

COVID-19 EMERGENCY PLANNING HIGHLIGHT REPORT

SERVICE AREA:	Education
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REPORTING PERIOD:	W/C 13 th April 2020

KEY ACTIVITY HEADLINES

- Schools and settings continue to remain open in the Easter holidays to support key workers and vulnerable children.
 - Around 240 schools have been open across most of the week – we have seen numbers fall from the level we expected but there has been around 1,200 pupils – consisting of around 940 pupils from keyworker families, 200 from children with a social worker and around 60 pupils with Education Health and Care Plans. We continue to meet all parental demand. We expect this number of increase next week with the start of the summer term
 - The position on the 16th April within early years can be outlined in the table below –

	Childminders		Early Years		Overall Children
	Number	% Open	Number	% Open	
CCC	220	37%	128	36%	887
PCC	54	32%	11	10%	185

- Vulnerable pupils – We continue to work with children social care and schools to ensure the children who need support, are accessing their school. Our list has focused on 900 children initially and the review process is complete. Schools are undertaking safe and well checks on a regular basis supported by their social worker. We have extended the scope of vulnerability to include those children in the Early Help system where we have concerns. Despite being outside of the remit from the DfE, we have 5 new children supported in 2 schools next week. We will continue to review cases of concern. We have also provided schools with the government guidance on the ages children should be left alone at home to share with parents.
- We continue to provide updates and interpretation for schools and settings of the government guidance on a daily basis. We have also established a page on our website to bring together [useful resources developed by schools and the LA](#) to provide support to leaders.
- We are expecting announcements next week on clarification on expectations for home learning. The information to date has been sparse and there has been great variability nationally over provision. This will coincide with the launch of the [BBC Bitesize](#) online learning offer.
- Admissions – On the 16th April we made offers to parents of children starting primary school in September. The position has improved on last year overall as outlined below

	Offers		1st Preference %		2nd Preference %		3rd Preference %		Directed %	
	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019
Peterborough	2727	2870	93.7	91.5	4.3	5.6	0.8	1	1.2	1.9
Cambridgeshire	6890	6823	93.7	92.75	4.2	4.34	0.7	0.95	1.4	1.96

Admissions appeals are currently on hold. We expect the government to legislate next week to allow virtual appeals to be undertaken to allow social distancing. We are currently working on how this process will work and details will be published on our appeals page in [Peterborough](#) and [Cambridgeshire](#).

- On Friday we distributed 301 PPE grab bags to schools and settings in the emergency scenario where a child has symptoms and are waiting for parents to collect. We have reinforced public health messages that PPE is not required in other scenarios and national advice/guidance should be followed on distancing and handwashing. We have also provided information on donning and doffing PPE.
- Free School Meals eligibility – we have seen the numbers of new claims for FSM increasing following our publicity last week. Parents have been sent a letter ([Cambridgeshire / Peterborough & PCC Application form](#)). There were 54 new claimants in PCC and 104 in CCC in the last week. We continue to have issues with the DfE FSM voucher system (Edenred) and we have recommended schools do not to move over until the summer term starts.
- SEND – we have worked with our Parent Carer forums (Pinpoint CCC / Family Voice PCC) to produce an update on the current position for parents of children with an EHCP and other pupils receiving SEN support. The two documents are here –

- [Information and guidance regarding the Statutory Process](#)
- [Communications to parents from Pinpoint and FVP](#)
- Dialogue continues around ensure children at home have access to the necessary ICT equipment. We have made available 50 laptops for children in care in Cambridgeshire and are looking at a wider roll out of equipment to those pupils that need it.
- We have weekly meetings with the trade unions to discuss key concerns for their members. This has been an effective partnership with few issues raised to date.
- Year 11 Admissions - we have escalated a number of cases to the Department for Education where schools are refusing to admit Year 11 students (the official date when year 11 students leave school is the last Friday in June (26th).

RISKS / CHALLENGES (AND MITIGATION)

- Schools and setting closing remains a concern – we have developed a contingency plan for child care to be provided from strategic hub schools around the county and city if sickness means local arrangements cannot be delivered. We continue to monitor sickness levels in schools daily.
- Admissions – we currently have in-year applications on hold due to schools being closed. We will restart this process once the new intake processes are complete and the holiday period has passed.
- Financial viability of providers in early years / catering / building contractors – there is going to be a legacy issue with provision potentially closing due to financial challenges.
- Legal requirements around EHCP continue – 20 weeks (plus 4 week extension) – expecting further updates to come. We are planning to redeploy our staff from other services within SEND services.
- Schools financial position – we have closed maintained schools accounts and will work with schools in financial difficulties. We are unable to undertake restructures during the period of closure. We continue to work closely with teaching unions over these challenges.
- Alternative Provision - We have raised concerns with the DfE around some alternative provision (for those excluded pupils) which may have to close due to the financial standing of the provider. We have identified alternative provision but this will require further expenditure and will impact upon the young people placed there. To date, we have had to find new provision for 11 students to date.

WORKFORCE UPDATE

- We have had staff coverage in the LA for schools and settings over the Easter break. There are no critical issues currently with staff absence.
- We have seconded two Ofsted inspectors to support the work in Education. They will be supporting developing home learning advice for SEND, reviewing our advice to schools, enhancing our home learning support for Secondary and developing our recovery plan.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (increase in costs / reduction in income)

- Education has quantified all its financial impact for overall council reports. All training and traded service have been cancelled until May half term.
- There is no identified funding for support ICT requirement for pupils that have no access at home. We intend making a claim for government for this money to support a roll out of devices.
- Continue to review rent payment arrangement with early years settings that are using our buildings.

RECOVERY ACTIVITY (plans being considered / future steps)

- We continue to develop a recovery plan for schools to ensure leaders in schools have fully considered all issues around any reopening process. We have met with the Regional School Commissioner to discuss our plans and the next steps. We will be collecting data from schools and settings next week on staff that are unavailable to work (shielded / pregnant etc) to help inform planning.
- We have been monitoring the position with the national opening of schools in Denmark where it is has been challenging to deliver social distancing (class sizes of 12 maximum) and the majority of schools have closed due to staff absence in Copenhagen.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Daily positive news story continue and we continue to publicise our early years advice line to parents.
- Cambridgeshire Music has launched its virtual orchestra initiatives to get everyone participating in music. The first piece of music is the theme tune to Hawaii 5-0 – details can be found [here](#)