



FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thursday, 19 January 2023 at 1.30 pm in the Bridges Room - Civic Centre

From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

Item	Business
1	Apologies for absence
2	Minutes of last meeting (Pages 3 - 10) The Committee is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on 1 December 2022
3	Performance in Schools 2021-2022 (Pages 11 - 14) Report of Strategic Director, Children's Services and Lifelong Learning
4	Ofsted Inspections Update (Pages 15 - 18) Report of Strategic Director, Children's Services and Lifelong Learning
5	School Attendance 2021/22 (Pages 19 - 28) Report of Service Director, Education, Schools and Inclusion
6	School Exclusions 2021/2022 (Pages 29 - 44) Report of Service Director, Education, Schools and Inclusion
7	Elective Home Education (Pages 45 - 52) Report of Service Director, Education, Schools and Inclusion
8	Work Programme (Pages 53 - 56) Joint Report of the Chief Executive and Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

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Tel: 0191 4332088, Date: Wednesday, 11 January 2023

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GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, 1 December 2022

PRESENT: Councillor M Hall (Chair)

Councillor(s): H Kelly, D Bradford, L Caffrey, B Clelland,
P Craig, J Mohammed, L Moir, A Ord, D Robson, R Waugh
and D Weatherley

CO-OPTED MEMBERS Ayodele Akin

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor(s): G Haley

F62 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Burnett, Cllr Davison, Cllr McCartney, Cllr McMaster, Cllr M Ord and co-opted member Rachel Walton.

F63 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2022 be approved as a correct record.

F64 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK - SIX MONTH REPORT

Committee received the Performance Management and Improvement Framework (PMIF) for the first six months of 2022/23, 1 April to 30 September 2022.

Following consultation the new PMIF focuses on six policy objectives from the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the most relevant to this Committee being; Give Every Child the Best Start to Life.

A number of cross-cutting areas have emerged over the last six months, including;

- Budget pressures – an increase to £55m funding gap
- Increased demand pressures particularly in terms of Children’s Social Care
- Impact of Brexit and the conflict in Ukraine in terms of costs facing local people and delivery of council services
- Widening inequality gap – 2% increase in the number of people who are considered vulnerable
- Staffing pressures across the Council presents challenges in delivering services

A presentation was given on the deep dive work undertaken around placement

sufficiency which continues to be an area of challenge. It was acknowledged that work continues on reducing demand through supporting families to prevent children from coming into care or to enable them to return to families where it is safe to do so.

The Early Help Offer aims to keep families together through such things as respite day care, parenting support groups and courses. In addition, a good Edge of Care Service is essential, to provide a robust assessment of need and make sure intervention plans are in place.

A key part of the priorities is to look at how to help children return home, what can be put in the household to make that possible. This involves reunification planning as a partnership, not just Social Care.

A Trauma Informed Care Model is due to be implemented early in the new year, this will involve work with Children's Homes to look at how the service responds to support those young people.

The Mockingbird programme is working well to create sufficiency of places and work is ongoing to look at how to broaden the model across Foster Carers to ensure all children and young people have that extended family.

Transitional Care Planning is in place for children with complex needs, work is ongoing towards a better model so that there are more flexible routes.

It was noted that there are currently 38 children and young people placed outside of Gateshead in residential provision and this number needs to be reduced. In order to bring this young people into the Gateshead, additional provision is required in the following areas; child sexual exploitation, therapeutic support, multiple and complex needs and children with disabilities. It was acknowledged that the key challenge is ensuring the right care and accommodation is available in Gateshead, however, as is the same in other local authorities, this resource does not exist.

It was reported that there has been a huge increase in the number of Independent Foster Association's (IFA) being used. The aim is to reduce the number of children in IFA's as these cost more and the money could be better invested for in-house foster carers. It was also noted that young people would be supported to stay with those foster carers once they approach adulthood, whereas IFAs are more likely to make business decisions, which would mean young people moving to independent living earlier than may necessarily be best for them.

Work is underway to improve the supported living offer with staying close options and opportunities are being looked at to see if more can be done to address timeliness of care planning.

In terms of commissioning practice this needs to look at the best use of block contracts and spot purchases; looking at who we are already in partnership with and how to get better quality and cost and the monitoring arrangements around that. In addition, better relationships with external residential home providers is necessary so that more young people stay in Gateshead. There needs to be preparedness for

increased costs due to the general cost of living increases and there needs to be an understanding of what that will mean going forward. Another priority is to increase in-house foster carers to ensure robustness. It was acknowledged that the deep dive exercise showed that getting these factors right would start to turn the curve.

It was questioned as to how it is judged when it is safe for a child to return home, would this be evidence based or a judgement call. It was noted that this would be through constant re-assessment, looking at why the child came into care initially and if those risk factors are still in place. It would also be to do with the age of the child and re-assessment of family members and looking at the family network. It was confirmed that not all children will return home as this is not always in the child's best interests, but that wherever possible this would be the aim.

It was queried the reason why 38 children are placed outside of Gateshead. It was confirmed that for a small number of those children it was because of the risk posed to them through criminal or sexual exploitation. Some are to do with education and care needs which cannot be met in Gateshead. It was also noted that for some the reason is because there are not enough places in Gateshead, either foster carers or residential beds. The point was made that this is not disproportionate to other local authorities.

It was questioned whether there are any reciprocal arrangements for children from other local authorities finding optimum placements in Gateshead. It was advised that specialist provision will take children from all over the country, however private provision in Gateshead, although registered in Gateshead do not always prioritise Gateshead children. It was noted however that the service does work with all providers in Gateshead but does not always know who the children placed there are. It was confirmed that a piece of work is underway to establish the number of private providers within Gateshead and the children and young people placed there.

It was questioned whether there is expansion of preventative work planned. It was confirmed that the service is looking at its practice and decisions to bring children into care, looking at a whole system approach to ensure only those who need to come into care are coming in. There is a clear driver to keep children and young people with their family networks.

The question was asked as to why a Foster Carer would choose an IFA. It was confirmed that Gateshead Council has never 'lost' a Foster Carer to an IFA whereas some Foster Carers do move from IFAs to the authority. It was acknowledged that IFAs have a huge amount of money to target recruitment but the quality does not always match what the authority can provide. From Gateshead's point of view the authority is very good at retaining Foster Carers and there are good conversion rates from initial contact to Foster Carer approval.

It was questioned why there is no up to date data regarding childhood obesity and school readiness for children on free school meals as the last data was from 2020. It was confirmed that this would be reported back to Committee at the annual report stage as no data had been provided by Public Health England.

RESOLVED - (i) That the six month performance report be noted and

further information be provided regarding childhood obesity and school readiness.

- (ii) That the performance report be referred to Cabinet for consideration in January 2023.

F65 SEND LOCAL OFFER AND TRIBUNAL UPDATE AND INCLUSION IN MAINSTREAM

The Committee received reports and a presentation on the local offer, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities tribunals and the inclusion in mainstream schools.

It was reported that 16.5% of children in Gateshead have some degree of SEND, 52% of Gateshead pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are taught within special schools, this compares to regional and national figure of 35%. There has been a 70.9% increase in the number of Gateshead EHCPs over the last eight years with a 117% increase in plans being issued for the first time. It was reported that in January 2022, 15.9% of children in Gateshead had special needs and a quarter of those children had EHCPs. It was noted that Gateshead is the highest in the region for the number of school age pupils with an EHCP, this is higher than the national average.

In terms of what is going well, over the last year SENDCo Networks and Cluster Meetings have been developed. Larger cluster meetings are now held for all SENDCos and half termly SENDCo Network Meetings. Training is provided and information shared by SEND teams to their schools to create a more inclusive environment. SENDCos also have access to the digital SENDCO handbook which provides clear information on services and guidance on completing paperwork. There is a dedicated SENDCO inbox which is triaged to ensure queries are directed to the correct place.

There are eight Additionally Resourced Mainstream Schools (ARMS) units in Gateshead with the main remit to look at integration into mainstream whilst providing specialist support. It was noted that there have been some positive success stories from the ARMS units with one EHCP being removed completely and the child returning to mainstream provision. There has been the creation of an Inclusion Lead post which will oversee all teams involved with SEND, which will help to organise and streamline the systems.

In terms of the Local Offer, there has been a lot of work undertaken to make it more accessible and easier to travel through. In addition, the SENDCO handbook is not restricted so all parents and carers can access this.

In relation to SEND Tribunals it was noted that the service is working well with parents to resolve matters prior to actual appeal hearing. It was reported that of the 145 lodged, only 14 had gone to a final hearing.

The challenges remain that there are inconsistencies in approaches to inclusion in schools, with some schools feeling they do not have the knowledge, skills or

capacity to be as inclusive as they need to be. It was also noted that the places at ARMS are limited and additional provision is required which would alleviate the demand for places in special schools. A further challenge is the increase in demands for statutory assessment, this places an enormous strain on the team and the Education Psychologist team is overwhelmed by referrals.

Further challenge around the Local Offer is maintaining the accuracy of information on the site with constant work to ensure it is kept up to date. Following discussion with young people there is also the development to co-produce a Youth Hub for the Local Offer, this will deliver joint work to provide support to young people, for example in terms of employment, training and community activities.

It was reported that Gateshead's Tribunal appeal rate was 1.8% for 2020 which is slightly higher than the regional and national rate. Nationally, 95% of appeal decisions are in favour of parents therefore it is important to weigh up if it is worth going to tribunal. The main area of appeal is due to not undertaking assessment, because there is a low threshold for assessment a graduated response is required.

In terms of next steps, a working group of Headteachers and SEND teams are looking at a common assessment system for identifying need and support. This is based on an existing system and is being adapted to suit the needs in Gateshead. This will provide more consistency and thus allow more mainstream settings to acquire the skills they need to be fully inclusive for SEND children. Subsequently this will provide better information for parents in relation to needs assessments and therefore reduce the number of Tribunal appeals lodged.

Future work will also be to investigate settings that have the space and experience to provide additional ARMS, either through expansion or creating new provisions. This is in addition to development of a clear ARMS strategy to identify need and where provisions need to be based.

Next steps also include completion of the Youth Hub and ongoing refresh of the information provided in response to comments received from stakeholders. A support and advise service (SENDIASS) has also been jointly commissioned with the ICB and is based at Barnardos in Gateshead.

Committee suggested that all primary schools should have ARMS units and it was questioned as to how much is the increase in EHCP requests due to a lack of ARMS in local schools. It was noted that a lot has been done to give parents confidence in what mainstream schools can offer, however there is always unknowns for parents with a new diagnosis. It was also acknowledged that the new way of assessment is helpful because it identifies what is needed to be resourced and where the gaps in provision are.

There were concerns that some schools could no longer afford to run ARMS and the model should be looked at again. It was confirmed that work is underway looking at the ARMS model and in particular a Service Level Agreement which clearly outlines the financial responsibility. This is already in place in some ARMS and officers are working through all the provisions. There were also concern that the Education Psychologist (EP) team is overwhelmed yet there are schools with no allocated EP

time. It was confirmed that the EP works on SLAs with schools if they have bought into EP time. It was acknowledged that this is a national issue. It was queried why private EP guidance parents cannot be access for those children on the waiting list for an EHCP assessment. It was noted that there is no issue with schools securing private EP guidance but if an EHCP is then requested only the EP directly commissioned from the local authority can be used, this is contained in legislation. It was also confirmed that the work EP's do in terms of EHCP assessments are done very timely and within timescales and are performing within the top 5% of local authorities.

It was suggested that setting up separate ARMS units can create a segregation. It was noted that there are different ARMS models and this includes a whole school approach, the model would depend on the children and the school.

RESOLVED - That the Committee noted the information presented.

F66 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN - MASA AND BUSINESS PLAN

Committee received the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) document for 2022-24. The document sets out how the services will work together with other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Gateshead.

The document was implemented in 2019 following new legislation on transitioning from the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The reviewed and updated document now includes reference to the changes from the CCG to the ICB and includes the strategic functions in place to safeguard children.

The new Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership's Business Plan sets out the strategic business direction, identifying specific priorities;

- GSCP leading the safeguarding agenda
- Learning lessons
- Embedding good practice and continually influenced by the views of children and young people

The document will be published online by the end of the week.

RESOLVED - That the Committee noted the contents of the MASA, including the statutory responsibilities and strategic functions.

F67 WORK PROGRAMME

Committee received the work programme report which included items requested for the next municipal year.

It was suggested that the Committee should consider including in its work programme the lack of critical paediatric beds in the region and the step-down process / beds.

RESOLVED - (i) That the provisional work programme for 2022/23 be noted.

- (ii) That further reports on the work programme will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional policy issues which the Committee may be asked to consider.

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TITLE OF REPORT: Analysis of test and exam outcomes in Gateshead 2021-22

REPORT OF: Strategic Director, Children's Services and Lifelong Learning

Summary

1. This report details the outcomes of Gateshead students in relation to tests and examinations 2021-22.

Background

2. Pupils and students took the full range of tests, assessments and exams in 2022. This was the first time since 2019.
3. The following tests and assessments took place in primary schools:
 - Early Years Foundation Stage Profile at the end of Reception Year when most children are 5. This assessment has been revised since 2019 so no comparison can be made with previous years.
 - Phonics screen at the end of Year 1 when children are 6. Children who do not meet the required standard are tested again in Year 2.
 - Reading, writing and maths assessments at the end of Year 2 when children are 7. Teachers assess whether children have met the expected standard using a combination of tests and criteria set by government.
 - Multiplication check at the end of Year 4 when children are 9. This is the first year this online timed test has been taken. No expected standard has been identified by government.
 - Reading, maths and grammar punctuation and spelling tests at the end of Year 6 when children are 11. Government sets the expected standard based on scores in the tests. Children are also assessed in writing through a set of criteria used by teachers to check whether the expected standard has been met or not.
 - Information about how children performed at the end of Year 6 is compared with how they performed in Year 2 and a progress score for the school (not individual children) is calculated. A score of 0 is expected progress.
4. Students in secondary schools took GCSE examinations again for the first time since 2019

Outcomes

- The impact of the pandemic is evident in outcomes from tests and assessments taken by the youngest children in primary schools (EYFSP data). They were most affected and missed the opportunity to socialise in toddler groups, in nursery provision and in reception classes. Outcomes are not significantly different from national.
- KS1 assessments at age 7. Children had their education severely disrupted. They missed vital schooling where they would have learned the basics of reading, writing and mathematics. Outcomes are not significantly different from national.
- Far fewer children nationally have reached the expected standard than pre pandemic. This pattern was repeated in Gateshead.
- In KS2 assessments at age 11 pupils outperformed their peers nationally in all subjects except writing. The impact of the pandemic was less severe. These children already had the benefit of well-established basic skills which were consolidated via remote learning. It was not possible to do this for writing.
- Gateshead students performed well in GCSES, outperforming national figures in most measures.

Below national by more than 2% but not significantly
 Above national

EYFSP

GLD	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Pupil Premium	SEN
Gateshead	62.9	72	59	50.8	47	27
National	65.2	74	61	60.1	49	23

Phonics Year 1

	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Pupil Premium	SEN
Gateshead	74	79	69	61	*62.1	40
National	75.5	79	72	75	*62.4	38

Phonics Year 2

	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Pupil Premium	SEN
Gateshead	40	45.3	36.5	35.1	35.7	27.5
National	44.2	48.3	41.1	48.5	39.1	25.7

Key Stage 1

Reading expected	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Pupil Premium	SEN

Gateshead	64	67.3	60.4	55	48.4	25
National	67	71	63	64	**51.5	26

Writing expected	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Pupil Premium	SEN
Gateshead	55	62	48.2	46.7	38.7	15
National	58	64	52	57	41.1	17

Maths expected	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Pupil Premium	SEN
Gateshead	64	64.2	64.8	58.1	47.2	22
National	68	67	68	67	51.9	29

Key Stage 2

Reading expected	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Disadvantaged	SEN
Gateshead	76	81	71	66	62.4	37.8
National	74	80	70	73	62.1	37.4

Writing expected	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Disadvantaged	SEN
Gateshead	68	76	61	60.9	52.5	22.6
National	69	76	63	69.7	55.3	25.9

Maths expected	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Disadvantaged	SEN
Gateshead	73	72	74	75.7	59.2	37.4
National	71	70	72	75.3	56.1	33.9

GPS expected	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Disadvantaged	SEN
Gateshead	74	77	70	70.2	58.9	30.5
National	72	77	68	75.7	58.5	31.3

 Below average  Above average

Progress reading	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Disadvantaged	SEN
Gateshead	0.11	0.7	-0.45	1.1	-0.67	-1.31
National	0	0.86	-0.74	0.88	-0.86	-1.87

Progress writing	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Disadvantaged	SEN
Gateshead	-0.75	0	-1.4	0.33	-1.4	-2.53
National	0	0.88	-0.79	1.13	-0.8	-2.13

Progress maths	All	Girls	Boys	EAL	Disadvantaged	SEN
Gateshead	0.14	-0.7	0.99	2.74	-1.0	-1.16
National	0	-0.8	0.82	2.04	-1.18	-1.56

Key Stage 4

	A8	P8	% E&M 9-5	% Ebacc entry	Ebacc APS
Gateshead	49.6	-0.13	53.4	48.5	4.42
National	48.9	-0.02	49.9	38.7	4.3
SEN support Gateshead	35.3	-0.6	22.1	25	2.97
SEN support national	34.8	-0.47	22.3	17.6	2.9
SEN EHCP Gateshead	9.6	-1.66	0	3.6	0.76
SEN EHCP national	14.3	-1.33	6.9	4	1.1
Disadvantaged Gateshead	36.1	-0.8	28.4	34.8	3.13
Disadvantaged national	37.5	-0.55	29.3	26.6	3.2
Female Gateshead	52.1	0.05	56.5	53.1	4.64
Female national	51.4	0.16	52.7	43.8	4.5
Male Gateshead	47.1	-0.31	50.3	43.8	4.2
Male national	46.4	-0.2	47.1	33.9	4.1

Recommendations

- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the contents of the report in relation to assessment, test and exam outcomes for the academic year 2021-2

Contact: Sue Waugh

Ext 8603

TITLE OF REPORT: Analysis of School Inspections September 2021 - July 2022

REPORT OF: Strategic Director, Children's Services and Lifelong Learning

Summary

1. This report details the position of Gateshead schools in relation to Ofsted Inspection findings for September 2021 - July 2022.

Background

2. September 2019 saw the introduction of a new schools' inspection framework – the Education Inspection Framework (EIF). As expected, this framework differed quite considerably from the previous version and has a significant focus on the quality of the curriculum. Schools receive an overall effectiveness grade based on a sub grade for each of the following areas.
 - quality of education
 - behaviour and attitudes
 - personal development
 - leadership and management
3. The quality of Early Years and 6th Forms are also inspected.

Ofsted use the following grading system

1 = Outstanding
2 = Good
3 = Requires Improvement
4 = Inadequate

4. Inspections were paused during the pandemic and reinstated in September 2021. The biggest change has been that schools outstanding schools which were previously exempt from routine inspection are once again inspected.
5. Terminology has also changed since September 2022. Schools receive either a graded inspection (which can change the overall effectiveness of a school) or an ungraded inspection (where the overall effectiveness cannot change)
6. In Gateshead 16 primary schools and 2 secondary schools have joined BWCET (Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust). This means they are new schools and may not be inspected for 3 years after conversion to an academy. One school is still in the process of converting to join BWCET.

7. Full copies of all inspection reports can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk

Outcomes September 2021- July 2022

Primary/Nursery School	School Type	Previous Inspection	Present Inspection
Bill Quay Primary	Maintained	Good	Good
Chopwell primary	Maintained	Good	Good
Colegate Primary	Maintained	Good	Requires improvement
Fellside Primary	Maintained	Outstanding (exempt)	Good
Kelvin Grove Primary	Maintained	Good	Good
Oakfield Junior	Maintained	Good	Good (concerns)
Sacred Heart Primary	Academy	Outstanding	Outstanding (concerns)
St Aidans Primary	VA	Outstanding (exempt)	Good
South Street Primary	Maintained	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement
Wardley Primary	Maintained	Good	Good
Brandling Primary	Maintained	Outstanding (exempt)	Requires Improvement
Eslington Primary	Maintained special	Outstanding	Outstanding
Gibside School	Maintained special	Outstanding	Outstanding
High Spen Primary	Maintained	Good	Good

Kells Lane Primary	Maintained	Outstanding (exempt)	Good
River Tyne Academy	Academy Alternative Provider	N/A	Good
Roman Road Primary	Maintained	Outstanding (exempt)	Inadequate
Whickham Parochial Primary	VC	Outstanding (exempt)	Good

Secondary School	School Type	Previous Inspection	Present Inspection
Heworth Grange School	Academy	Inadequate	Requires improvement
Kingsmeadow Community comprehensive	Maintained	Good	Good

Independent schools

8. There are currently (Dec 22) 10 independent schools in Gateshead. 3 are graded good, 6 are graded requires improvement and 1 is graded inadequate. The school graded inadequate has no Gateshead pupil attending.

Summary of outcomes (as at 1/9/22)

9. Two secondary schools have yet to be inspected so percentages calculated from 11 schools.

	Good/ Outstanding	Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Gateshead All	84%	23%	61%	16%	0%
Gateshead excluding independent	90%	26%	64%	9.5%	0%
Gateshead primary excluding independent	90%	21%	69%	9%	1.4%
Gateshead secondary excluding independent	81%	36%	45%	18%	0%

England	87.7%	18.8%	68.7%	9.2%	3.3%
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Recommendations

OSC is asked to consider the position of schools in relation to Ofsted inspections.

Contact: Sue Waugh

Ext 8603

TITLE OF REPORT: School Attendance 2021/2022

REPORT OF: Service Director, Education, Schools and Inclusion

SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on attendance in Gateshead for academic year 2021-2022.
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Background

2. Regular school attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.
3. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.
4. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%). At KS4, pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 4 to 1. The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%).^{2 12}.
5. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.
6. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms. This includes crime (90% of young offenders had been persistently absent) and serious violence (83% of knife possession offenders had been persistently absent in at least 1 of the 5 years of study).

7. Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families.
8. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.
9. Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.
10. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium.
11. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.
12. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have.
- 13. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.**
- 14. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.**
15. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.
16. As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, schools, trusts and local authorities should always work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support.
17. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise

attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents.

18. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions should be made on an individual case by case basis.
- 19. Formal intervention support** can include a parenting contract agreed by the pupil, parent, school and/or local authority progressing to a legally binding Education Supervision Order in the Family Court if there is non-engagement, and it is deemed necessary.
- 20. Statutory children's social care involvement** Where there are safeguarding concerns and an Education Supervision Order is not appropriate or has not been successful the case can be considered for s.17 or s.47 statutory social care involvement.
- 21. Attendance prosecution** where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate, the case can be considered for attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court or a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) for irregular attendance.
22. In Gateshead, once a school has exhausted all strategies available to them to support an improvement in a child/young person's attendance, a referral can be made to Legal Intervention Team for formal action to be taken against the parents for failing in their legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance.
23. Parents are given 6 weeks for their child's attendance to reach the expected level. During the 6-week period parents are issued with a formal warning, offered a meeting (via phone, Teams or in person) and, if the case moves towards prosecution, invited to complete a Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) - interview under caution. If the attendance remains unsatisfactory, the parent may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecuted in a Magistrates Court.
24. Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) can be issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure their child's regular attendance. However, non-payment of the fine results in the matter proceeding to court for the original offence of failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance.
25. Good school attendance is considered to be an attendance percentage approximately 95%+. The Department for Education calculate an overall national absence rate.

26. Pupils are considered to be **persistently absent** if their attendance falls below 90%. The Department for Education calculate an overall national persistent absent rate from this.

For further background information see **Appendix 1**

Attendance information 20212022

27. **Table 1** shows the national and Gateshead overall absence rate

Table 1

	2018-2019	2019-2020 Autumn term	2020-2021	2021-2022
National rate	4.8%	4.9%	4.6%	7.5% (+2.9)
Gateshead rate	4.6%	5.7%	4.9%	8.3% (+3.3)

() increase/decrease from previous year

Pandemic absence statistics suspended spring/summer

28. **Table 2** shows the national and Gateshead persistent absence rate

Table 2

	2018-2019	2019-2020 Autumn term	2020-2021	2021-2022
National rate	18.5%	13.2%	11.1%	22.6% (+11.5)
Gateshead rate	17.9%	15.9%	13.3%	24.4% (+11.4)

() increase/decrease from previous year

Pandemic absence statistics suspended spring/summer

29. **Table 3** shows the national and Gateshead severe persistent absence rate

Table 3

	2018-2019	2019-2020 Autumn term	2020-2021	2021-2022
National rate		0.9%	1.1	1.6 (+0.5)
Gateshead rate		0.9%	1.1	2.2 (+1.1)

() increase/decrease from previous year

Pandemic absence statistics suspended spring/summer

30. Many schools showed strength in their approach to attendance in 2021-2022. This included 23 primary schools and two secondary schools.
31. Some schools had challenges in 2021-2022. This included 20 primary schools and 4 secondary schools.
32. In 2021-2022 the Department for Education launched a national attendance data sharing site for schools to report attendance into each day. This allows schools to make real time comparisons with themselves and other schools. As of 09/12/2022 the following schools had signed up to the system representing 11115 pupils: Barley Mow Bill Quay Brandling Brighton Avenue Chopwell Crookhill Dunston Emmanuel College Esslington Grace College Harlow Heworth Grange High Spennings Lane Kibblesworth Lobley Hill Parkhead Ravensworth River Tyne Riverside Roman Road Rowlands Gill Ryton Infant Ryton Junior St Augustine's St Joseph's Infant Birtley St Joseph's Junior Birtley St Joseph's Gateshead St Joseph's Highfield St Philip Neri Swalwell Washingwell.

Summary

33. Overall absence rates are above the national average. Pupils in Gateshead schools attend school less regularly than other pupils nationally.
34. Overall, in 2021-2022 attendance percentages for primary aged pupils in maintained and Special schools sat between 90%-95%; secondary pupils in maintained schools/academies/Special sat below 90% attendance. It can be reasonable to conclude that as children get older their attendance at Gateshead school decreases.
35. Overall, in 2021-2022 year 6 and year 11 pupils across the local area had attended school less well than other year groups within their respective phase.
36. Overall persistent absence rates are increasing against national measure. Gateshead pupils are persistently absent more than other pupils nationally.
37. Overall, in 2021-2022 year 5 and year 11 pupils across the local area had the highest persistent absence rate.
38. Overall persistent absence rates are increasing against national measure. Gateshead pupils are persistently absent more than other pupils nationally.

Legal Intervention Team

39. **Table A:** Penalty Notices issued for Non-Attendance 2017 -2022

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 (Sept-March)	2020-21	2021-22
Number Issued	53 (2 pending)	20	5	0	14
Number Paid	20	0	2	n/a	3
Number Unpaid	25	13	3	n/a	7
Withdrawn	6	7	0	n/a	0
Payments pending	-	-	-	-	4

40. **Table B:** Referrals for Unauthorised Leave of Absence 2017-2022

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 (Sept-March)	2020-21	2021-22
Number of referrals	600	953	398	27	534
Warning Letters issued	452	728	304	19	362
Penalty Notices issued	121	225	94	0	172
Penalty Notices paid	64	142	61	n/a	99
Penalty Notices not paid	21	10	20	n/a	15
Penalty Notices withdrawn	2	15	10	8 (Covid issues)	17
Payments pending	20	58	3	n/a	41

41. **Table C:** Total number of prosecutions 2017 - 2022

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
154	66	84	23	59

42. **Table D:** Summary of permits and licenses issued annually 2017-2022

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Child Employment Permits	34	45	18	28	35
Child Performance Licences	169	373	102	35	55
Body of Persons Approval	-	19	8	2	7

Chaperone Approvals	103	22	25	8	76
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43. **Table E:** Summary of CME work 2017-2022

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total number of Referrals (leavers and arrivals)	156	139	145	554	400
Leavers	-	-	-	156	239
Found	54	73	38	97	139
Moved abroad - found	5	22	7	26	17
Not traced	31	6	18	15	42
Moved abroad: not traced	66	38	34	5	8
Not CME	-	-	6	13	33
Arrivals	-	-	42	398	161

Strategic recommendations

44. Attendance is a key focus of local area work sitting right across the Gateshead system due to the revised Department for Education Guidance 'Working Together to Improve Attendance' (May 2022). This is being championed by Helen Ferguson, Suzanne Dunn and Andrea Houlahan. The local area has voluntarily opted to have a Department of Education mentor as a critical friend to support us through this process. This collaboration includes a critical look at the emerging graduated offer we are developing within the local area with key strategic leads as well a deep dive into current practice to ensure that our evaluation of current practice is robust. The mentor is also able to share and advise on national context and current good practice to guide curiosity about what may be achievable within our own area.

45. The recommended key priorities are to:

- a. Develop a graduated partnership approach to improving attendance utilizing/extending the existing strategies and approaches across the system.
- b. Have appropriate governance arrangements to ensure that strategies and approaches are robustly aligned and working well; driving improvements in attendance.
- c. Appoint an officer to manage the synergy system so attendance data can be routinely and robustly interrogated to inform and evaluate work.

Recommendations

46. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to receive this report for information and discussion.

Key documents

Working together to Improve Attendance (May 2022) [Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England (2015) [Advice template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Children missing education (2016) [Stat guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Appendix 1 - Additional background information

Legal Intervention Team staffing

1. Gateshead currently employ 4 full time members of staff in the Legal Intervention Team (1xGrade I 3xGrade H) to carry out the following statutory duties:
 - Penalty Notices (non-attendance, unauthorised leave of absence, exclusions)
 - Prosecution in Magistrates Court
 - School Attendance Orders
 - Child Performance Licences
 - Chaperone Approval (performance)
 - Child Employment Permits
 - Children Missing from Education (CME)

Emotionally Based School Avoidance

2. is an umbrella term used to describe a group of children and young people that have severe difficulty in attending school due to emotional factors which can result in prolonged absences from school. There is a clear distinction between those who are absent from school due to truancing and those that are absent from school due to specific emotional distress that they experience around attending school.
3. Previously referred to a 'school refuser' this term can be misleading as the word 'refuser' implies that the child or young person has control over school non-attendance. In this instance the terminology locates the problem within the child/young person and detracts from the environmental factors that could be instrumental in supporting a child or young person back into school.
4. The local authority, through the high needs funding block and Schools Forum via de-delegation of funding, have provided funds for 2 Emotionally Based School Avoidance Learning Mentors until March 2023. These officers provide support for pupils presenting with emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA).
5. The Emotionally Based School Avoidance Learning Mentors work to support the reintegration and engagement of pupils back into their educational provision (special or mainstream school) or to support increased attendance.
6. These officers are allocated through a school led referral to Education Inclusion Panel (EIP) who hold the local authority's statutory duty to 'arranging suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This applies whether the child is on the roll of a school and whatever the type of school they attend. It applies to children who are pupils in

Academies, Free Schools, special schools and independent schools as well as those in maintained schools.'

7. In 2021/2022 there were a total of 127 referrals made to Education Inclusion Panel (EIP). Of these 78 (61%) were deemed appropriate. 30 (38%) of these appropriate referrals were seeking allocation of an Emotionally Based School Avoidance Learning Mentor.

The Team Around the School (TAS) model

8. This commenced in April 2018 with one school. It now includes four Secondary schools (Whickham, Lord Lawson of Beamish, Heworth Grange and Kingsmeadow) and two primary schools (South Street and Carr Hill).
9. The model focuses on children and young people within Years 5, 6, 7 and 8 and uses a monthly panel meeting of school staff, Early Help practitioner and manager and drugs/alcohol worker (currently Platform). Allocations of support are given through school staff completing a vulnerability tool to record and evidence concerns about children and young people in these year groups. TAS is one of several initiatives in place to support education colleagues to provide early help interventions that can include a focus on wider familial and contextual issues that impact upon consistently good school attendance at a Tier 2 intervention level.

The Social Workers in Schools Programme

10. This aims the expertise of social workers to help facilitate a real time supportive and collaborative response to safeguarding concerns within schools at the very earliest opportunity. Social worker colleagues are also available to offer support, advice and smaller scale interventions within the school.
11. Gateshead Council secured funding up until March 2022 and this has now been extended to August 2023.
12. The following schools were randomly selected to host a social worker through the Programme: Whickham Kingsmeadow St. Thomas More Lord Lawson River Tyne Academy Heworth Grange with a total outreach to in excess of 6000 young people and their families.

TITLE OF REPORT: School exclusions 2021/2022

REPORT OF: Service Director Education, Schools and Inclusion

SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on exclusions in Gateshead for academic year 2021-2022.
-

Background

2. The government supports headteachers in using suspension and permanent exclusion as a sanction when warranted as part of creating a calm, safe, and supportive environment in which pupils can learn and thrive. To achieve this, suspension and permanent exclusion are sometimes a necessary part of a functioning system, where it is accepted that not all pupil behaviour can be amended or remedied by pastoral processes, or consequences within the school.
3. Only the headteacher* of a school can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil on **disciplinary grounds**.
4. A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year), or permanently excluded.
5. A pupil's behaviour outside school can be considered grounds for a suspension or permanent exclusion. Any decision of a headteacher, including suspension or permanent exclusion, must be made in line with the principles of administrative law, i.e., that it is: lawful (with respect to the legislation relating directly to suspensions and permanent exclusions and a school's wider legal duties); reasonable; fair; and proportionate.
6. When establishing the facts in relation to a suspension or permanent exclusion decision the headteacher must apply the civil standard of proof, i.e., 'on the balance of probabilities' it is more likely than not that a fact is true, rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt.' This means that the headteacher should accept that something happened if it is more likely that it happened than that it did not happen.

7. Headteachers should also take the pupil's views into account, considering these in light of their age and understanding, before deciding to exclude, unless it would not be appropriate to do so.

*In a maintained school, 'headteacher' includes an acting headteacher by virtue of section 579(1) of the Education Act 1996. An acting headteacher is someone appointed to carry out the functions of the headteacher in the headteacher's absence or pending the appointment of a headteacher. This will not necessarily be the deputy headteacher: it will depend on who is appointed to the role of acting headteacher. In an academy, 'principal' includes acting principal by virtue of regulation 21 of the School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012.

8. They should inform the pupil about how their views have been factored into any decision made.
9. Where relevant, the pupil should be given support to express their views, including through advocates such as parents or, if the pupil has one, a social worker.
10. Whilst an exclusion may still be an appropriate sanction, the headteacher should also take account of any contributing factors identified after an incident of misbehaviour has occurred and consider paragraph 45 of the Behaviour in Schools guidance which states:

'The behaviour policy should include a range of possible sanctions clearly communicated to and understood by pupils, staff, and parents.

Examples of sanctions may include:

- *a verbal reprimand and reminder of the expectations of behaviour;*
- *the setting of written tasks such as an account of their behaviour;*
- *loss of privileges – for instance, the loss of a prized responsibility;*
- *detention;*
- *school based community service, such as tidying a classroom;*
- *regular reporting including early morning reporting; scheduled uniform checks; or*
 - *being placed "on report" for behaviour monitoring;*
 - *suspension; and*
 - *in the most serious of circumstances, permanent exclusion.'*

11. A suspension, where a pupil is temporarily removed from the school, can be an essential behaviour management tool that should be set out within a school's behaviour policy.
12. A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year). A suspension does not have to be for a continuous period.

13. The law does not allow for extending a suspension or 'converting' a suspension into a permanent exclusion.
14. **In exceptional cases**, usually where further evidence has come to light, a further suspension may be issued to begin immediately after the first period ends; or a permanent exclusion may be issued to begin immediately after the end of the suspension.
15. A permanent exclusion is when a pupil is no longer allowed to attend a school (unless the pupil is reinstated).
16. The decision to exclude a pupil permanently should only be taken:
 - in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; **and**
 - where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others such as staff or pupils in the school.
17. The headteacher may cancel any exclusion that has already begun, but this should only be done where it has not yet been reviewed by the governing board.
18. Where an exclusion is cancelled, then:
 - Parents, the governing board, and the LA should be notified without delay and, if relevant, the social worker and VSH;
 - Parents should be offered the opportunity to meet with the headteacher to discuss the circumstances that led to the exclusion being cancelled;
 - Schools should report to the governing board once per term on the number of exclusions which have been cancelled. This should include the circumstances and reasons for the cancellation enabling governing boards to have appropriate oversight and;
 - The pupil should be allowed back into school.

For additional background information see **Appendix 1**

Exclusion information 2021/2022

Permanent exclusions

19. **Table 1** shows the number of pupils permanently excluded from Gateshead schools **over a three-year period** where the permanent exclusion was upheld

Table 1

Academic Year	Permanent Exclusions (Total)	Permanent Exclusion (Secondary Primary)	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
2019/20	38	37/0	25	13	0
2020/21	42	42/0	19	8	15
2021/22	50	49/1	18	19	13

20. **Table 2** shows permanent exclusion rates nationally and in Gateshead over a three year period

Table 2

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
National permanent exclusion rate	0.06%	0.05%	0.04%
Gateshead permanent exclusion rate	0.11%	0.13%	0.10%

() increase/decrease from previous year

21. **Table 3** shows the number of permanent exclusions issued from Gateshead schools in academic year 2021-2022

Table 3

School	Total permanent exclusions issued	Total withdrawn/not upheld	Y5	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	M	F	Out of area pupils
School A	5			1	2		2		4	1	
School B	1		1						1		
School C	6			3	2			1	6		4
School D	4			1	1	1	1		3	1	
School E	5				3	2			3	2	
School F	6			1	1	2	2		3	3	
School G	10	1		1	3	1	2	3	9	1	2
School H	1						1			1	
School I	3					2		1	2	1	
School J	5				3	2			4	1	
School K	1						1		1		
School L	1						1		1		
School M	4	1			1	1	1	1	4		1
Total	52	2	1	7	16	11	11	6	41	11	7

22. **Table 4** shows the pupil profile at the point that a permanent exclusion that were issued in academic year 2021-2022

Table 4

School	Total number of pupils Child in our Care at point of permanent exclusion being issued	Total number of pupils with social worker at point of permanent exclusion being issued	Total number of pupils SEN K at point that of permanent exclusions being issued	Total number of pupils EHCP at point of permanent exclusions being issued	Total number of pupils families open to Early Help at point of permanent exclusion being issued
School A			1		1
School B			1		
School C					1
School D			1		
School E			2		3
School F		1			1
School G		1			
School H					
School I					3
School J					2
School K			1		
School L	1 (Newcastle LAC)				1
Total	1	2	6	0	12

Reasons for permanent exclusions

23. **Table 5** shows a breakdown of permanent exclusions upheld by reason in academic year 2021-2022

Table 5

Reason	Number
Physical assault (pupil)	5
Physical assault (adult)	6
Verbal abuse (pupil)	0
Verbal abuse (adult)	0
Bullying	1
Racist incident	1
Sexual misconduct	0
Drug/alcohol	4
Damage	0
Theft	0
Persistent disruptive behaviour	31
Inappropriate use of social media	0
Other	1(knife) 1 (stealing acid)

Suspensions

24. **Table 6** shows suspension rates across Gateshead over a three year period

Table 6

	2019-2020	2020-2021	20212022
National suspension rate	4.17%	4.14%	4.25%
Gateshead suspension	4.77%	6.88%	7.93%

25. **Table 7** shows suspensions across Gateshead in 2021-2022

		GENDER			SEN				PUPIL PREMIUM		
School Name	SUSP Total	Female	Male	Total	EHCP	SEN Support	No SEN	Total	YES	NO	Total
School M	3	1	2	3	1	2	0	3	1	2	3
School N	7	1	6	7	0	6	1	7	7	0	7
School O	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
School P	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
School Q	3	0	3	3	0	3	0	3	3	0	3
School R	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
School S	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
School T	3	0	3	3	3	0	0	3	3	0	3
School U	15	5	10	15	4	2	9	15	6	9	15
School V	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1
School W	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
School X	9	0	9	9	9	0	0	9	9	0	9
School Y	6	0	6	6	0	5	1	6	0	6	6
School Z	3	1	2	3	0	1	2	3	2	1	3
School A1	3	1	2	3	0	3	0	3	3	0	3
School B1	5	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	5	0	5
School C1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
School D1	6	0	6	6	0	3	3	6	3	3	6
School E1	4	0	4	4	1	3	0	4	4	0	4
School F1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
School G1	3	0	3	3	0	3	0	3	3	0	3
School H1	4	0	4	4	0	1	3	4	4	0	4
School I1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
School J1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
School B	10	0	10	10	0	10	0	10	10	0	10
School K1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1
School L1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
School M1	2	0	2	2	1	0	1	2	2	0	2
School N1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
School O1	3	2	1	3	0	0	3	3	3	0	3
School J	309	83	228	311	12	66	233	311	150	161	311
School E	454	214	244	458	35	137	286	458	371	87	458
School D	495	203	294	497	7	192	298	497	390	107	497
School P1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1
School G	372	160	218	378	15	101	262	378	247	131	378
School L	82	22	63	85	3	10	72	85	42	43	85
School F	183	97	89	186	2	34	150	186	122	64	186
School A	72	27	49	76	0	26	50	76	50	26	76
School I	57	21	38	59	1	2	56	59	15	44	59
School Q1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
School R1	43	7	36	43	43	0	0	43	40	3	43
School S1	4	3	1	4	4	0	0	4	1	3	4
School T1	88	19	69	88	4	17	67	88	70	18	88
	2261	873	1414	2287	145	641	1501	2287	1576	711	2287

Summary

Permanent exclusions

26. The rate of permanent exclusion over the three-year period is significantly above the national average. It is a fluctuating figure across for the local area. Research highlights that pupils who are excluded are at greater risk of having poorer educational outcomes, more fragile to criminal and sexual exploitation and have reduced life chances.
27. In 2021-2022 boys represented the highest number of permanent exclusions that were issued and upheld. They are approximately three times more fragile to permanent exclusion than girls. This is a trend continued from the previous year.
28. In 2021-2022 none-SEN pupils represent the highest group of pupils that were issued with a permanent exclusion that was upheld.
29. In 2021-2022 Key Stage 3 was the phase where most permanent exclusions were issued and upheld. This is a trend continued from the previous year.
30. In 2021-2022 persistent disruptive behaviour was cited on the greatest number of permanent exclusions issued and upheld.

Suspensions

31. The rate of suspensions over the three-year period is significantly above the national average. It is a figure on the rise.
32. In 2021-2022 boys represented the highest number of suspensions issued. They are approximately twice more likely to be suspended than girls. A trend that is reflected in permanent exclusions that are issued and upheld.
33. In 2021-2022 primary school issued more suspensions to pupils identified as SEN whereas Secondary schools issued more to those pupils not identified as SEN.
34. In 2021-2022 pupils identified as pupil premium were twice as likely to be issued with a suspension than those not identified as pupil premium.
35. Historic suspension rates show Gateshead are sig above national suspension rates and where increases are evident Gateshead are increasing at a greater rate.

Strategic considerations

36. The rate of permanent exclusions is too high.
37. Exclusions have to be a focus of local area work right across the Gateshead system so that we can achieve a cultural change which is supported by a realistic strategic plan that drives greater inclusion and a more robust, holistic, preventative work so that permanent exclusions and suspension rates are on a consistent downward trend.
38. This must pay particular attention to behaviours that can become entrenched and difficult to modify; particularly amongst males, building capacity within schools to adapt policy, procedure and practice. It must include ways in which we can support and build school capabilities and support pupils at the right time and in the right way using the strengths we have within the system SENIT; TAS and SWIS. See Education, Schools and Inclusion Service priorities (**Appendix 2**).

Recommendations

39. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to receive this report for information and discussion.

Appendix 1 - Background information

Staffing to meet statutory duties in relation to exclusion

1. To meet our statutory duty set out in Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (2022) to 'arrange suitable full-time education for the pupil to begin from the sixth school day after the first day the permanent exclusion took place' we employ a 0.8 Grade H Officer who arranges this provision.
2. This Officer also assists with arranging tuition to meet our statutory duty under Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs (2013) to 'arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.'

Support with the local area

3. Gateshead also offer a suite of support that can be accessed by most schools. This support ranges from adapting learning environments and strategies within school to better meet need, building staffing capabilities for the longer term and reducing familiar barriers that may be a contributing factor to behaviours.

SEN Inclusion Team (SENIT)

High Needs Incident Team (HINT)

4. The High Incidence Needs Team (HINT) are part of the SEN Inclusion Team and consist of teachers who are specialists in the areas of:
Communication and Interaction
Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
Complex Social Communication (CSC)
Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)
Physical and Medical Needs
Cognition and Learning
Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)
5. Supported by a team of Higher Level Teaching Assistants HINT teachers work with schools and settings by supporting them to implement the graduated approach to meeting the needs of children and young people aged 4-25 with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). HINT staff can contribute to the 'assess, plan, do, review' cycle through training, modelling and coaching, advice and guidance for staff, and through observation/assessment of skills and needs of the child or young person.

Primary Behaviour Support (PBS)

6. This team working across Gateshead, providing advice and support when a child is referred for behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. They work mainly in the school concerned working directly with the children and staff.
7. They adopt a multi-agency approach, working closely with both education and health care professionals as well as with parents and carers. They also have effective links with specialist provisions.
8. The team offer behaviour training to raise self-esteem; manage anxiety and building resilience and managing anger.

The Early Years Assessment and Intervention Team (EYAIT)

9. This team consists of a team of specialist teachers and specialist teaching assistants. They work closely with children and families, schools and settings and with other professionals and are skilled and experienced in working with children with special educational needs and disabilities. The team may offer assessments, interventions, support and reviews for children experiencing barriers to their development and learning, and for whom specialist intervention may be recommended.
10. They are able to:
 - offer assessment, targeted intervention, advice, coaching and modelling sessions for children from 0-4 who are experiencing significant barriers to their development and learning
 - establish and develop partnerships with parents/carers in supporting children with SEN
 - offer coordinated, holistic and multi-agency assessments, interventions and reviews
 - develop effective strategies to enable children to access their education in an inclusive environment
 - liaise with parents/carers and practitioners to develop appropriate action plans
 - develop and support transition to the child's next educational placement
 - contribute to the EHC Plan process
 - maintain data and carry out evaluations for the Local Authority

Early Help Team Around the School

11. The Team Around the School (TAS) model commenced in April 2018 with one school. It now includes four Secondary schools (Whickham, Lord Lawson of Beamish, Heworth Grange and Kingsmeadow) and two primary schools (South Street and Carr Hill).

12. The model focuses on children and young people within Years 5, 6, 7 and 8 and uses a monthly panel meeting of school staff, Early Help practitioner and manager and drugs/alcohol worker (currently Platform). Allocations of support are given through school staff completing a vulnerability tool to record and evidence concerns about children and young people in these year groups. TAS is one of several initiatives in place to support education colleagues to provide early help interventions that can include a focus on wider familial and contextual issues that impact upon consistently good school attendance at a Tier 2 intervention level.

Children's Social Care Social Workers in School Programme

13. The Social Workers in Schools Programme aims the expertise of social workers to help facilitate a real time supportive and collaborative response to safeguarding concerns within schools at the very earliest opportunity. Social worker colleagues are also available to offer support, advice and smaller scale interventions within the school.

14. Gateshead Council secured funding up until March 2022 and this has now been extended to August 2023.

15. The following schools were randomly selected to host a social worker through the Programme: Wickham Kingsmeadow St. Thomas More Lord Lawson River Tyne Academy Heworth Grange. With a total outreach to in excess of 6000 young people and their families.

16. Although the cumulative research findings will not be available until late in 2022 with regards to the efficacy of the programme it is clear from qualitative information that the Programme has afforded the space, opportunity and time to make our multi-agency safeguarding approach ever more robust. This includes in supporting and advising on wider contextual factors. This can be prior to any recommendation to offers of support through Early Help or referrals to front door but does also include sharply focused advice to Designated Safeguarding Leads with regards to families known to tier 2 and tier 3 support services.

Appendix 2

Education, Schools and Inclusion

Action	Lead	Completion Date	Milestones	Progress	RAG
Develop a commissioning strategy for alternative provision and develop the ARMS provision across Gateshead to meet the needs of more children and young people in mainstream settings. (SEN action plan 3.1)	Julie McDowell/Deborah Mason	TBC	<p>DRAFT</p> <p>Establishing Analysis of relevant data completed. Financial envelope has been agreed. Assets have been identified. Engagement activities with: Service users. Schools – in particular joint enterprise completed. Engagement with other partners (Health?) completed.</p> <p>Outcome Evidence base for AP evidenced.</p> <p>Planning Identification of relevant providers using local knowledge has been carried out.</p> <p>Outcome Relevant provider(s) identified.</p> <p>Implementation Procurement process has been undertaken with commissioners. Contract with successful provider(s) agreed - clear</p>	<p>DRAFT paper Alternative Provision produced</p> <p>Gateshead SEN action being developed and actioned</p>	

			<p>outcomes are agreed: educational, social, cultural, therapeutic and vocational. Referral criteria and process established. Including undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the pupil to ensure that the AP is able to meet their individual needs.</p> <p>Outcome QA criteria agreed. Referral criteria and protocols for placements established.</p> <p>Support and challenge Challenging targets set around permanent exclusion with schools. Monitoring and evaluation procedures agreed with provider(s) and partners.</p> <p>Outcome PEX reducing. Regular QA cycle established.</p>		
We will review and refine our support for schools around exclusions with the aim of reducing our	Julie McDowell/others TBC	TBC	<p>DRAFT Develop the outreach offer from River Tyne Academy so the school workforce is better equipped</p>	Gateshead SEN action being developed and actioned	

rate of exclusions. (SEN action plan 1.3)			to effectively support children and young people with social, emotional, and mental health needs (summer 2023)		
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TITLE OF REPORT: Elective Home Education

REPORT OF: Service Director, Education, Schools and Inclusion

SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on elective home education in Gateshead for academic year 2021-2022.
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Background

2. Elective home education is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home - or at home and in some other way which they choose - instead of sending them to school full-time.
3. This is different to education provided by a local authority otherwise than at a school - for example, tuition for children who are too ill to attend school.
4. Parents have a right to educate their children at home, and the government wants the many parents who do it well to be supported.
5. Educating a child (or children) full-time at home can be a rewarding but challenging task.
6. Parents may choose to engage private tutors or other adults to assist in providing a suitable education, but there is no requirement to do so.
7. There are other settings which may be used, for example parental support groups which offer tuition, and companies which give part-time tuition. This can also include provision made at further education colleges for children aged 14 and over.
8. Although children being home-educated are not normally registered at any school, parents sometimes choose to make arrangements for a child to receive part of the total provision at a school - the purpose of this will often be to provide education in specific subjects more easily than is possible at home.
9. Such arrangements are sometimes known as 'flexi-schooling'. Schools are under no obligation to agree to such arrangements, but some are happy to do so.

- 10.** Parents who choose to educate a child in these ways rather than sending the child to school full-time take on financial responsibility for the cost of doing so, including the cost of any external assistance used such as tutors, parent groups or part-time alternative provision.
- 11.** If the child attends state-funded school or FE college for part of the week, that will have no cost to the parents.
- 12.** Examination costs are also the responsibility of parents if a child does not attend school full-time, although some schools or colleges attended part-time may meet the costs.
- 13.** One of the most significant issues for any local authorities is maintaining adequate oversight.
- 14.** There is no legal duty on parents to inform the local authority that a child is being home educated. If a child never attends school, an authority may be unaware that he or she is being home educated.
- 15.** Identification of children who have never attended school and may be home educated forms a significant element of fulfilling an authority's statutory duty under s.436A of the Education Act 1996.
- 16.** In Gateshead local authority the elective home education officers maintain close links with other services and conduct a multi-agency elective home education group once per month to ensure information is shared so as far as it is possible to do so, so that the identities of children who may be being electively home educated are established so that it can be established if they are receiving a full time, suitable education.
- 17.** Gateshead local authority also require all schools to inform them of children and young people who have been removed from roll to be electively home educated.
- 18.** There are no detailed legal requirements as to how a local authority develop oversight to assure itself that every child and young person being electively home educated is receiving a suitable education.
- 19.** However, the Department of Education recommends that each local authority:
 - should provide parents with a named contact who is familiar with home education policy and practice and has an understanding of a range of educational philosophies;
 - ordinarily makes contact with home educated parents on at least an annual basis so the authority may reasonably inform itself of the current suitability of the education provided. In cases where there were no previous concerns about the education provided and no reason to think that has changed because the parents are continuing to do a good job, such contact would often be very brief;

- has a named senior officer with responsibility for elective home education policy and procedures, and the interaction with other work on issues such as children missing education, unregistered settings, vulnerable children, and welfare;
- organises training on the law and the diversity of home education methods for all officers who have contact with home-educating families, possibly in conjunction with other authorities;
- ensures that those local authority staff who may be the first point of contact for a potential home-educating parent understand the right of the parent to choose home education.
- works co-operatively with other relevant agencies such as health services to identify and support children who are being home educated, within the boundaries established by data protection and other legislation.

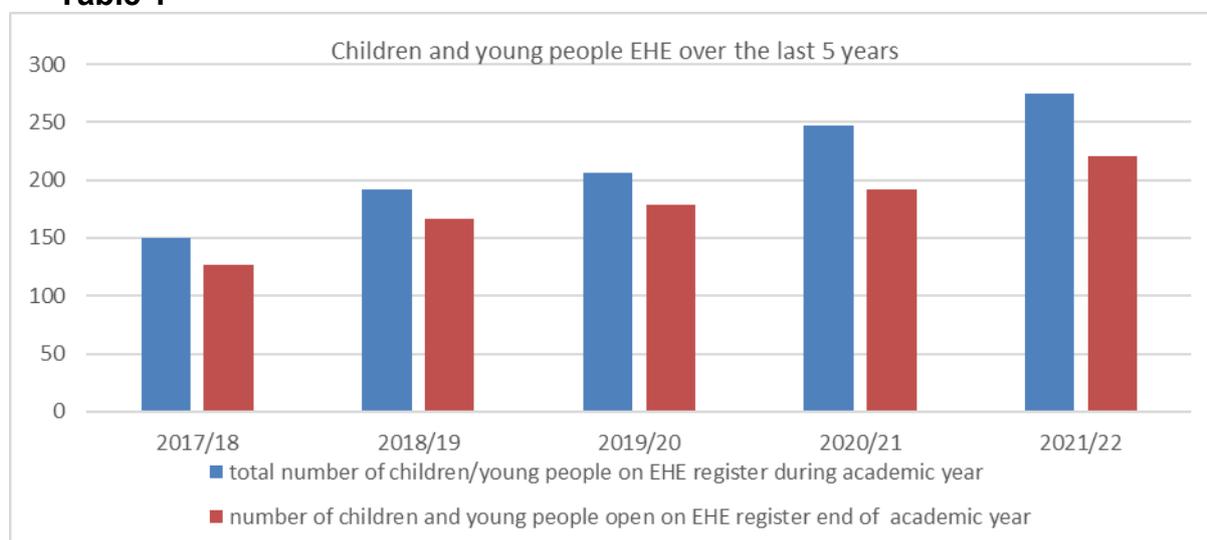
20. It is recognised that it is very important that parents are provided with accurate information from the outset to establish a positive foundation for the relationship.

21. However, parents are under no obligation to accept support or advice from a local authority, and refusal to do so is not in itself evidence that the education provided is unsuitable.

Elective Home Education 2021-2022

22. Table 1 Children and young people being Electively Home Educated

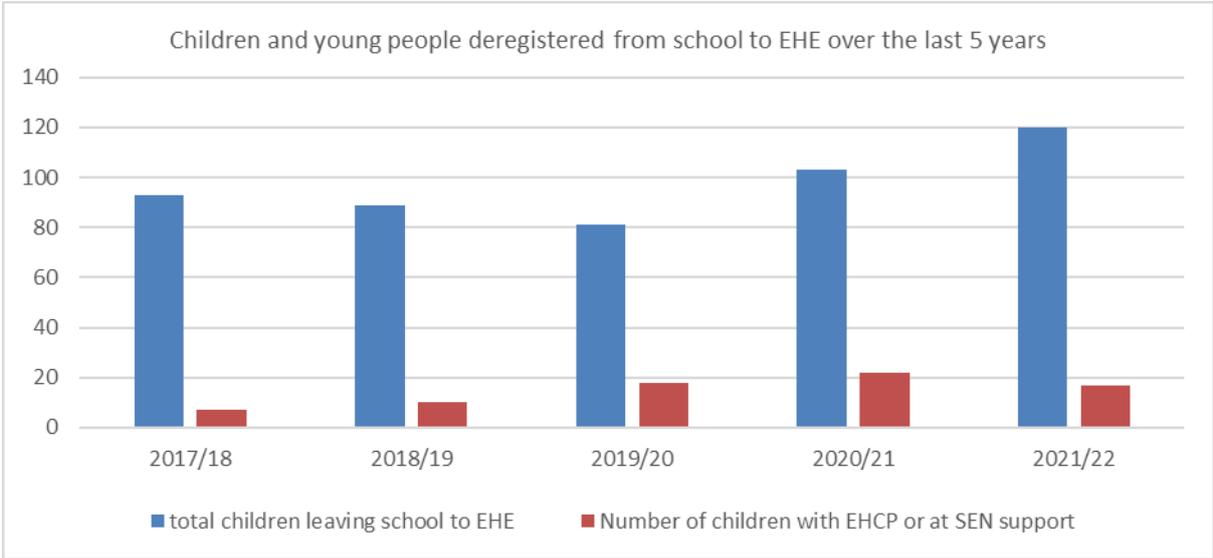
Table 1



Deregistration from school during 2021-2022

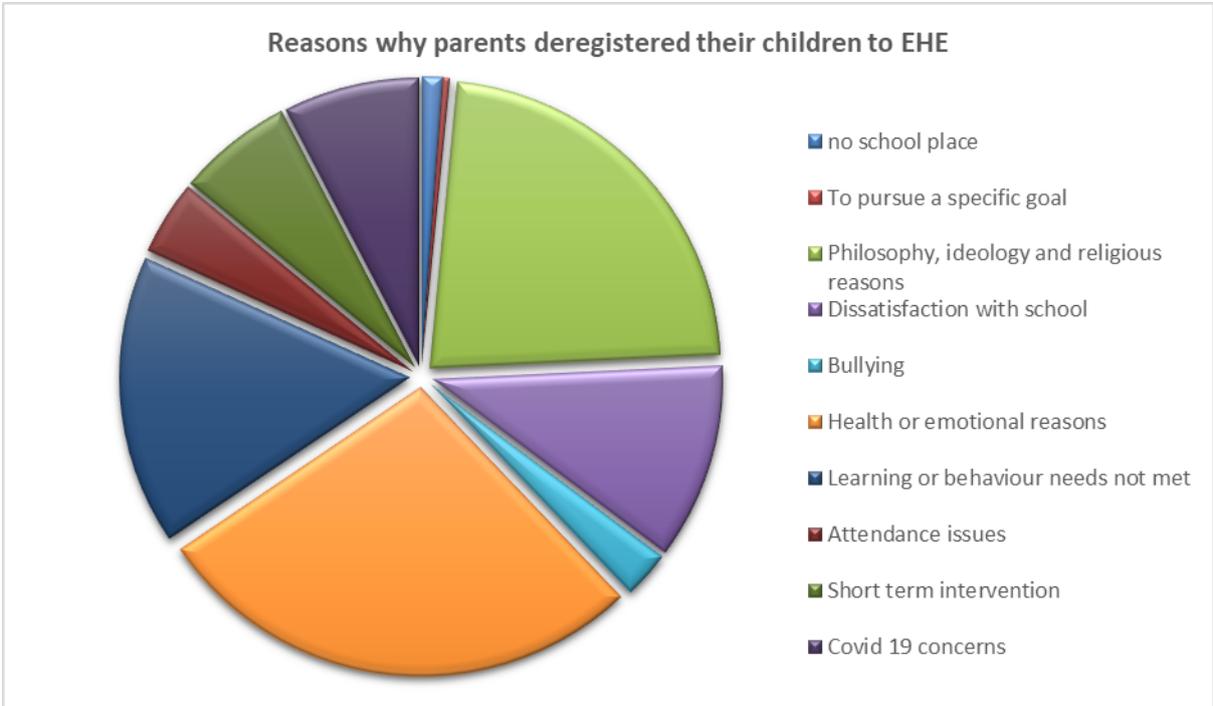
23. Table 2 shows the numbers of children and young people that were deregistered from school during academic year 2021-2022

Table 2



24. Table 3 gives an overview of reasons cited by parents (when given) who chose to electively home educated in academic year 2021-2022

Table 3



25. Table 4 shows ethnicity of children and young people being electively home educated in academic year 2021-2022

Table 4

Ethnicity of children and young people being electively home educated 2021- 22
Arabic 5
Black European 1
Traveller 2
Indian 1
White British 242
White Asian 2
White European 1
Black African 2
Bangladeshi 1
White other 2
16 other/unknown

Summary

26. There were 275 children and young people recorded on the Elective Home Education (EHE) register during academic year 2021-2022.

27. This was a 20% increase compared to academic year 2020-2021 and a 65% increase since 2017/18. This increase is in line with national trends.

28. There were 94 primary aged and 181 secondary aged children EHE in academic year 2021-2022.

29. There were a total of 42 children and young people who were at SEN support and 10 children who had an Education Health and Care Plan on the elective home education register during academic year 2021-2022. This represented a 20% increase from academic year 2020-2021.

30. There were 133 males and 142 females recorded on the elective home education register during academic year 2021-2022. Data shows that over a period of 5 years more females have been electively home educated than males.

31. The number of children and young people on the elective home education register changes throughout the year. At the end of the academic year there were 192 children and young people open on the elective home education register.

Deregistration

32. There were 120 children deregistered from a schools in Gateshead or elsewhere during academic year 2021-2022 and placed on the Gateshead elective home

education register. This is a 17% increase on data during academic year 2020-2021.

33. The 120 children deregistered from schools during academic year 2021-2022 were made up of 17 at SEN support or who had an education health and care plan.
34. The most significant rise in the number of young people being deregister from school to become electively home educated was year 8 - representing a 162% increase. Parents of children in year 8 indicated the poor transition, due to Covid restrictions, impacted on their child's integration into secondary school.
35. During 2021-2022 there was a reduction in the numbers of children who are electively home educated and have never attended a school.

Reason for choosing to electively home educate

36. Historically, ethical and philosophical reasons have been the most common reason for choosing to electively home educate.
37. During academic year 2021-2022 mental health and emotional needs became the most prevalent reason for parents deciding to electively home educating.

Children and young people known to children's social care services

38. During academic year 2021-2022 there were 10 children open to children's social care either at child protection or child in need and 11 children open to Early Help. These number have continued to increase during the last 5 years. There are currently no children being electively home educated that are open to statutory children's social care.
39. We are progressing work with social care colleagues to define a protocol that will address our concerns when parents choose to electively home educate when the family are known to statutory social care services or become known to statutory social care whilst being electively home educated so that children maintain their school placement or return to school as rapidly as possible.

Children and young people returning to school after a period of being electively home educated

40. During 2021-2022 there were 31 children and young people who returned to mainstream school often supported by the Fair Access Process.
41. There were 6 children and young people who were referred as children missing in education in academic year 2021-2022 who had been considered to be electively home educated.

42. During 2021-2022 there were 8 referrals to the Legal Intervention Team, to commence the School Attendance Order procedures as evidence of education provision was unsatisfactory.

Staffing

43. A part time elective home education Officer was employed in February 2022 (0.8 Grade G) to support the current officer. This is equivalent to one FT officer. They are supported by 0.3 admin time.

44. The officer made at least one visit to the overwhelming majority (75%+) of parents that preferred this method of interaction with us.

Recommendations

45. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to receive this report for information and discussion.

Documents

Elective Home Education Strategy: [2715-PS-Elective-Home-Education-Strategy-2020-2025-V5-August-2020.pdf](https://www.educationgateshead.org/2020-2025-V5-August-2020.pdf) ([educationgateshead.org](https://www.educationgateshead.org))

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TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Work Programme

REPORT OF: Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive
Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

Summary

The report sets out the provisional work programme for Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2022/23.

1. The Committee's provisional work programme was endorsed at the meeting held on 16 June 2022 and Councillors have agreed that further reports will be brought to future meetings to highlight current issues / identify any changes / additions to this programme.
2. Appendix 1 sets out the work programme as it currently stands. Any changes proposed to the programme will be set out in bold and italics for ease of identification.

Recommendations

3. The Committee is asked to
 - a) Note the provisional programme;
 - b) Note that further reports on the work programme will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional policy issues, which the Committee may be asked to consider.

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Draft Families OSC Work Programme 2022-23	
16 June 2022 1.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Management & Improvement Framework – Year End Performance 2021-22 • Breastfeeding and Tongue Tie (to focus on targets and support available) • Implementation of Mosaic (the new Children’s Services ICT system) how it is improving processes etc and provide a demonstration to Committee • Results of Covid 19 Survey • Work Programme
8 September 2022 1.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted Improvement Plan – Progress Update • CAMHS & Impact of Covid – Update (to focus specifically on the waiting lists – what are the timescales, reasons for referrals etc and what are the interim arrangements which are being put in place given the reported length of the waiting list.) • Annual Report on Complaints and Representations – Children • Work Programme
20 October 2022 5.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Justice - impact of SALT • Poverty Proofing Schools / affordability of school uniforms • Mockingbird Programme – Progress Update • Children’s Social Care /Early Help– Demand pressures, children in care and child protection • Work Programme
1 December 2022 1.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Management and Improvement Framework – Six Month report? • SEND Tribunal data (to focus on the number of Tribunals that are taking place and highlighting any themes arising and the outcomes) & Local Offer – SEND – Update (to include figures / information on Haskel Special School / the Jewish community) • Safeguarding Children – MASA and Business Plan • Inclusion in Mainstream • Work Programme
19 January 2023 1.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance of Secondary Schools • Ofsted Inspections / School Data – progress update • Permanent Exclusions / Suspensions and Elective Home Education – Update (to include the practice of “informal” suspensions).? • Work Programme
9 March 2023 1.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma Informed team update • Impact of Covid on new mothers – Update

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Adoption Agency Annual Report • Annual Conversation with Head Teachers of Special Schools • Ofsted – Annual Report • Work Programme
<p>27 April 2023 1.30pm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Children – GSCP – Emerging Priorities • Children and Young People's Access to Dental Health Services in Gateshead – Update • Corporate Parenting Board - Annual Update • CAMHS – Progress Update • Work Programme

Issues for next year’s work programme (2023/24) –

- Outreach Youth Work – targeted and universal
- The benefits arising from the changes to the music service
- Children’s Services approach to poverty
- Family Hubs (raised under Youth Justice report)
- Demand Pressures on Children’s Social Care
- Lack of critical paediatric beds in the region and the step down process / beds

Training identified

- SEND – Training on the process and the statutory responsibilities of the local authority (for Families OSC only)
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (for OSC and other members of the council)