

Item 5 - Briefing Note - Key national updates

Cambridgeshire Children's Social Care OfSTED Inspection

Children's Social Care Inspection began on Wednesday 4 June 2014. It has been a 4 week programme for inspectors which included auditing caseloads, on-site visits (Including with partner colleagues) and interviewing. The last day will be Wednesday 25 June 2014 and we hope to be able to verbally update the Children's Trust Board at its next meeting on 2 July 2014 on some of the key outcomes.

Parental info on school performance

Parents will, for the first time, have more information about how schools are performing in providing a rounded academic education for children and how they spend their money.

This new data comes as part of the Department's contribution to the Coalition Government's commitment on transparency, openness and accountability. In addition, for the first time ever, parents will be able to use the Department's website to create their own performance tables that rank local schools or to compare them with others. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/parents-get-more-information-about-school-performance>

Curriculum reforms

The new [national curriculum](#) was published on 11 September 2013, and it will be taught from September 2014. The new curriculum for all subjects contains the essential knowledge that all children should learn, but will not dictate how teachers should teach.

The curriculum contains the programmes of study and attainment targets for all subjects, at all key stages, except key stage 4 English, mathematics and science, which will follow after a public consultation on the draft programmes of study. Teachers should note that in the 2014 to 2015 academic year, pupils in years 2 and 6 should be taught the current programmes of study in [English](#), [mathematics](#) and [science](#). These pupils will sit the current key stage 1 and 2 tests respectively. New tests will be available from 2016.

Further information relating to each curriculum level and subject is available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum>

Business Planning in Cambridgeshire County Council

The Business Planning process is underway in Cambridgeshire County Council and Services are developing proposals to deliver an ambitious programme of savings over the next few years. The scale of the savings require a fundamental review and change of service provision that will led to very different ways of working across CFA services compared to current arrangements. CFA will continue to build on this vision and will need to connect with key partner organisations to discuss this approach. For more information contact Meredith Teasdale.

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SEND Specific focus:

SEND implementation grant

On 1 September, local authorities will begin to implement a new system of support for children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND). The government is making an additional £45.2 million available to local authorities in 2014-2015, and intends to make £31.7 million available in 2015-2016 to meet additional local authority costs incurred in implementing the SEND reforms.

Details of the [grant each local authority will receive](#) are available. The first instalment of the grant will reach local authorities by September 2014. This new funding is in addition to support already provided including:

- £70 million SEN reform grant allocated to local authorities in 2014-2015
- £30 million for independent supporters planned between April 2014 and March 2016
- the package of support available to local authorities through the SEND pathfinder champions and delivery partners

On 10 June, the DfE published [draft transitional arrangements guidance](#) to support local authorities in planning for implementation of the new system.

The government has also published a new easier-to-read [code of practice](#), which offers practical advice for councils, schools and hospitals to ensure they are providing the new support for these children and young people.

Cambridgeshire SEN discussion paper

Cambridgeshire has drafted a discussion paper around better outcomes for children, young people and their families with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Appendix 1. The paper will be, in due course, shared with children and young people with SEND, their families and a range of partners including schools, educational settings, health commissioners and providers.

The outcomes from our discussions will inform the development of a SEND strategic commissioning strategy which will plan for the current and future needs of children and young people with SEND and their families to help them achieve good outcomes while ensuring resources are used well.

For more information contact Jane Ryder-Richardson,
jane.ryderrichardson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire SEND Reforms and local offer

Local Authorities must work together with key partners to set out in one place information about provision they expect to be available for children and young people in their area who have SEND.

A set of slides have been developed to give an overview of the SEND local offer and outlining the expectations for the key providers. For more information contact Jane Ryder-Richardson, jane.ryderrichardson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

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The Children and Families Act 2014

On 13 March the Children's and Families Act received Royal Assent. The Act covers a range of subjects requiring the local authority and its partners to change how it works for children and families with important changes for children special educational needs and disabilities and those that care for them. A summary of the of the Children and Families Bill is highlighted below.

Adoption

The aim for more children being adopted by loving families with less delay. Part 1 of the act contains provisions to give effect to proposals set out in '[An action plan for adoption: tackling delay](#)' and '[Further action on adoption: finding more loving homes](#)'.

Family justice

Part 2 improves the operation of the family justice system, as recommended by the independent [family justice review](#). It will lead to a swifter system, with children's best interests are at the heart of decision making.

Childcare reform

Part 4 of the act contains various provisions relating to childcare, giving childminders more flexibility to work in agencies if they want to and making it easier for schools to offer more flexibility.

Welfare of children

Part 5 of the act contains various provisions relating to the welfare of children, including giving children in care the choice to stay with their foster families until they turn 21, making young carers' and parent carers' rights to support from councils much clearer, reforming children's residential care to make sure homes are safe and secure and a requirement on all state-funded schools - including academies - to provide free school lunches on request for all pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2.

Children's Commissioner

Part 6 reinforces the role of the Children's Commissioner with a remit to 'protect and promote children's rights'.

Statutory rights to leave and pay

Part 7 of the act delivers the legislative commitments made in the government response to the [modern workplaces consultation](#) (November 2012). The provisions create a new employment right to shared parental leave and statutory shared parental pay for eligible working parents. All employed women continue to be eligible for maternity leave and statutory maternity pay or allowance in the same way as previously. If they choose to bring their leave and pay or allowance to an early end, eligible working parents can share the balance of the remaining leave and pay as shared parental leave and pay up to a total of 50 weeks of leave and 37 weeks of pay. Eligible adopters can use the new system for shared parental leave and pay. Adoption leave and pay include prospective parents in the 'fostering for adoption' system, and intended parents in a surrogacy arrangement who are eligible, and intend to apply for, a parental order.

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Time off work - ante-natal care, etc

Part 8 creates a new right for employees and qualifying agency workers to take unpaid time off work to attend up to two ante-natal appointments with a pregnant woman. The right is available to the pregnant woman's husband, civil partner or partner (including same sex partners), the father or parent of the pregnant woman's child, and intended parents in a surrogacy situation who meet specified conditions. Provision is made for paid and unpaid time off work for adopters to attend meetings in advance of a child being placed with them for adoption.

Right to request flexible working

Part 9 provides for the expansion of the right to request flexible working from employees who are parents or carers to all employees, and the removal of the statutory process that employers must currently follow when considering requests for flexible working. The government's policy reforms for the right to request flexible working are set out in its paper '[Modern workplaces - government response on flexible working](#)' (published in November 2012). This part sets out the statutory provisions to support those reforms.

Special educational needs

We will reform the system for children and young people with SEN, including those who are disabled, giving children, young people and their parents greater control and choice up to 25. Part 3 of the act contains provisions following the green paper: '[Support and aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and disability](#)' published by the Department for Education on 18 March 2011 and the follow up '[Progress and next steps](#)' published 15 May 2012.