect is a factor	0					1	1	2	2	1	
	No. children referred to CS where Physical Neglect is a factor	0					121	191	198	188	160	
	% children referred to CS where Physical Neglect is a factor	0					5	10	10	8	7	
	No. CP plans total	0	455	411	399	365	369	342	368	381	403	388
	% CP plans labelled as Neglect	50	77	75	75	76	75	77	81	87	80	82
No. of CPPs starting and categorised as neglect	100	150	101	90	80	104	115	101	127	91	116	
% CPPs starting within 2 yrs of previous plan - both neglect	10	15	5	12	10	8	5	16	10	4	9	
No. children entering care	0	49	44	46	41	44	32	33	57	57	43	
% children entering care where Neglect was a factor	50	55	80	67	51	73	72	70	60	67	63	
NCC EH	% of EH cases subsequently stepped up to SW where neglect is a reason	0					0		2	5	3	
NHCFT	No. safeguarding referrals with category of Child Neglect	50	52	32	35	40	41	79	51	51	92	65
	% safeguarding referrals with category of Child Neglect	0	19	17	14	15	18	25	24	24	28	20
Police	Child Concern - notifications	OK		3,354	3,910	3,638	3,720	4,292	3,566	3,931	4,376	4,487
	Child concerns - % of repeat notifications	0		39	38	37	38	35	35	35	35	35
	Neglect - offences against children	0		7	8	8	14	16	12	24	12	14

Jan to Mar 2020 Apr to Jun 2020 Jul to Sep 2020 Oct to Dec 2020 Jan to Mar 2021 Apr to Jun 2021 Jul to Sep 2021 Oct to Dec 2021 Jan to Mar 2022 Apr to Jun 2022

NSSP Priority dashboard - End of June 2022



Priority 3 Safeguarding children under 1 year old (includes unborn babies)

Data from: CCG - CNTW - NCC Ed - NCC CS - NCC EH - NHCFT - Police

Owner	Indicator Name	Quarte									
		Jan to Mar 2020	Apr to Jun 2020	Jul to Sep 2020	Oct to Dec 2020	Jan to Mar 2021	Apr to Jun 2021	Jul to Sep 2021	Oct to Dec 2021	Jan to Mar 2022	Apr to Jun 2022
NCC CSC	No. referrals for babies	102.0	80.0	72.0	93.0	87.0	90.0	76.0	72.0	86.0	52.0
	% of referrals that were for babies	12.0	12.4	14.4	12.2	12.7	12.7	13.8	9.7	11.6	7.0
	No. strategy discussions for babies	69.0	44.0	40.0	48.0	37.0	48.0	47.0	47.0	49.0	48.0
	% strategy discussions where a baby is the subject	12.3	11.1	11.8	13.3	10.6	12.8	13.8	12.9	12.9	13.6
	No. S47s where babies are the subject	50.0	46.0	33.0	39.0	37.0	36.0	42.0	39.0	41.0	24.0
	% S47s where a baby is the subject	12.6	15.7	13.1	18.2	14.7	13.8	18.3	13.4	14.2	8.6
	Of the S47s counted above, no. babies subject to ICPC	37.0	33.0	24.0	28.0	31.0	30.0	30.0	29.0	27.0	15.0
	% of ICPCs where a baby is the subject	16.0	23.4	20.2	23.9	20.8	23.8	21.3	18.7	19.1	8.4
	No. babies starting CP plans	31.0	32.0	20.0	27.0	36.0	29.0	25.0	23.0	29.0	15.0
	% of CP plans starting where the child is a baby	15.6	23.9	17.7	24.5	28.6	22.5	19.5	15.1	21.5	11.6
	No. of CP re-plans within 18 months of the previous CP plan end date	4.0	0.0	3.0	1.0	0.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	0.0
	% CP re-plans within 18 months of the previous CP plan end date	12.9	0.0	15.0	3.7	0.0	10.3	8.0	4.3	6.9	0.0
	No. of CP re-plans where 2nd plan was before child's first birthday	0.0	0.0	2.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0
	% of CP re-plans where 2nd plan was before child's first birthday	0.0	0.0	10.0	3.7	0.0	0.0	4.0	4.3	0.0	0.0
	No. CP plans for babies	43.0	44.0	40.0	41.0	47.0	43.0	44.0	52.0	57.0	62.0
	% of children subject to CP plans that are babies	9.5	10.7	10.0	11.2	12.7	12.6	12.0	13.6	14.1	16.0
	No. of CP plans ending (where child was unborn when CP plan started)	15.0	28.0	22.0	13.0	15.0	24.0	20.0	26.0	14.0	16.0
	% of above that ended within 0 to 3 months	53.3	32.1	31.8	23.1	26.7	33.3	30.0	30.8	14.3	25.0
	% of above that ended within 3 to 6 months	20.0	21.4	22.7	15.4	13.3	16.7	10.0	15.4	21.4	18.8
	% of above that ended within 6 to 12 months	13.3	32.1	18.2	53.8	60.0	33.3	50.0	46.2	42.9	50.0
	% of above that ended within 12 months+	13.3	14.3	27.3	7.7	0.0	16.7	10.0	7.7	21.4	6.3
	No. babies entering care	11.0	8.0	9.0	6.0	11.0	8.0	10.0	17.0	17.0	13.0
	% of children entering care that are babies	22.4	18.2	19.6	14.6	25.0	25.0	30.3	29.8	29.8	30.2
No. of babies in care	27.0	27.0	27.0	26.0	20.0	20.0	21.0	31.0	29.0	27.0	
% of children in care that are babies	6.2	6.1	6.1	5.9	4.6	4.6	5.2	8.0	6.8	6.3	
NCC EH	% of people attending brilliant babies subsequently referred to SW in 1y					0.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.0
?	No. SINs due to co-sleeping				0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	

NSSP Priority dashboard - End of June 2022



Priority 4 Impact of domestic abuse (DA) on children and child to parent violent abuse (CPVA)

Data from: CCG - CNTW - NCC Ed - NCC CS - NCC EH - NHCFT - Police

Owner	Indicator Name	Qu	Jan to Mar 2020	Apr to Jun 2020	Jul to Sep 2020	Oct to Dec 2020	Jan to Mar 2021	Apr to Jun 2021	Jul to Sep 2021	Oct to Dec 2021	Jan to Mar 2022	Apr to Jun 2022
NCC CSC	No. children referred to CSW	OK	2,345	2,138	2,272	2,229	2,171	2,321	1,885	1,984	2,234	2,381
	No. children referred to CSW where DA is a factor	500	505	564	657	609	586	515	449	396	362	463
	% children referred to CSW where DA is a factor	20	22	26	29	27	27	22	24	20	16	19
	% of children referred with DA as a factor that go on to CS referral stage	0	44	35	23	37	28	35	40	46	27	29
	No. children referred to CSW where CPVA is a factor	50						28	26	33	74	82
	% children referred to CSW where CPVA is a factor	2						1	1	2	3	3
	No. of cases open to SW where DA is a factor	0						538	473	411	373	318
	% of SW cases where DA is a factor	0						24	22	18	16	15
	No. of SW cases working with CPVA team	0						38	49	36	26	30
	% of SW cases where CPVA is a factor	0						2	2	2	1	1
	No. children entering care	0	49	44	46	41	44	32	33	57	57	43
	% children entering care where DA was a factor	20	24	14	20	22	36	22	18	28	33	33
	No. CLA entering care where DA was a factor	10	12	6	9	9	16	7	6	16	19	14
	NCC Ed	% schools reporting Op Encompass had a +ve impact on understanding of DA	0							26		
NHCFT	No. MARAC referrals completed	0	18	21	19	17	15	15	12	20	22	15
	% MARAC refs increase / decrease compared to prev Q	0	-11	3	-2	-2	-2	0	-3	8	2	-7
Police	No. DA Incidents	OK	1,208	1,738	1,242	1,200	1,055	1,813	1,784	1,567	1,703	1,943
	No. DA Victims	1K	895	1,261	907	898	782	1,389	1,375	1,207	1,284	1,432
	% DA Victims age 16/17	0	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	% of repeat DA incidents	0	26	27	27	25	26	23	23	23	25	26
	Domestic Incidents involving Children	500	570	695	830	527	538	824	753	662	724	769
	% Domestic incidents involving children	50	47	40	67	44	51	45	42	42	43	40
	Arrests associated with domestic violence incidents with child involved	0	242	150	140	254	224	198	149	145	172	174
	% Domestic incidents with children involved that end in arrest	0	42	22	17	48	42	24	20	22	24	23
	No. MARAC Cases discussed	0	91	125	134	114	115	116	117	117	109	113
	No. repeat cases	0		34	42	31	45	30	28	27	23	41
	% of repeat MARAC cases discussed	0		27	31	27	39	26	24	23	21	36

Jan to Mar 2020 Apr to Jun 2020 Jul to Sep 2020 Oct to Dec 2020 Jan to Mar 2021 Apr to Jun 2021 Jul to Sep 2021 Oct to Dec 2021 Jan to Mar 2022 Apr to Jun 2022

3.3 An Early Help Case Study

The following case study provides a qualitative illustration of joined-up and prompt multi-agency action resulting in positive outcomes for the child and family. Concerns included neglect, domestic abuse and parental substance abuse/mental health issues.

Background:

- Child started 2-year-old early education provision in June 2022.
- Health Visitor shared concerns with Senior Early Years Worker regarding home conditions and mothers' wellbeing. Senior Early Years Worker shared concerns around mothers' mental health with Early Help colleagues.
- Discussion between Early Help team and health visitor led to a referral to Children's Services.
- Child Protection conference held and case opened – neglect and domestic abuse
- Initial core group meeting – info shared: mum testing positive for drugs, child attending 2-year-old provision up to summer holiday period and has attended one holiday drop-in session with no concerns noted, social worker is still working with families' targets and mother providing regular samples to the health visitor.
- Outcome: mother to join in summer holiday provision at Children's Centre. Health visitor arranging with GP for more suitable mental health provision for mum. Mum signposted for drug abuse support. Father not to have unsupervised contact.

What we are worried about	What is working well	What needs to happen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor parental mental health, living conditions, past and current substance misuse & domestic violence in the home, overall impacting on the child's holistic development, learning and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mother shared her mental health history with Senior Early Years Worker when bringing child to provision on 2nd day. • Mother engaging with relevant professionals and attending Children's Centre for parenting support, and the learning and development opportunities for her child. • Parent attending appointments with GP, referred to mental health services. • Parent accessing support from the family network to improve home conditions. • Relevant & timely information sharing with other professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mother to continue attending services for support. • Consistency with relevant information sharing between professionals. • Mother to have regular negative drug test results. • Improved home conditions to be maintained.

4. Dealing with Risk & Learning from Safeguarding Practice

This section explains how learning and improvements are embedded to make progress on achieving better outcomes for children and young people.

4.1. What have we learnt from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews?

The Safeguarding Practice Review Group (SPRG) collates the findings from local children's safeguarding practice reviews (LCSPRs), evaluates the learning/findings, and provides further audit and scrutiny to gain a broader view of the findings on behalf of NCASP.

There have been 3 rapid reviews this year, one of which took place out of area, and no LCSPRs initiated during this reporting period. Ongoing work and actions have continued in relation to previous reviews. There has been one joint child/adult learning review completed, and one child learning review undertaken in the previous reporting period which was finalised this year. One LCSPR from the previous year is complete and will shortly be published.

Priority 1. Children and young people's mental health, including self-harm and suicide. There have been 2 rapid reviews undertaken relating to suspected child suicide however neither met the criteria for a formal LCSPR, one of these involved a child placed out of the area. The SPRG has overseen and completed a learning review related to a suspected child suicide. The learning from this review has been shared and included in single and multi-agency training, including a carousel event. A draft action plan and 7-minute guide

has also been prepared. The self-harm pathway has been reviewed and updated to consider the learning from this and other recent reviews. There is an ongoing action to consider information sharing regarding self-harm between health and education services. A joint adult and child learning review has been completed during this reporting year, where the key themes included transitional safeguarding and the impact of trauma. There is ongoing work to ensure these approaches are embedded across services. In addition, the Northumberland Emotional Wellbeing Service (NEWS) is now in place and fully operational, working with families and carers.

Priority 2. Neglect. The SPRG undertook a learning review during this year where neglect featured and the action plan is currently being monitored. The findings from this and previous learning directly informed a well-attended, multi-agency Neglect Summit in May 2022.

Priority 3. Safeguarding children under 1 year old - including non-accidental head injuries and co-sleeping. In response to a learning review completed in the previous year for a small baby with serious, life-threatening head injuries, the action plan has been reviewed and assurance sought from agencies. ICON, a prevention programme to raise the awareness and reduce the incidence of abusive head trauma (AHT), has been rolled out across Northumberland in Sept 2021. There is ongoing work with the immobile baby policy to include in training across agencies. The immobile baby policy has been included in the carousel event and the multi-agency vulnerable baby training. Work is underway to develop an information leaflet for parents regarding the process when an immobile baby has a bruise, which is recognised as a very emotive and stressful experience for parents and professionals.

A SPR was initiated in the previous year with regards to a baby who sustained multiple fractures. The review concluded this year however publication is on hold due to ongoing police investigations. Nevertheless, a 7-minute guide and an action plan has been produced.

Priority 4. Impact of domestic abuse on children including Child to Parent Violence and Abuse (CPVA). A Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) undertaken this year was asked to consider any learning relating to a child, which will be included as an appendix report and was presented to NCASP.

In response to learning from previous joint learning reviews, there has been ongoing work and training to raise awareness of CPVA and promote the pathway.

5. Quality of Practice and Partners Assurances; how effectively are children and young people being safeguarded in Northumberland?

Scrutiny from external inspectorates provides independent monitoring and reviewing of how well safeguarding is being carried out in Northumberland. The pandemic delayed these processes last year however inspections have more recently been reinstated.

Northumberland's safeguarding partners and relevant agencies have continued to provide assurance to NCASP and sought assurance from their commissioned services.

5.1 The Integrated Care Board (ICB)⁴

As one of the statutory safeguarding partners the ICB must gain assurance from all their commissioned services, NHS and independent healthcare providers, throughout the year to ensure quality and continuous improvement.

Assurance consists of assurance visits, Section 11 audits which will be carried out in the next reporting year, and attendance at provider safeguarding committees and quarterly monitoring provided through the safeguarding children and adult performance dashboards.

The ICB is also required to demonstrate that they have appropriate systems in place for discharging their statutory duties in terms of safeguarding. The ICB safeguarding team has extended the attendance at multi-agency meetings to provide information on behalf of GP Practices as agreed through the information sharing agreement including MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements), MSET, and MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference). Through this process, and information sharing agreements which have been reviewed and updated over the last year, access has been granted by most GP practices in Northumberland which allows the team to retrieve relevant information, add appropriate coding and provide reports for the meetings on behalf of GPs and then feedback after meetings.

Furthermore, assurance has been sought from GP practices by the Named Nurse Primary Care (NNPC) who aims to attend each practice at least once annually. This offers the opportunity to support, share

⁴ The Clinical Commissioning group until July 2022

learning, seek assurance, and identify any areas for development. Additionally, this provides an opportunity to develop good rapport with GPs and Primary Care staff. To achieve this the most appropriate setting is to attend the supporting families multi-disciplinary meeting where vulnerable people are discussed. To date the NNPC has attended 36 practices 'supporting families' meetings either face to face or via teams. Attendance at these meetings allow the NNPC to share learning from Case Reviews and CQC inspections, to discuss any training needs or training opportunities for Primary Care staff in addition to supporting and advising on safeguarding concerns.

5.2 Northumbria Police

MASH demand was closely monitored to measure the impact of COVID on child concern (CCN) notifications and allow flex and response accordingly, with a continued physical presence with MASH police staff, officers and support staff, located in and working from the MASH.

5.2.1 Priority 1. Children and young people's mental health including self-harm and suicide.

Northumbria Police have continued to provide a Street Triage Service investing in training front line offices, this commitment is open to Children across Northumberland. The CNTW nurses and police officers who work on the service deploy to incidents of children in MH crisis and have continued to provide a face-to-face service throughout the COVID pandemic and beyond.

In the last 12 months our Street Triage officers have undertaken training in ACE's, learning disabilities and child exploitation to ensure they have a more holistic understanding of children's presenting

behaviours. The Street Triage service also ensure they are sighted on the impact of parental mental ill health on children and young people's mental health and make safeguarding referrals for children impacted by a parent or carers mental health crisis, utilising a think family approach.

Kooth is promoted within Northern area command for front line officers in Response Policing and Neighbourhood Teams to use as a signposting tool for young people with mental health concerns.

The role of our Criminal Justice Liaison and Diversion Nurses in Custody who can support children who are suspected of an offence with their mental health is fully embedded. The importance of seeing an incident through the eyes of a child and hearing the voice of the child to understand their lived experience to ensure that our officers focus on Mental Health triage and interventions for Children rather than taking a Criminal Justice approach wherever possible.

Struggling children whose poor mental health has pushed them towards self-harm and substance abuse have been provided support by Northumbria Police, through early intervention and education.

5.2.2 Priority 2. Neglect

Northumbria Police are committed to reducing instances of child neglect. All reports are subject to daily oversight from the Detective Inspector within dedicated Child Abuse Teams. There is a drive to work with our partners throughout the force to establish the root cause of the issues and provide help and support to prevent any reoccurrence. Vulnerability training has been initiated for officers' force wide, helping them identify where neglect is a factor. Raising awareness that this is a form of child abuse that can have serious and long-lasting impacts on a child's life - it can cause serious harm and

even death. Awareness that neglect can happen at any age, sometimes even before a child is born. If a mother has mental health problems or misuses substances during pregnancy, for example, she may neglect her own health, and this can damage a baby's development in the womb.

When a prosecution is justified these are driven by supervisory oversight to make the process as quick as possible to limit the impact to victims throughout. All investigations are conducted by specialist investigators within Child abuse teams who are trained in interviewing children.

5.2.3 Priority 3. Safeguarding children under 1year old – including non-accidental head injuries and co-sleeping

All reports of this nature are daily brought to the attention of specialist child abuse teams and scrutinised and reviewed at Detective Inspector level. Staff attend and share information at all levels of multi-agency meetings to ensure accurate interventions and safety plans are in place.

Detective Inspectors attend all rapid review meeting for serious injury and SUDI and continues with the child death review panel and joint learning review processes.

Lessons learned are disseminated and staff attend formal delivery sessions as part of their CPD for the SCADIP (Specialist Child Abuse Investigators Development Programme) accreditation.

All reports of this nature are investigated by Child Abuse specialist detectives who have a SCADIP qualification from the College of Policing.

5.2.4 Priority 4. Impact of Domestic Violence on Children and CPVA

From September 2021 to August 11.8.2022 there were 42 incidents of CPVA in the Northumberland area including harmful acts/

behaviours or patterns of coercive control. The force recognises that children displaying these types of behaviour may well be subject to factors including learning disabilities, autism, ADHD, substance abuse, and ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) and therefore consider the child's developmental age as well as their age. The force continues to promote the "Through the Eyes of a child" campaign as part of their frontline response to domestic abuse incidents.

5.2.5 Criminal Exploitation

Northumbria Police have developed a vulnerability assessment tracker (VAT) within the Multi-Agency Exploitation Hub. While in its early stages of development the performance data is at this time primarily Police centric, the aim is to host relevant multi agency data which will be a big step forward in supporting safety plans. Work has progressed on Information Sharing Agreements (ISA) with the future aim for all hub partners to drive a more connected intelligence picture to allow for effective extra-familial safeguarding. Also, developed is an internal threat reduction group meeting at a senior management level which is linked to the Force tasking and coordination process driving the 4P policing activities (Prevent, Protect, Prepare & Pursue) in response to exploitation. This is supplemented with analytical support desk within the Force Intelligence Department dedicated to Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking as well as Child Sexual Exploitation and County Lines identifying any current or emerging trends and hotspots.

A weekly meeting between all partners to discuss individuals raised as being at potential risk or at current risk of exploitation takes place. There are no geographic boundaries, allowing a whole system approach to ensure bespoke safety plans are put in place.

5.3. Local Authority

5.3.1 Children's Social Care (CSC)

Effective performance management and quality assurance processes underpin continuous improvement and ongoing development as a learning organisation. The focus and depth of our quality of practice is driven in the work of QPAG where all quality of practice findings are presented, improving how learning from quality of practice work reaches front line staff in a meaningful and embedded way by enhancing the communication flow from QPAG to CSMs to Team Managers to Practitioners.

Overall, there has been evidence of continuing improvement in the quality of practice seen in all activities. We have worked on achieving more consistency in application of standards and this has been evidenced, improvement has been noted and practice is more consistent across all areas of children's social care in Northumberland. The consistency of recording has also improved but requires ongoing focus to ensure all good practice and impact is evidenced. . The increased quality of practice activity in this period and the dedication and commitment of workforce members to ensure good outcomes for children and young people threads through the practice.

Further to the practice areas and impact noted in the previous section on the priorities, the following findings from our quality of practice work relevant for the partnership are summarised below:

The Signs of Safety model has been firmly embedded in the practice at the front door and across the safeguarding teams. The use of

clear, jargon-free language, networks, danger statements and safety plans, and direct work with young people are consistently evident. Staff report increased confidence in the use of the model and can see the benefits in their relationships with families and outcomes for children.

While the overall numbers of children subject to a child protection plan has increased over the year from 359 to 389, our quality of practice work has evidenced that the decision making, and application of thresholds is appropriate. Child protection conferences are consistently held in a timely way

There is good application of thresholds and children are receiving the right service at the right time. Referrals are well received into the Front Door and triage is thorough and analytical in the application of thresholds for intervention. Effective decision-making at the Front Door has led to re-referrals reducing further, from 20% in 2020/21 to 16% in 2021/22, far lower than the national average of 23%.

Cases that require immediate actions are escalated appropriately and the relevant cases are proceeding to MASH where a multi-agency approach determines the next steps.

EDT actions are considered as proportionate and recording of these actions is thorough and appropriate. Where necessary, rapid safety plans are put in place and a handover process is in place to ensure day services are aware of any necessary tasks that might be required.

Section 47 enquiries are initiated at appropriate junctures across the service and measures are put in place to safeguard the child(ren). This is strengthened by oversight from the Service Manager,

however the recording of information and analysis in Section 47s is variable and further work is required in this area.

Through ongoing scrutiny of our thresholds, we are reassured that we are applying them appropriately and not intervening unnecessarily: our rate of S47s going to ICPC is between 50% and 60% (consistently higher than the national average of 37%).

Strong child-centred practice is evident across all areas of social care and the majority of assessments and plans are robust, ensuring children's needs are understood. Use of child protection/looked after and child in need procedures are well embedded within the teams and effective use of conferencing/reviews and relevant meetings strengthens the overall ethos to keep children safe and improve their lives.

Parents and wider family members and networks are engaged well and there is regular and effective multi agency working. Plans are variable, however are improved with the Signs of Safety form used now. Identification of family networks is improving, and they are being engaged and are creating safety for the child

Good step-up arrangements from early help to social work are in place and quality of practice activity evidence that this is executed well and with the child at the focus, joint visits are arranged, and the situation explained to parents about the shift in level of involvement needed.

Effective responses to and understanding of exploitation and extra familial harm are strong in Northumberland Adolescent Service (NAS), with constructive partnership work evident. Numbers of young people discussed in MSET have reduced in the last 12 months

and those that are re-presenting is extremely low (averaging just 7% in 2021). There was an increase in young people accepting their offer of a Return Home Interview with a 13% increase from 75% to 88% between October 2021 and May 2022.

Further to our internal quality of practice findings, two external inspections reported ongoing improvements;

Details from the SEND inspection in July 2021 can be found here; <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50166604>

Details from a focused visit in July 2022: Planning for and achieving permanence can be found here; <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50191898>.

5.3.2 Education

The Schools' Engagement sub-group continued to operate according to its Terms of Reference to improve the engagement of schools with the work of the partnership and improve safeguarding standards in schools and education settings.

The annual review of the S175 Safeguarding Standards Audit completion rate by schools has dipped this year (to 82% by July 2022), however development of an e-S175 is underway and will be launched with schools before the end of 2022, with better accessibility and significantly enhanced functionality.

Progress through the groups workplan was good and provided a framework to ensure that partnership priorities were understood and acted on appropriately in education settings. **Schools are prepared and resourced to take appropriate action in their own**

school communities to challenge sexual abuse, violence and harassment

The impact of delivery on this priority was positive, with evidence that more schools create the opportunity for children to speak out about sexual abuse, violence and harassment and have better information to either prevent or respond to incidents. Schools know which other appropriate agencies to involve when needed and the statutory RSHE curriculum addresses this theme effectively.

19 Northumberland schools were asked by Ofsted inspectors about what they are proactively doing to combat sexual abuse, violence and harassment in their community (even if there were no reported cases), including preventative measures, the curriculum (and RSHE curriculum) and responses to allegations. Complaints about schools via the Ofsted whistleblowing route were monitored and only one related to sexual violence and sexual harassment (linked to the school's PSHE curriculum) Safeguarding was recorded as 'effective' in the 19 Ofsted school inspection reports published by July 2022.

Through the sub-group, the Schools' Safeguarding Team co-ordinated schools' responses to the NSPCC audit commissioned by NCASP, of sexual harassment and violence in Northumberland settings. Contributing to the findings report for NCASP compiled by the task and finish group. Partners developed advice and guidance relating to sexual exploitation in schools that was included in every locality briefing for Designated Safeguarding Leads.

The Schools' Safeguarding Team now delivers multi-agency domestic abuse L1 course training.

Fulfil the extended duty of Virtual School Headteachers to promote the education of children with a social worker

From June 2021 Virtual School Headteachers have had a new duty to promote the education of children with a social worker. The requirement is not to provide a new service, but to deliver services in ways that strengthen the relationships between social workers and Designated Safeguarding Leads.

A priority, and key measure of success, is improved stability for children with a social worker in school, and improved school attendance. Northumberland's Virtual School delivered a webinar for the DfE to demonstrate good practice regarding the attendance of children with a social worker.

Actions to identify and support individual children not in school are delivered through the Children Missing Education (CME) process at a monthly multi-agency CME tracking panel.

Poor school attendance is recognised as a negative impact of Covid-19 and which affects the safeguarding of children. Following the cases of Arthur and Star, assurance was provided to NCASP regarding the safeguarding of children not in school during the pandemic and school closure periods.

Strategies to improve school attendance are on-going, and further improvements will be achieved as the new DfE School Attendance guidance is implemented. This includes the development of a Northumberland attendance strategy and specific focus on children with a social worker.

Recommendations from learning reviews have been fully implemented.

Implementation of lessons from learning reviews has promoted good practice and improved understanding of the vulnerability of children not in school. The recommendations were monitored through the sub-group workplan and schools' S175 Safeguarding Standards Audits.

The Fiona Review;

- 100% of schools and alternative providers have received updates on the recommendations from this review
- Recommendations from this review are included in all whole school training and monthly Designated Safeguarding Lead refresher training.

The Bobby Review;

- A Prevent item was included in every half termly issue of Safe to Learn, received by all schools and alternative education providers, including the Prevent Flowcharts and how to make a referral
- To ensure that senior leadership teams in schools are able to support students with SEND or safeguarding concerns, recommendations were shared regarding contingency planning for Designated Safeguarding Leads e.g. absent from work, change of role, new staff

- Measures for smooth handover and continuity planning for individual pupil cases was included in the S175 Schools' Safeguarding Standards Audit
- Exclusion processes and the use of alternative education were reviewed through the Exclusions Strategy Board and included in The Northumberland Strategic Inclusive Plan (a new promoting inclusion and preventing exclusion strategy)

The Aaron review;

- 100% of schools and alternative providers have received updates on the recommendations from this review
- Recommendations from this review are included in all whole school training and monthly Designated Safeguarding Lead refresher training
- The updated partnership Suicide and Self-Harm strategy and pathway was shared
- All schools have access to relevant training provided by the local authority and NCASP.

5.4 Cafcass⁵ Section 11 submission to safeguarding partners

The Cafcass Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21 were published on 28 October 2021 in accordance with the standards set out in the *Guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act (2007: section 2.13)*.

The strategic risk profile saw some increase in risk which related to issues associated with the pandemic including pressure of rising

⁵ Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service

demand and delays in concluding cases in court resulting in growing caseloads. Noteworthy risks around case management and safeguarding include not seeing children, either as a result of sickness or pandemic restrictions, which means that there is an inadequate understanding of the child's lived experience, wishes and feelings. Mitigation includes an operational action plan aiming to have 100% of records where a child is expected to be seen, in line with policies; the plan is monitored and then scrutinised. Organisational and strategic risk continues to be monitored through new reporting processes, including identification of emerging risks, and this is supported by regular assessment of environment risks. There were no noteworthy emerging strategic risks at the end of the financial year.

5.4.1 Quality assurance

In accordance with the newly published Cafcass inspection framework, Ofsted undertook a focused visit in April this year and despite the exceptional challenges of the pandemic Cafcass *'sustained and further improved our track record of placing children, their welfare and safety at the centre of our work.'* Internal quality assurance audits find close to 63% of the work to be good or better, with a further 30% meeting the required standards.

The same quality assurance framework remains in place from last year but also includes a focus on improving coaching, learning and family feedback aspects of quality assurance, as an important means of reflecting on practice and impact. During this year, changes include:

- A strengths-based audit focused on learning, to improve the impact we have on children.
- The incorporation of collaborative (alongside FCAs) audit and family feedback. This enables a more complete picture to be

formed of the quality and impact of the work for the child, which supports improved practice and learning about what is done well and what needs to change.

- The level of management oversight for staff not approved to self-file is retained by additional auditing between quarterly audits. For self-filing FCAs, this is now completed via 'dip sampling quality assurance'.
- The National Improvement Service undertakes moderation of audits on a regular basis and works with regional teams where there is a difference in judgement as well as overseeing learning and improvement actions.

A new performance and accountability framework is the mechanism through which Cafcass hold 's themselves to account as an organisation for the commitments made in the National Improvement Plan.

5.4.2 Feedback from children and families

In addition to the learning from internal audits, feedback is obtained from children and families directly to the family court adviser after meetings via surveys and in less direct ways, for example through mystery shopper work at call centres.

During the last year, an integral aspect of audits included routinely asking parents and children for their feedback. For example, we audited records for 200 families who had experienced domestic abuse and received feedback from 81 people. Many reported they felt listened to and their circumstances were understood by Cafcass for example, *"Thank you for putting my children's safety and wishes at the heart of your report and for your empathy and kindness"*. However, the need for more explanation of the decisions made in

assessments, more consideration of all professional opinions and the need to keep an open mind about children's and parents' experiences throughout the assessment process, provided some learning.

Feedback from children, cited that they need more help in advance of initial meetings so that they can prepare for and understand the purpose of engagement with them. In response to this point, introductory letters were revised and re-issued to enable children to plan what they would like to say and for Cafcass to explain clearly the purpose of the meeting – including asking for their feedback on

5.4 Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

The Safeguarding Service hosted NHCFT's annual safeguarding conference in September 2021. The eighth annual conference was held virtually by over 200 staff and guest speakers included experts from Sexual and Criminal Exploitation, drug and alcohol, learning disability and The Lighthouse Boys who spoke about their lived experience of losing their mother and sister when their father murdered them both and the impact of domestic abuse in their early lives.

The trust continues to use a flagging electronic system for children who have a learning disability to ensure that when a child attends hospital, a code will be in their medical record so that staff can identify that they have a learning disability and ensure reasonable adjustments are put in place as required.

SIRS identifies partners who may pose a risk to the unborn/new-born is referenced as good practice by the National Panel in their thematic

how well they had felt supported. Children are also asked in the new letters, what is special about them and what they would like to be known about how this affects their experiences, wishes and feelings. A Family Forum has been created to work closely with families whose experiences of work with them should have been better. The two most important objectives in this work are to put right mistakes made and to learn from that practice so that anyone receiving help and support receives a quality experience equivalent to the best offered.

review of non-accidental injuries in under 1's. This process was established following a Serious Case Review.

From April 2021 the trust safeguarding service extended their service supporting staff and patients around safeguarding. There is a safeguarding practitioner on site at the Emergency Care Centre

(NSECH) covering all of the wards and A&E. This was a proactive approach taken due to the increased volume of patients and safeguarding concerns since the Covid-19 pandemic. A successful business case resulted in an additional 5 specialist safeguarding posts into the service which includes a specialist domestic abuse practitioner who is IDVA and ISVA qualified. The service takes a proactive role in safeguarding and includes full cross cover across children's, adult's and the acute learning disability liaison service.

The trusts joint safeguarding children and adult three-year strategy and action plan 2021-2024 has been signed off. In year it includes;

- Plans for early identification and prevention of cocaine use through audit, toxicology reports and campaigns.
- Reviewing and developing domestic abuse training, a physical presence of a DA practitioner on acute hospital sites, develop a pathway for victims of sexual violence that attend the trust. Will be achieved through training, audit, data analysis and DA champion networks feedback.
- Develop the workforce's understanding of 16/17 year old vulnerabilities around transition and appropriate actions to take with mental health, substance misuse and exploitation concerns. Will be achieved by identifying staff needs, and providing appropriate support.
- Implementation of ICON to reduce abusive head trauma in babies through training for all midwives.

5.5 Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear (CNTW) Mental Health Trust

The service has now returned to face-to-face contacts, but has also retained new ways of working developed during lockdown. Including multi-disciplinary risk management meetings to ensure safe and appropriate intervention are in place to meet a child's needs.

A Universal Crisis Team (UCT) remains in place, Children and Young Person (CYP) pathway to a 24/7 provision and mobilised a 24 hour Enhanced PLT, providing a holistic approach to assessment for young people/adults up to age 25; with both CYP and Working Age Adult professionals jointly providing review.

Neglect and risks to vulnerable babies are dealt with in Level 2 and 3 training. Where concerns regarding neglect is identified, staff are

required to complete an incident report to obtain advice, support and supervision as needed.

Following learning from 'Daniel', and other local case reviews the Keeping Children Safe Assessment is under review.

Staff have attended specific Child to Parent Violence and Abuse training, including awareness of reporting processes.

5.6 Northumberland Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (DALPB)

Partnership arrangements for domestic abuse (DA) have been established in its new strategic Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.

The Board is responsible for supporting Northumberland County Council in meeting its duties under the new DA Act 2021 and ensuring victims of domestic abuse have access to adequate and appropriate support to improve outcomes for victim/survivors, including their children, through a strategic approach to identifying and addressing gaps in support. Following a refresh of the DA needs assessment the DA Board published its Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024 informing the recommissioning of domestic abuse services from 1st April 2022 to ensure support is available when needed for victims, survivors, their children and those causing harm who are acknowledging the need to change their behaviour.

Northumberland Integrated Domestic Abuse Support Services: DASSN (Domestic Abuse Support Service Northumberland) provided by Harbour– refuge, dispersed properties, sanctuary scheme, IDVA service, outreach, assertive outreach, groups & service user forum. Full time IDVA based in MASH.

Counselling, Therapeutic & Outreach Service for Children and Young People provided by Acorns – counselling, play therapy, outreach support & service user forum.

Changing Behaviour Service provided by Harbour– 1:1 & groups, based in MASH. Partner safety work.

6. Focus on the Child’s Experience of Services and Embedding it in Practice

6.1 Young People’s Views and Opinions About the Services they Receive

There is still more work to do for NCASP to understand the lived experiences of children and young people. The following material has limitations generally in that the analysis largely stems from those young people open to Northumberland Adolescent Services (NAS), equating to 95% of all responses, with 4% coming from Early Help Teams and 1% coming from ESLAC. Since August 2021 there was a total of 69 responses of which 89% were directly completed by young people. Nevertheless, hearing the voices of this particular cohort of young people is crucial for a safeguarding partnership.

The lived experiences of children and young people more broadly in Northumberland is reported on page 12 from data sourced by the **2021 Health & Behaviour-Related Questionnaire** in the priorities section.

Domestic Abuse in Rural Areas provided by NDAS – 1:1, group work and awareness raising in the North & West

Adult Counselling provided by Cygnus Support – counselling for male and female victims of DA.

A DA Summit has been arranged for the 6th October 2022 to support the DA Board in reviewing the DA Strategy and action plan priorities.

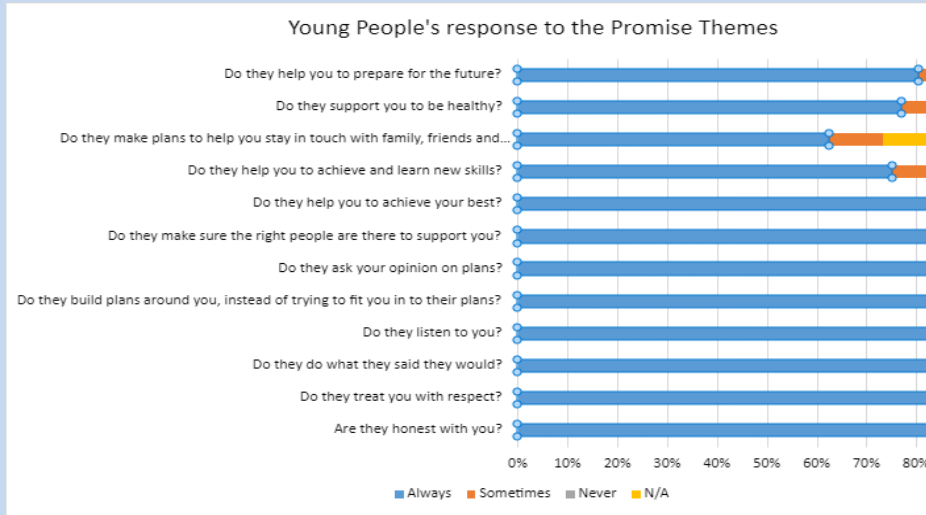
The Children and Young Peoples Plan, Priority 1, states - Children and Young People know that their voice will influence decisions that affect them.

A Young People’s Feedback survey was developed collaboratively at the beginning of 2021 to provide a picture of the views of young people about the services they received over the year.

6.1.1 What we are doing well

Respondents rated the overall service they received out of five, with one being “Poor” and five being “Brilliant”. Over the 12-month period the average score was 4.36 out of 5. This highlights that most young people are happy with the service they are receiving.

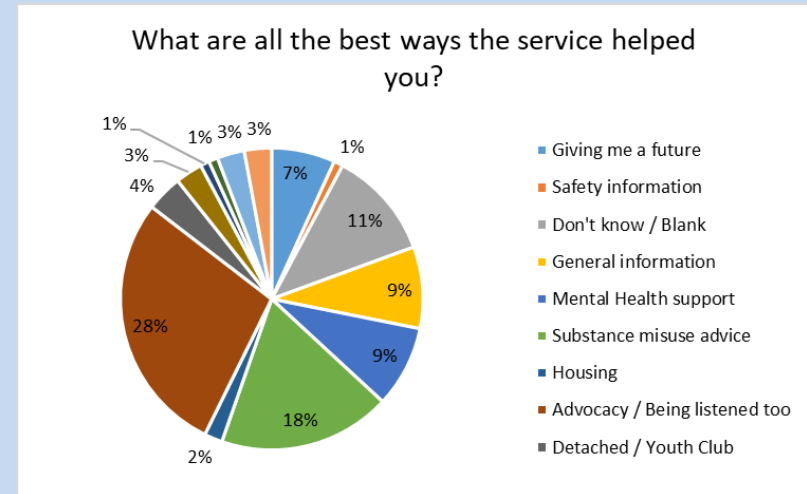
Figure 1. Details of the young people’s responses to questions about The Promise which was created for children and young people in care but has relevance to all young people involved with Northumberland’s Children’s Services.



Analysis of responses demonstrate a generally positive picture on the themes of The Promise;

- 95% of young people say they are always listened too
- 99% say they are always treated with respect
- 96% say their workers are always honest with them

Figure 2. Young people were asked about the best ways in which their service helped and supported them;



Qualitative Data

Young People reported that they felt listened to by their worker/s and that their worker/s cared for them and were there for them. They valued and trusted these relationships;

- “(worker’s name) has been really supportive and caring. She gives good advice and has earned my full respect and trust. When my social worker was on leave and I was going through a difficult time (worker’s name) stepped in and came out nearly everyday if she could to help and support me. I really appreciated that. She sat in hospital with me when I was going through a hard time. She didn’t have to but she did and that goes a long way.

- “The best way social services has helped me is by giving me a life my parents couldn't and making sure they can do whatever I have needed.”
- “Help with moving on and to succeed in life”
- “I'd be homeless if it wasn't for (worker's name), no one else has ever helped me this much.”
- “The service helped me change my life around and has inspired me to do a youth work degree.”
- “The service has really supported me and listened to my views”
- “(workers name) listened to me, she made me feel like I mattered to her and that made me happy to talk to her.”
- “Listened to me and was an extra voice to try and get me a place to live in Cramlington as that is where I wanted to be. I am now in accommodation in Cramlington and very happy.”

A recent focussed visit by Ofsted to Northumberland children's services noted a number of areas of improvements including;

“The Designated Family Judge reports an improvement in the quality of work, including how the child's voice is evidenced within reports” and also that “Social workers encourage children, including disabled children by using communication aids to express their views about their plans”.

6.1.2 What we need to do better

A small number of young people reported feeling that they were only “sometimes” supported, helped or involved in their care plans or interventions. Below is a breakdown of the key areas for potential improvement where they felt we could do more in relation to that theme. (See Figure 1)

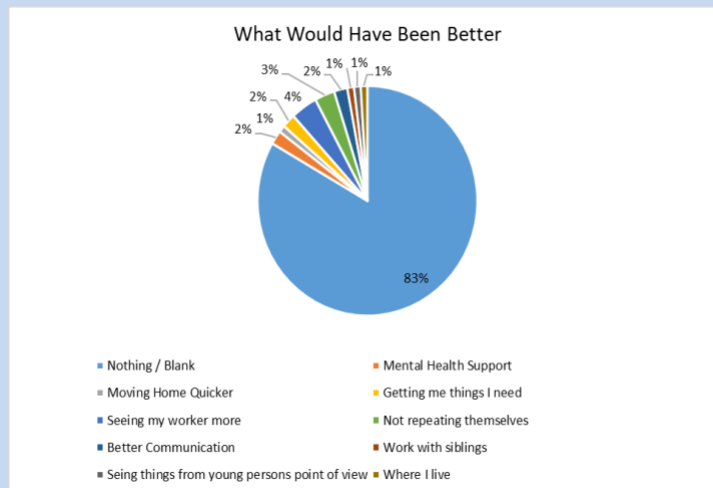
- 3% of respondents felt that workers were “sometimes” honest with them,
- 10% felt that workers would “sometimes” do what they said they would,
- 6% felt that workers “sometimes” made sure the right people were there to support
- 7% felt workers “sometimes” helped them achieve their best.
- 14% felt that workers “sometimes” helped them to achieve or learn new skills, 3% felt this “never” happened.
- 11% felt workers “sometimes” helped them stay in touch with family and friends, 27% felt this was “not applicable” to them
- 12% felt workers “sometimes” supported them to be healthy, 2% felt this “never” happened.
- 13% felt workers “sometimes” prepared them for the future

The three broad findings below indicate that some young people feel that they are not as involved in the development and review of their care plan or intervention as they could be. This suggests that at times our young people may not always be made aware that they are listened to and their opinions are taken seriously or that

they have not had decisions explained to them in a way they can understand and accept.

- 5% of respondents indicated that workers only “sometimes” listen to them
- 10% indicated that workers “sometimes” build plans around the young person and their needs
- 5% of respondents felt that workers would “sometimes” ask their opinion on a plan

Figure 3. Young People were asked what could have been better for them:



- 106 responses were received during the 12-month period, 83% indicated that there was nothing that they felt would improve the service they had received. However, it is

acknowledged that some young people who did not have a positive experience may have chosen not to complete the feedback form. Therefore, responses may be disproportionately positive.

In the comments made about what would have been better, there were some recurring themes;

- Keep working with me, not closing the case, keeping the same worker (which suggests young people viewed this relationship positively)
- Keeping intervention sessions shorter
- Not repeating the same information time and again.
- Following up with specific tasks (applying for passports, Driving licences etc)

Summary

Whilst the data indicates some areas for further work and scrutiny, the findings over the 12-month period are generally positive and highlight effective work carried out by frontline workers. Young people stated that their workers are positive, easy to talk to and engage with, are supportive and knowledgeable and there is mutual respect between the worker and young person.

Progress to Date

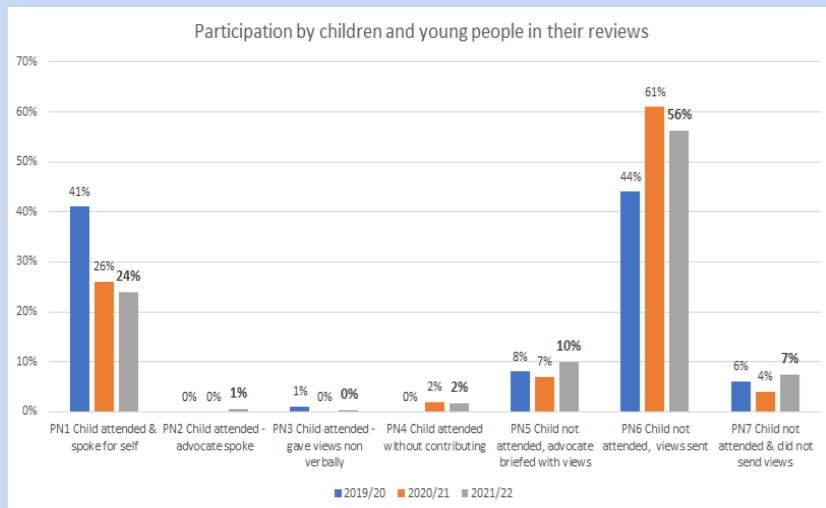
A number of developments have progressed including three participation champions identified within the Youth Justice Service, 14/18+ Team and Sorted with plans for this to be rolled out into the Accommodation Service going forward. The participation champions act as a link between the young people within the individual services and the participation service with a view to promoting the

involvement of young people; whether that be supporting young people to attend Voices Making Choices (VMC) or the care leavers forum to promoting feedback from young people within the individual services. Those attending the Strategic Participation Group have been asked to begin the process of identifying their own participation champions that can promote the engagement of young people and ensure services are recording the voice of the child/young person and acting upon the information shared.

All quality improvement work is reported to a senior management performance and QA meeting to understand outcomes and monitor progress against further actions. This participation work will generate a range of further actions.

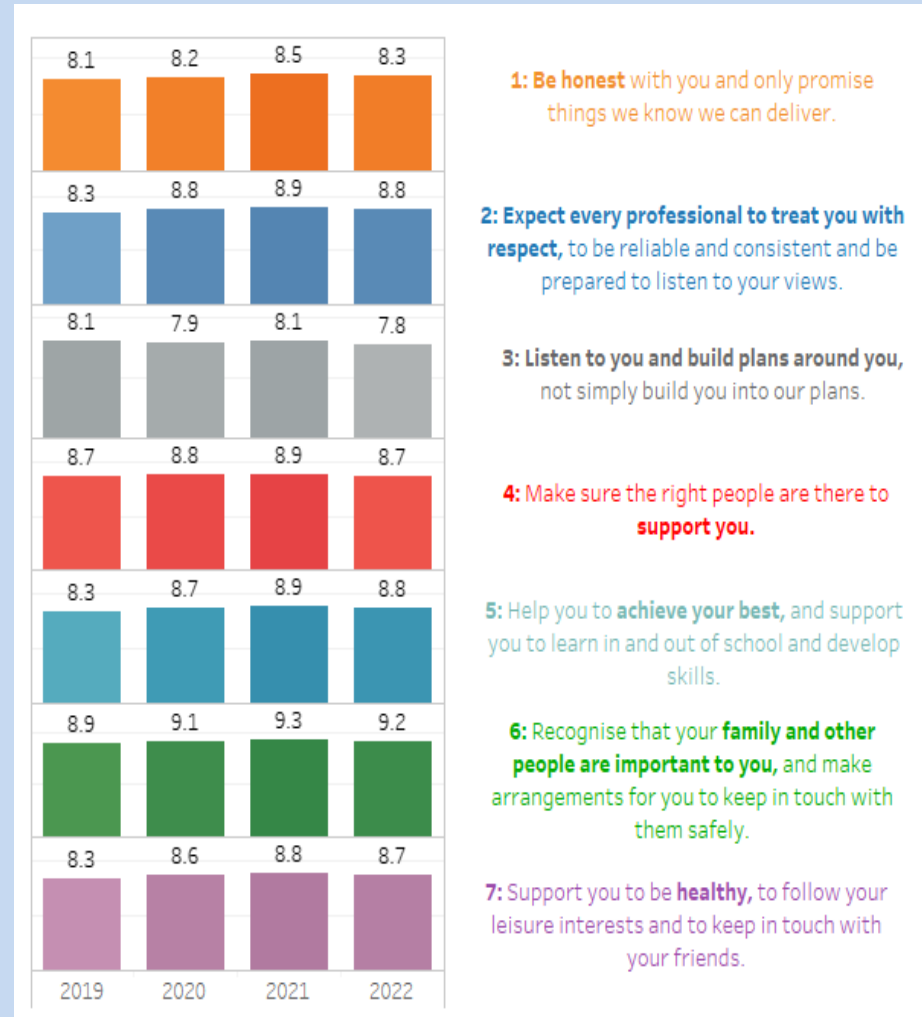
6.1.3 Participation of children and Young People in their reviews

Overall, 91% of children in care participated in their reviews this year compared to 94% last year.



6.1.4 The Promise

The average scores show, out of 10, how Northumberland is meeting its Promise to our looked after children.



7. Workforce Development and Improvement

A range of multi-agency training has been delivered, virtually and face to face, during the past year.

C.A.R.E Northumberland⁶ was developed as a multi-agency strategic response, across both children and adult services, to reduce the experience of adversity and minimise the impact of ACEs on the health and wellbeing of both children and adults. This is a key focus for NCASP.

C.A.R.E Northumberland aspires to having a seamless and life course approach for residents from childhood to adulthood. We do this by working together, learning from one another and working with organisations in our communities that can support this important work.

Impact Evaluation

Following attendance at a multi-agency C.A.R.E. Learning event, we conducted a post course evaluation to capture the impact on practice from those who attended.

We asked:

Q: Give us an example from the C.A.R.E. Training that has made a difference in your practice

We were told;

“I have used the tools to identify resilience in young people and promoted it.”

“It has helped me to think about the impact of adversity within people’s lives and how this affects them and their own resilience levels”

“Supporting a parent with training and finding job opportunities”



“We ran a small group session in a secondary school – the aim of which was to empower two vulnerable pupils to understand their language difficulties and what they can do to help themselves and what others can do to support them”

Q: How do you know you have made a difference?

We were told:

“Children have told us they feel listened to”

“Feedback we have received from schools”

“Promoted the parents mental health – they felt more confident and the household became a more positive environment resulting in the family being able to have more opportunities for days out”

“Supporting people to make positive change and see positive outcomes”

Q: Give an example of a positive outcomes you were able to achieve

⁶ Caring About Resilience, Adversity and Empowerment

We were told:



“The family dynamics have changed for the positive. They have more routines and rules in place – they have a happier environment now”

“The difference in the pupils was amazing”
“Helped the family to navigate a difficult period

of care”

“At the NSSP Schools Engagement subgroup meeting, the Designated Safeguarding Leads discussed how the improved understanding of ACE’s has helped them to respond to CCN’s and support children in school”

The Signs of Safety® Approach.

This is a relationship-grounded, safety-organised approach to child protection practice which continues to be rolled out across the partnership in Northumberland.

As a result of attending a Signs of Safety partner learning event, staff were asked 3 months later; **‘how has the training impacted upon your social care practice and, how do we know we have made a difference to those children and families you support’**

75% of responders advised they were confident in linking information from training into practice and of those who scored that they were not yet confident, they said that team discussions and practicing different parts of Signs of Safety would increase their confidence.



Responses were sought regarding perceptions of impact upon practice. These included;

“The needs of the young person were identified and recorded clearly and that has been able to inform further work with the young person”

“I have been able to make more child centred and friendly timelines and plans”

“I now start with positives/strengths (within a family) rather than immediately considering concerns”

“Helped me to have difficult conversations in non-judgemental ways, as well as recording it accurately”

What was said about the impact upon outcomes for children and families. Including;

“The young person now works with the team”

“Now focus on young person’s strengths, skills and goals for the future”

“This framework has provided a non-confrontational way to express concerns for parents leading to clarification of why they were not currently considered a safe carer for their child”

“Families are reporting that they feel listened to and that there is less jargon as it is a more focused approach on what is working and what the worries are”.

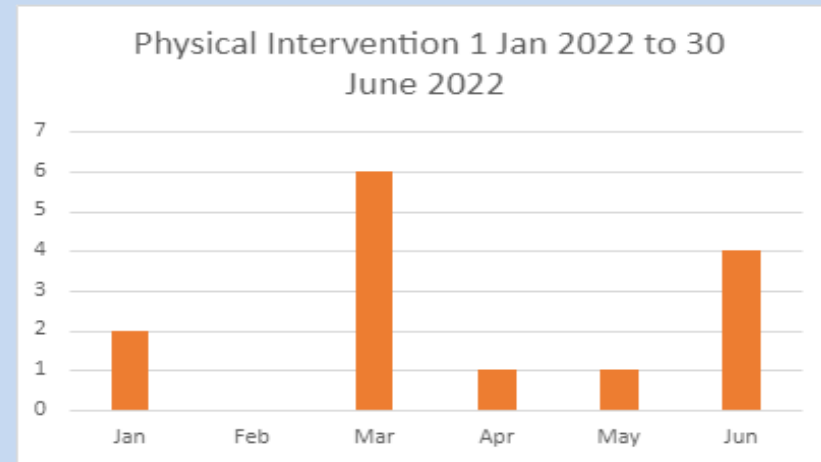
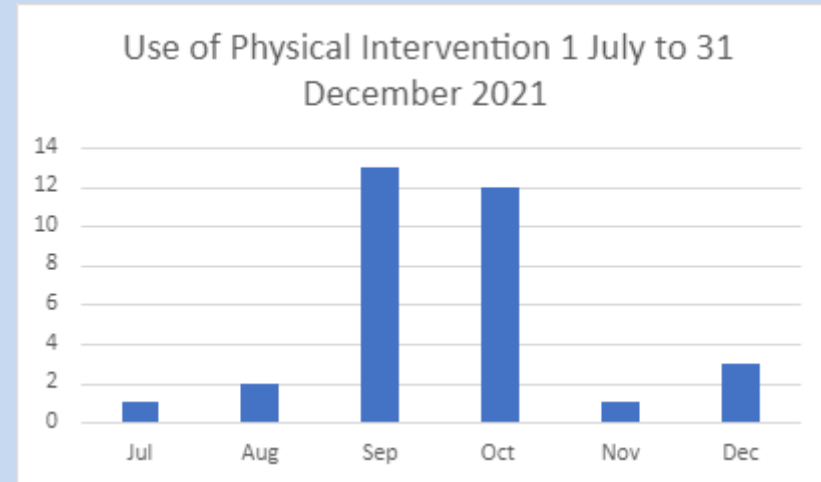
8. A review of the use of restraint in Kyloe House secure children’s home.

This secure children’s home is operated by the local authority and is approved by the Department for Education to restrict children’s liberty. The home can accommodate up to 15 children aged between 10 and 17.

The home provides care for children accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who are placed by local authorities.

The commissioning of health services is the statutory responsibility of NHS England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Health and Education is provided on site in dedicated facilities.

During the first six-month reporting period, there were a total of 32 incidents of Physical Intervention (restraint) and a total of 14 during the second six-month reporting period.



The use of physical intervention and comparison across periods, is difficult to analyse due to several factors. Admission of young people with complex needs, young people who find relationship building difficult, violence and self-injurious behaviours can impact on numbers of restraint.

The staff team work closely with the young people to identify triggers and methods of support to deescalate and reduce the need for Physical Intervention. The young people also receive necessary support from the mental health and physical health team within Kyloe House to promote their health and wellbeing. This also has an impact on the use of Intervention.

8.1 Ofsted Inspection March 2022.

The inspection found that the secure children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for 'Good'.

Inspectors found that members of the healthcare team were *"made aware of all significant incidents involving children, including occasions of physical restraint. During usual working hours, the nursing staff on duty assess the children without delay. This ensures that children's health needs, or any medical needs that become apparent as a result of a significant incident, are responded to"*

Furthermore;

"As a result of consistent care and positive relationships, there has been a reduction in the use of physical restraint, managing away and single separation. When these measures are used, records provide evidence that the criteria are met, and that debriefs for children and staff take place in a timely way. Reviews of physical interventions

include a review by a manager who is independent of the home. This provides an added layer of scrutiny and evaluation."

"Quality assurance and auditing processes are completed on a wide range of areas and incidents occurring in the home. The oversight of the home is thorough, and any deficits or shortfalls are addressed. Nevertheless, the management team does not always identify any lessons learned from incidents, to further inform best practice."

Consequently, it was recommended that;

"The registered person should ensure that from their monitoring and evaluation of the home and of staff practice, following any significant incident, that they proactively implement lessons learned in sustaining good practice."

Consequently, all incident forms now undergo a robust quality assurance process by the management team. The forms have been improved to reflect a lesson's learned section. At the same time, formal supervision includes lessons learned to include discussion with staff on a one-to-one basis. It is also a standard agenda item for team meetings and which is minuted.

Ofsted carried out an unannounced quality assurance visit on 27 July 2022 and were satisfied that the requirements were met.

9. Independent Scrutineer's Conclusions

The data and analysis presented throughout this report demonstrates that NCASP has met its statutory duties and agencies have delivered safe and effective frontline services that strive to safeguard children and young people. There is evidence of improvements and effective partnership working despite the context of increasing pressures and risks from the pandemic and the subsequent economic environment that may well negatively impact on children's health and well-being going forward.

9.1 Does NCASP add value to safeguarding in Northumberland?

Major challenges continued over the past year for NCASP. The context has further deteriorated for families, particularly those on low incomes experiencing financial insecurity and anxiety with what is still to come. We know there is an association between a family's socio-economic circumstances and the likelihood of a child experiencing abuse or neglect, however we also know that this is a gradient relationship and not a straightforward divide. The impact of hardship on parental capacity is complex and persistent, sometimes at an individual level through mental health or illness, but also through invisible barriers creating difficulty in asking for earlier support. The increasing cost of living crisis can only exacerbate pressures on families, therefore focusing agencies efforts on being both visible and accessible as points of information and support is key to keeping everyone safe and connected in the coming months. An intelligence led and collaborative approach to the deployment of

resources such as Household Support Funding and pop-up interventions is crucial.

Families experiencing poverty are often not resourced to invest in themselves, their home environment, things they need, or quality care and activity. Too often the social and physical environments are unchangeable by families themselves yet are stubborn barriers to living well and staying safe.

However, children experience neglect, and children experience happy and safe childhoods across the socio-economic spectrum, so it is vital partners understand this, recognising the role stigma and shame play in preventing families from accessing support must be central to the design of any activities or interventions agencies put in place to mitigate. Evidence shows that relieving the emotional and financial burden of the extended holidays, building support networks and establishing hobbies with peer groups is a key safety net for families and a fundamental aspect of social mobility. We need to make best use of partners relationships to work with families, understanding the challenges they face and the opportunities they would like to see and be part of.

The Council for Disabled Children (CDC) worked with three local areas, one of which was Northumberland, to explore approaches to providing an inclusive and supportive programme for children with SEND and their families⁷. Northumberland remains focussed on partnership, reach and quality. Examples of Northumberland's good practice are cited in the toolkit.

⁷ Cited in Holidays, Activities and Food Programme. A toolkit for engaging and supporting children with SEND.

The question of whether value is added by the MASA to that of individual agencies safeguarding systems, is crucial to evaluating the impact of NCASP. It is particularly important, going forward, to assess the impact of the new integrated children and adult partnership arrangements. To this end, a prospective evaluation framework has been designed to measure the outcomes and outputs the partnership hopes to achieve from the joint arrangements.

NCASP continues to drive joined-up working on the frontline through, for example, an integrated Children and Adult MASH which works well; this model has been welcomed by partners. Joint adult/children Learning Reviews and action plans with joint 7-minute guides have been developed as appropriate. Progress has been made with the collation and analysis of multi-agency data, with a specific focus on NCASP priorities. This has enabled the partnership to understand their current position, measure progress and outcomes, and plan practice improvements.

There is a culture of positive relationships and effective multi-agency working in Northumberland; partners are sufficiently confident to constructively challenge each other at a senior level. The new arrangements, led by the executive group, are beginning to promote change, for example in joint funding commitments and joined-up senior decision-making. Over the coming year, Northumberland's vision is to develop ever closer strategic alignment between NCASP and other local partnerships.

The actions, following the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of criminal and sexual exploitation undertaken in 2019, are now complete and signed off by NCASP. Multi-agency responses to children and young people at risk of sexual and criminal exploitation,

and all aspects of Modern Slavery continue, led by the joint Criminal & Sexual Exploitation group.

NCASP has scanned and responded to emerging risks, such as extra-familial sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviours in schools and the wider community. The work continues.

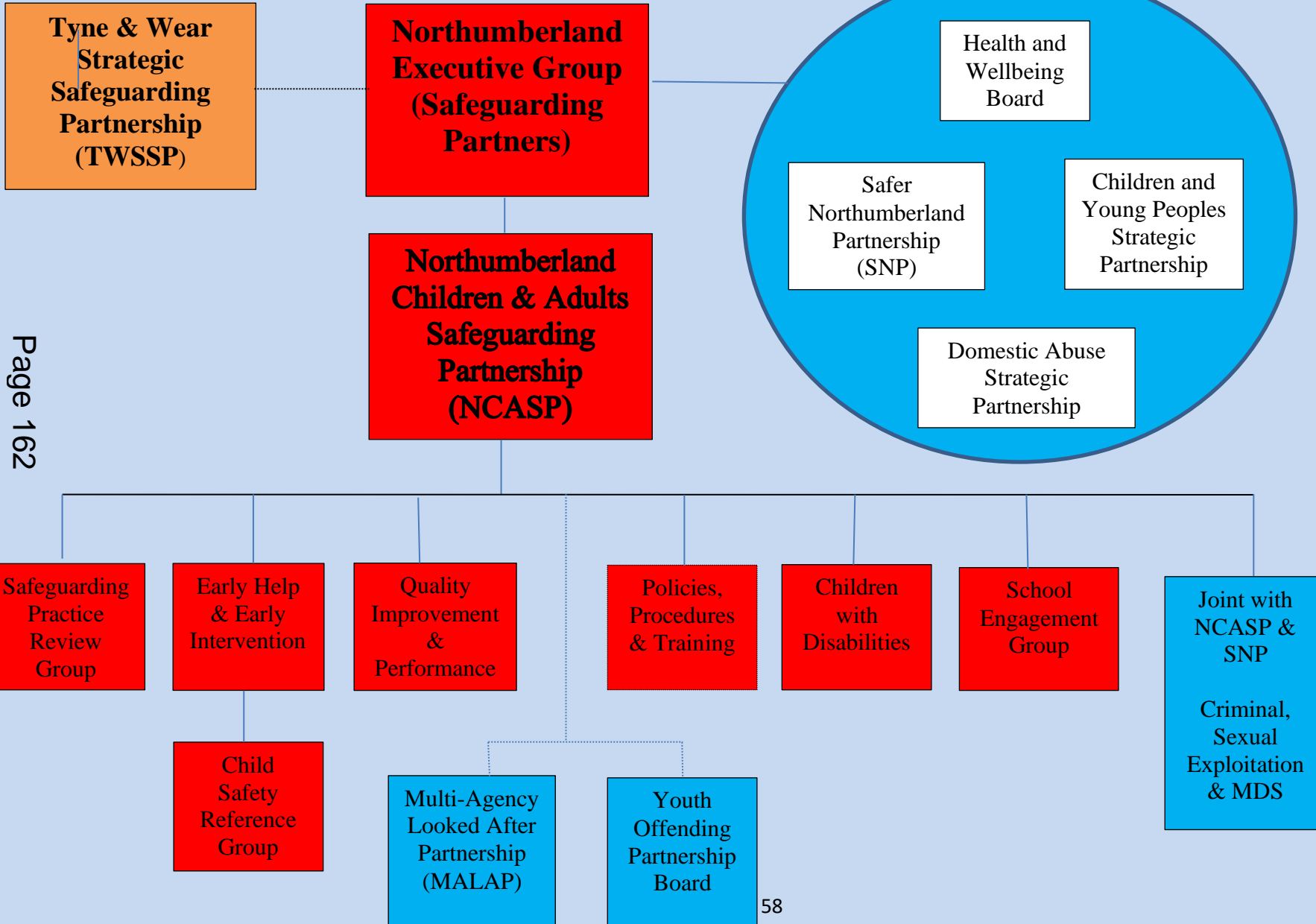
The analysis within this report supports the proposition that NCASP is a learning partnership underpinned by a positive culture of agencies working effectively together. However, work is ongoing to strengthen the governance of the strategic safeguarding arrangements going forward. Priorities have been agreed, and risks identified, nonetheless the strategic vision, long term objectives and goals need further development by the three safeguarding partners.

A recently published review of Independent Scrutiny and Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements reported that only 29% of 95 safeguarding partnerships involve children and young people in a formal scrutiny role.

<https://www.vkpp.org.uk/publications/publications-and-reports/reports/independent-scrutiny-and-local-safeguarding-children-partnership-arrangements-august-2022/>

Further work is needed to involve young people in the role of effective, independent scrutiny in Northumberland. Meaningfully involving children and young people and gaining their views about the quality of multi-agency practice is a challenge but with some evidence of progress, particularly in frontline practice. This continues to represent a significant test for the safeguarding partners.

Appendix 1. Governance Structure



Appendix 2. NCASP Membership

Members

Independent Scrutiny and Assurance Chair

Northumberland County Council

Interim Executive Director of Children's Services
Executive Director of Adult Social Care
Service Director, Education and Skills
Head of Housing and Public Protection
Director of Public Health

Integrated Care Board/CCG

Service Director Transformation and Integrated Care

Northumbria Police

CAFCASS

Service Manager

Advisors to the NCASP

Strategic Safeguarding Manager
Designated Doctor
Designated Nurse
Senior Manager Performance and Systems Support.
Sub-Committee chairs as required

Detective Chief Superintendent Safeguarding

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Healthcare Professionals.

Head of Safeguarding Children & Adults and Acute Liaison Learning Disability and Autism

Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust

Group Nurse Director

Probation Services

Head of North of Tyne

Senior Operational Support Manager North of Tyne

Appendix 3 – NCASP Staffing and Budget

Staffing

The NCASP is supported by the following officers:

NCASP Business Manager
Business Support

NCASP Budget

The financial contributions from partner agencies are as follows:

Partner	2021-2022
Northumbria Police	£12,167
TCB/CCG	£70,000
Northumberland County Council	£75,159
Probation	£861
Training Course Fees (NHCFT)	£1100
Total Contributions	£159,287

Expenditure	2020-2021
NCASP Manager	£ 44,980
Admin Assistant to Senior Manager	£25,754
Overtime	£1,273
Holiday pay	£184
Training (% salary)	£36,781
Performance (% salaries)	£13,217
Total staffing costs	£122,189
Staff training	£550
Professional Services, Tri.x procedures, Independent Chair and SCR Authors	£35,201
Other	£1,347
Total Expenditure	£159,287

Appendix 4. Northumberland Context (March 2022)

- Population: 323,820
- Child Population: 58,801
- Clinical Commissioning Group: 1
- Police Force: 1
- CRC/NPS: 1
- GP Practices: 37
- Foundation Trust (Acute and Community): 2 plus inpatient children go to Newcastle
- Mental Health Trust: 1
- Ambulance Trust: 1

- Schools
- 167 (59 Academies including 1 Free School Academy)
 - First and Primary: 127 (38 Academies)
 - Incl. 1 Free School Academy)
 - Middle: 14 (7 Academies)
 - High School: 16 (12 Academies, incl. 1 all age)
 - Special School: 9 (2 Academies)
 - PRU: 1

- 45,550 pupils attending schools – 19.6% FSM, 98.0% have English as first language
- 3.9% of pupils with an EHCP, 11.5% with SEN support
- 52% of under 2s in targeted areas regularly visit a Children’s Centre
- 619 Early Help Plans
- 823 Child in Need Plans
- 396 CP Plans
- 415 Looked After Children



Northumberland County Council

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5TH JANUARY 2022

REVIEW OF SEND PROVISION IN NORTHUMBERLAND: SCOPING REPORT

Report of: Jackie Roll, Head of Electoral and Democratic Services

Purpose of report

In November 2022, Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FACS) recommend creating a task and finish group to examine the continued increase of children and young people requiring an Education and Healthcare Plan (EHCP). This scoping report will set out the terms of reference, membership and timeline of the proposed Family and Children's Services FACS Task and Finish Group.

Recommendation:

To consider and agree the following:

- **Consider the terms of reference/scope of the review**
- **Agree the membership of the review committee**
- **Agree a timetable for the review to be completed**
- **Agree that the findings of the review will be reported to Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Key issues

Scrutiny Committees should contribute to the development of Council policies and review existing policies, consider proposals for new policies and suggest new policies. As part of their role in policy development, the Committee has requested further investigation into the increase of EHCPs and the need for specialist provision in schools highlighted in the Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) Capacity and Planning Strategy.

The SEND Capacity and Place Planning Strategy is updated each year. This is to ensure that information used to plan and grow capacity continues to reflect the demands for specialist provision in the light of the impact of interventions and strategies currently being implemented across Northumberland.

The data presented for each school partnership in the strategy demonstrates there is a growing demand to increase specialist capacity across Northumberland with high level data suggesting that there could be a further 700 special school places required by 2026 if the current pattern of increased demand continues.

The task and finish group will look ahead to the impacts future demand will have on residents and Council services. The group will consider three key areas to support the wider FACS Committee in their ability to contribute to policy development and make recommendations. The three areas the group will examine are:

Better Identification of needs and support

Data for the last 10 years shows an increasing trend in children and young people being identified as requiring an EHCP and needing specialist support within schools. The group will listen to evidence on the ways in which EHCPs are identified and how support is matched to a child's need.

The group will aim to understand what the reason for the predicted increase may be.

Health and Geographical Inequalities

The determinates of health inequalities are well documented, and many are aware that health and wellbeing is intrinsically linked to education. Children with learning disabilities are at increased risk of exposure to all the major categories of social determinates of poorer physical and mental health. Adolescence and early adulthood are crucial stages for young people in Northumberland and without acceptable educational support the impacts can be lifelong.

The group will explore how inequalities in health and geography can impact SEND learners with an EHCP.

How are needs met outside the County

The strategy highlights Northumberland's commitment to meeting the increasing demand within the County's own provision through innovative ideas and models to increase capacity. FACS understands the importance of being able to cater for all children and young people in Northumberland and supports the Council working with schools in doing this.

The Committee understands the value of learning from others and therefore the group will hear examples of best practice and lessons learnt by partners from outside Northumberland.

Background

Throughout 2022, FACS received several updates on SEND provision and need in Northumberland. In November 2022, FACS OSC received the first version of the SEND Capacity and Place Planning Strategy. The Strategy is a live document and will be updated annually to reflect changes in need and provision.

In Northumberland, the number of children and young people who have been diagnosed as requiring an EHCP has been increasing steadily, with significant additional capacity in the county's 9 special schools being required year on year in each of the past 10 years. Recent data shows there are 78% more children and young people with an EHCP in Northumberland in 2022 than there were in 2013.

There has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people who have been identified with a primary special need of autism (ASD) and/or social emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.

Terms of Reference

The review aims to examine the reasons behind the reported increase in children and young people who have been identified as needing an EHCP and what more can be done to support them and schools.

The review will include:

- Reviewing the reasons behind the increase in identification over the last 10 years and
- Examining the impact of health and geographical inequalities
- Exploring how the needs of children and young people can be better identified at the earliest opportunity
- Learn how the needs of children and young people are met by partners outside Northumberland.

The Group will be chaired by the Vice-Chair of FACS, Councillor Richard Dodd, and will consist of 3 other elected members and 1 Co-opted member of FACS.

Evidence Gathering

The group will seek to gather evidence from the following sources:

- Headteachers
- Teaching and support staff
- NCC Children’s Services
- Public Health
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Local Authorities with examples of best practice
- Department for Education
- Research reports and policy documents
- Other evidence drawn to the attention of the Group

Proposed Timetable for Review

It is proposed that the review will be completed as follows. The dates will be finalised as participants availability is confirmed:

Stage	Participants	Committee	Date
Agreement of ToR		FACS OSC	5 th January 2023
Session 1: Better Identification of needs	Headteachers Teaching and Support Staff	Review Committee	2 nd February 2023
Session 2: Geographical Inequalities	Public Health Team	Review Committee	2 nd March 2023
Session 3: How are needs met outside the County?	Written evidence from other authorities	Review Committee	6 th April 2023
Final Report		FACS OSC	4 th May 2023

Evidence Gathering Sessions

The number of evidence sessions may change. It is possible that evidence given during these sessions may need further follow up in other sessions or via other means such as written responses. The number of required evidence sessions will not be known until the 1st session has taken place.

Consideration of Findings

The findings will be considered in a written report presented to Family and Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on Thursday 4th May 2023.

Conclusion

The scope of the review is designed to ensure that a comprehensive investigation is undertaken to support the knowledge and understanding of the FACS Committee of SEND provision, demand, and future need in Northumberland.

Recommendation

To consider and agree the following:

- **Consider the terms of reference/scope of the review**
- **Agree the membership of the review committee**
- **Agree a timetable for the review to be completed**
- **Agree that the findings of the review will be reported to Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Background Papers

[SEND Capacity and Place Planning Strategy](#)
[Minutes of FACS OSC – 10 November 2022](#)
[Northumberland Inequalities Plan 2022 - 2032](#)

REPORT AUTHOR:

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Northumberland County Council

Family and Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme and Monitoring Report 2022 - 2023

Page 173

Chris Angus, Scrutiny Officer
01670 622604 - Chris.Angus@Northumberland.gov.uk

19 December 2022 - CA

Agenda Item 9

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:

School Capital Investment
Children Permanently Excluded from School/Elective Home Education
Education (Guidance about the cost of School Uniforms) Act 2021

**Northumberland County Council
Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme 2022 - 2023**

5 January 2023

Page 17	<p>Pre-Scrutiny:- National Funding Formula and School Funding 2023/24</p>	<p>To update Cabinet regarding the National Funding Formula (NFF) and the implications for 2023/24 School Funding in Northumberland.</p>
	<p>Pre-Scrutiny:- Update of School Organisation Plan 2021-24</p>	<p>The second iteration of the School Organisation Plan for 2021-24 in September 2021</p>
	<p>Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report</p>	<p>To provide an overview of the work completed by the NSSP undertaken from 2021-2022.</p>

20 February 2023

	<p>Pre-Scrutiny:- School Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2024/2025 Academic Year</p>	<p>This report informs Cabinet of the outcomes of the consultation on School Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the 2024/25 Academic Year as required by the School Admissions Code 2014. Approval (determination) of these admission arrangements is also sought.</p>
	<p>Virtual School Headteacher Annual Report 2021-2022</p>	<p>To present the education outcomes of Northumberland's looked after children for the academic year 2021 – 2022.</p>

	<p>Children who are Electively Home Educated (Summary and Guidance)</p> <p>Social Work Workforce and Recruitment and Retention</p>	<p>The report provides information about the increase in the number of children who are electively home educated, and the multi-agency support that is in place for families.</p>
2 March 2023		
Page 177	<p>Director of Education Annual Report: Key Educational Outcomes (2021-2022 Academic Year)</p> <p>Finance & Performance</p> <p>Safeguarding Activity Trend</p>	<p>Annual report on the key educational outcomes of the previous academic year. The Committee will be asked to identify any further areas for scrutiny.</p> <p>To consider current performance and the budgetary position for services within the Committee's terms of reference</p> <p>To provide analysis of social work activity trends and case allocation as well as highlighting national developments regarding the Department for Education safeguarding indicators.</p>
	6 April 2023	
	<p>Annual Report of Principle Social Worker</p>	<p>To advise and update the Scrutiny Committee about the input and work of the Principal Social Worker in 2021/22 and an overview of the quality of practice and development needs of frontline social workers.</p>

Northumberland County Council
Family and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Monitoring Report 2022-2023

Ref	Date	Report	Decision	Outcome
1	5 May 2022	Informal Consultation on School Organisation for The Coquet Partnership	RESOLVED that Cabinet be advised that this Committee supported the recommendations outlined in the report.	At its meeting on 10 May, Cabinet considered the Committee's comments.
2	5 May 2022	Update On Future Arrangements for The Delivery of Early Help Locality Services in Northumberland	RESOLVED that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proposed changes to the current commissioning arrangements be agreed; and 2. The temporary increase in expenditure during 2022/23, 2223/24 and 2024/25, which would be covered by the additional grant funding to be received over the same period from the Supporting Families programme and the Family Hub and Start for life Programmes be noted. 	No further action
3	26 May 2022	Education Strategy Board Annual Update	RESOLVED that it be noted that the Committee had reviewed the performance of the Board in its first year and its ability to review, develop and drive the Education and Skills key priorities	To continue to receive annual updates
4	26 May 2022	The Impact of the School	It was unanimously RESOLVED that:	A further report to be received at a later date

		Improvement Team	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The performance of the team and their ability to develop the quality of education in Northumberland be noted; 2. The changes to funding imposed by the DfE and the possible impact of service be noted; 3. A further report be received once it was known how the reduced funding would be accounted for; and 4. A recommendation be made to Cabinet for funding of the School Improvement Team to continue until the end of this Administration so that the team could continue to develop and offer support to schools both inside and outside of Northumberland 	
5	7 July 2022	Send Strategy Progress Report	RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and the Committee supported the next steps to be taken.	To receive future updates
6	7 July 2022	The Annual Report of Northumberland County Council Fostering Service 2021/22	RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and the performance information for the period April 2021 – March 2022 be acknowledged.	No further action
7	7 July 2022	Briefing Note - Potential Multi Academy Trust Opportunity	RESOLVED that the contents of the briefing note be noted	No further action

8	8 September 2022	Finance and Performance	RESOLVED that the current performance and how it compared to benchmarks was noted.	No further action
9	8 September 2022	Outcomes of Consultation on Proposals for the Coquet Partnership	RESOLVED that Cabinet be advised that this Committee supported the recommendations as outlined in the report.	At its meeting on 21 September, Cabinet considered the Committee's comments.
10	8 September 2022	Children's Services Annual Representations 2021- 2022	RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.	No further action
11	8 September 2022	Children's Social Care – Annual Self Assessment	RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted	No further action
12	8 September 2022	OFSTED Focused Visit to Northumberland Children's Services	RESOLVED that the information be noted	No further action
13	8 September 2022	Proposal In Relation to Future Arrangements For The Youth Service	RESOLVED that :- 1. The activity undertaken during the review be noted; and 2. Option 1, as outlined in the report, be agreed as the way forward.	No further action at this time
14	8 September 2022	Family Hub Development	RESOLVED that the Committee:-	No further action at this time

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree to proceed with the funding for the Family Hub offer; and 2. Support the development of the governance and wider processes to underpin this as outlined in the report. 	
15	8 September 2022	Support for Children and Young people with mental health needs in Northumberland	RESOLVED that the contents of the report and the future plans be noted and the support now on offer for children and young people in Northumberland be recognised.	No further action
16	6 October 2022	Regional Schools Director's Overview		No further action
181	6 October 2022	Outcomes of Consultation on Berwick Consultation	RESOLVED that Cabinet be advised that this Committee supported the recommendations as outlined in the report.	At its meeting on 11 October, Cabinet considered the Committee's comments.
18	6 October 2022	Supported Accommodation Tender	RESOLVED that Cabinet be advised that this Committee supported the recommendations outlined in the report and asked that a report be brought back to the Committee at a future date outlining the available services and anticipated placement numbers.	<p>At its meeting on 11 October, Cabinet considered the Committee's comments.</p> <p>A report outlining the available services and anticipated placement numbers to be brought back in 2023</p>
29	6 October 2022	The Northumberland Inclusion Strategy	RESOLVED that the Committee welcomed the report and noted the content and detailed strategy along with the impact that the work undertaken within Children's Services and	More detail of figures in appendix 2 to be provided

			Schools has had on the lives of Northumberland children	
20	6 October 2022	Pegasus Centre Update	RESOLVED that the information in the report be noted.	No further action
21	3 November 2022	Proposals for Coquet Partnership: Outcomes of statutory consulation and final decision	RESOLVED that the Cabinet be advised that this Committee supported the recommendations as outlined in the report.	At its meeting on 17 November, Cabinet considered the Committee's comments.
22 Page 182	3 November 2022	SEND Place Planning and Capacity Strategy	RESOLVED that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cabinet be advised that this Committee unanimously supported the recommendations as outlined in the report; and 2. A Task and Finish Working Group be established as outlined above. 	At its meeting on 17 November, Cabinet considered the Committee's comments.
23	1 December 2022	Care proceedings and Public Law Outline: Annual Report on progress	RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.	Report to return in 12 months