

Agenda

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 10 March 2022, 10.00 am
County Hall, Worcester

All County Councillors are invited to attend and participate

This document can be provided in alternative formats such as Large Print, an audio recording or Braille; it can also be emailed as a Microsoft Word attachment. Please contact Scrutiny on telephone number 01905 844965 or by emailing scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

DISCLOSING INTERESTS

There are now 2 types of interests:
'Disclosable pecuniary interests' and **'other disclosable interests'**

WHAT IS A 'DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST' (DPI)?

- Any **employment**, office, trade or vocation carried on for profit or gain
- **Sponsorship** by a 3rd party of your member or election expenses
- Any **contract** for goods, services or works between the Council and you, a firm where you are a partner/director, or company in which you hold shares
- Interests in **land** in Worcestershire (including licence to occupy for a month or longer)
- **Shares** etc (with either a total nominal value above £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital) in companies with a place of business or land in Worcestershire.

NB Your DPIs include the interests of your **spouse/partner** as well as you

WHAT MUST I DO WITH A DPI?

- **Register** it within 28 days and
- **Declare** it where you have a DPI in a matter at a particular meeting
 - you must **not participate** and you **must withdraw**.

NB It is a criminal offence to participate in matters in which you have a DPI

WHAT ABOUT 'OTHER DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS'?

- No need to register them but
- You must **declare** them at a particular meeting where:
You/your family/person or body with whom you are associated have
a **pecuniary interest** in or **close connection** with the matter under discussion.

WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF ANOTHER AUTHORITY OR PUBLIC BODY?

You will not normally even need to declare this as an interest. The only exception is where the conflict of interest is so significant it is seen as likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

DO I HAVE TO WITHDRAW IF I HAVE A DISCLOSABLE INTEREST WHICH ISN'T A DPI?

Not normally. You must withdraw only if it:

- affects your **pecuniary interests** OR
relates to a **planning or regulatory** matter
- **AND** it is seen as likely to **prejudice your judgement** of the public interest.

DON'T FORGET

- If you have a disclosable interest at a meeting you must **disclose both its existence and nature** – 'as noted/recorded' is insufficient
- **Declarations must relate to specific business** on the agenda
 - General scattergun declarations are not needed and achieve little
- Breaches of most of the **DPI provisions** are now **criminal offences** which may be referred to the police which can on conviction by a court lead to fines up to £5,000 and disqualification up to 5 years
- Formal **dispensation** in respect of interests can be sought in appropriate cases.

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 10 March 2022, 10.00 am, County Hall, Worcester

Membership

Councillors:

Cllr Kyle Daisley (Chairman), Cllr Tracey Onslow (Vice Chairman), Cllr Dan Boatright, Cllr David Chambers, Cllr Matt Jenkins, Cllr Steve Mackay, Cllr Jo Monk, Cllr Tony Muir and Cllr David Ross

Co-opted Church Representatives (for education matters)

Mr T Reid (Church of England)

Parent Governor Representatives (for education matters)

Mr M Hughes

Agenda

Item No	Subject	Page No
1	Apologies and Welcome	
2	Declaration of Interest and of any Party Whip	
3	Public Participation Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance in writing or by e-mail indicating both the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 9.00am on the working day before the meeting (in this case 9 March 2022). Further details are available on the Council's website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone number/e-mail address listed in this agenda and on the website.	
4	Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting To follow.	
5	Educational COVID Recovery - Impact on Educational Outcomes 2021 including Apprenticeships (Indicative timing 10.05-11.00)	
6	Performance and In-Year Budget Monitoring (Indicative timing 11.00-11.30am)	
7	Work Programme (Indicative timing 11.30 -11.40am)	

Agenda produced and published by the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP. To obtain further information or hard copies of this agenda, please contact Alyson Spall/ Alyson Grice 01905 844962 email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

All the above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the [Council's Website](#)

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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

10 MARCH 2022

EDUCATION COVID RECOVERY – IMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES 2021 INCLUDING APPRENTICESHIPS

Summary

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and the Director of Children's Services/Chief Executive, Worcestershire Children First have been invited to the meeting to update the Panel on educational outcomes for the academic year 2020/2021, in particular the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the measurement of educational outcomes; and apprenticeships.
2. Representatives from the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP) have also been invited to attend for the discussion about Apprenticeships.

Background

3. The reporting period 2020/21 continues to be impacted by the pandemic.
4. The use of internal assessment of children's progress to inform teaching is an inherent part of school's normal practice. It enables the delivery of an effective curriculum that meets children's needs. Although the pandemic caused Key Stage assessments to be suspended, teachers have continued and adapted their assessment methods to ensure the most effective provision is available for children. Although the requirement for statutory moderation was also removed, Worcestershire Children First (WCF) School Improvement Team provided professional development opportunities to support teachers in making accurate assessment judgments for internal purposes. This has been taken up by both maintained and academy schools.
5. As in 2020, in 2021 Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 SATs, phonics and multiplication tests were cancelled, and Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 outcomes were based on Teacher Assessment. School Performance tables that refer to these end of Key Stage outcomes continue to be suspended for the 2020 to 2021 academic year and no school will be judged on data based on exams and assessments from 2021. Until a new data release is available, all those working with schools, including Ofsted and Department for Education (DfE) regional teams, should refer to the 2019 data.

Raising Standards in Schools

5. Weekly meetings between WCF and DfE representatives have continued to take place since 23 March 2020 to feedback challenges and successes of education provision continuing through the pandemic. In addition, throughout this

period regular meetings have also taken place with school leader phase representatives, including Early Years and Further Education (FE), and WCF officers as a mechanism for identifying issues, collaborative problem solving and consistent communication.

6. Support was provided to both academy and maintained schools through the DfE National Leader of Education support programme. Schools were identified as a result of their Ofsted category and WCF knowledge of their need, and in consultation with the DfE. Twenty schools were supported through this programme during the academic year 2020/21 and feedback indicates this support has been of benefit to these schools in ensuring consistency of education provision for children.

7. The School Improvement Team works with all maintained schools through a named School Improvement Advisor. The role of a School Improvement Advisor is to ensure that all children have access to consistently high-quality opportunities to learn and achieve. They therefore ensure that robust quality assurance and appropriate levels of support and challenge are provided to schools, and promote strategies to raise outcomes for all pupils, including vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs. They have a close working relationship with Headteachers and are a regular point of contact, and support for Headteachers. Academies were also offered a point of contact, a School Improvement Advisor during the pandemic. As part of supporting the provision for good educational outcomes the School Improvement Team developed guidance and training including:

- The development of a recovery curriculum to support the full reopening of schools in order to support the adaption of the curriculum to meet pupil needs as a consequence of lockdown (June 2020)
- Planning and delivering remote learning provision required for pupils required for restricted attendance (September 2020)
- Best practice of how leaders should quality assure the quality of a school's remote education offer to ensure provision is as effective as possible (January 2021)

8. In June 2020, the government announced £1 billion of funding to support children to catch up on missed learning caused by the pandemic. This funding included:

- a one-off universal £650 million catch-up premium for the 2020/2021 academic year to ensure that schools have the support they need to help all children make up for missed learning
- a £350 million National Tutoring Programme to provide additional, targeted support for those children who need the most help. During the first year of the programme introduced in November of the 2020/2021 academic year, state-maintained primary and secondary schools in England were able to access high-quality subsidised tutoring provision for 5 to 16-year-olds using 2 routes, tuition partners and academic mentors. In 2021/22 this has been expanded to offer an additional third route of school-led tutoring. Although subsidised, the expectation is that the remaining costs will be funded by schools using, for example, the recovery premium or pupil premium

9. Schools are expected to use this funding for specific activities to support their pupils' education recovery in line with the curriculum expectations. While schools can use their funding in a way that suits their cohort and circumstances, they are expected to use this funding for specific activities which will help pupils catch up on missed learning.

10. To support schools to make the best use of this funding, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has published a coronavirus (COVID-19) support guide for schools. This provides further guidance on how schools should implement evidence-based approaches to catch up and supporting case studies to highlight effective practice. This guidance has been extensively shared via the weekly Education Bulletins available to all schools, and through the work of the School Improvement Team.

11. Schools could also use catch-up premium funding to support summer holiday catch-up provision. In Worcestershire, most secondary schools offered this opportunity to support children who were transitioning to the school in September 2021.

12. Whilst national measures and restrictions have gradually been lifted since September 2021, schools have continued to experience disruption relating to staff and pupil COVID absence. Schools have therefore continually needed to be flexible using a range of methods and delivery to adapt and meet children's needs.

Impact on Learning – Autumn 2021

13. Qualitative feedback from schools, and from Ofsted Autumn visits in 2021 indicated that the newest cohorts of children in primary and secondary schools arrived with lower starting points than previous years. Schools also found that some pupils were taking longer than usual to settle in and get used to the school routine, which they attributed to the pandemic disrupting the previous academic year and pupils' transition arrangements. The pandemic continues to affect pupils' attendance and leaders have reported an increase in pupils with poor mental health and well-being.

14. Some pupils in primary schools have gaps in phonics knowledge, and in both primary and secondary schools, some pupils are catching up on practical skills, such as in the sciences and in physical education (PE). These 'gaps' in knowledge are either attributable to limitation of content delivery due to restrictions in school and restricted attendance. Schools have adapted curriculum plans in order to provide increased opportunities for pupils to revisit and consolidate previous learning and are focusing on areas of the curriculum that have been missed and need to be covered.

15. The use of regular, informal assessments to determine what knowledge pupils have (and have not) remembered from their teaching during lockdown are a key element of school's approach to recovery curriculum planning. Most teachers are using this to inform their curriculum planning. Many schools are using assessment to identify pupils who may benefit from additional support, such as one-to-one intervention, to catch up. Schools describe this as a dynamic,

ongoing process of assessing, adapting teaching and supporting specific pupils where needed.

Attendance

16. Attendance is and will remain an area of sharp focus. Nationally and locally schools report that absence reasons related to COVID-19, include:

- pupils testing positive for COVID-19
- COVID-19-related anxiety among both parents and pupils
- poorer mental health among pupils as a result of the pandemic/lockdowns
- parents rescheduling or rearranging term-time holidays
- children having low resilience due to setbacks or illness

17. Some schools also reported they had more COVID-19-related absences among disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and specific year groups, for example, Year 8, Year 11 and sixth form. Leaders are tackling this through family support, designated staff members, follow-up phone calls or home visits, and clubs for those whose attendance is particularly low.

18. During the pandemic, schools were expected to submit daily attendance to the DfE. In Worcestershire, two thirds of schools have regularly supplied the DfE with daily attendance figures allowing WCF to monitor trends and make comparisons. Since the beginning of January 2022, Worcestershire attendance figures have risen from 85% to 90%, broadly matching national figures at the same point. Primary schools are showing the highest attendance with the most recent figures at 93%, whilst Middle schools are showing 92% and the Secondary schools at 89%. Comparing to attendance pre-covid shows that Primary and Middle schools' attendance has dropped by 3% whilst Secondary schools have dropped by 6%, and although much of this decrease is directly COVID related, schools are reporting their need to respond to absence related to emotional wellbeing and mental health.

19. This term WCF have been invited to work with Wyre Forest Secondary Schools that are leading sector led local activity to address absence. We expect to identify collaborative actions and share this practice as it develops.

Inspection Outcomes

20. In September 2019, a new Ofsted framework was introduced for the inspection of schools. Under this new framework inspections focus on the curriculum, spending less time looking at test data, and more time looking at what is taught and how it is taught. Hence Ofsted grades assess the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development, and leadership and management.

21. Due to the pandemic, no routine inspections occurred during the period 23 March 2020 to 31 August 2021. Inspection outcomes as at July 2021 were:

	Maintained schools (116)			Academies (127)			All schools (243)	
Outstanding	24	21%	91%	17	13%	75%	17%	83%
Good	82	71%		79	62%		66%	
RI	10	9%		11*	9%		9%	
Ofsted category	0	0%		19*	15%		7%	
No Ofsted judgement				1	1%			

22. In July 2021, 83% of Worcestershire schools were judged Good or Outstanding, which is below the national average of 86% (August 2021). In July 2021, nationally compiled data showed that 84% of Primary pupils, 75% of Middle school pupils and 83% of Secondary pupils in Worcestershire attend a Good or Outstanding school. 89% of state funded special schools in Worcestershire are Good or Outstanding. Held within this data are 23 schools (*) who have converted to an academy since an inspection judged them to be less than Good but are now technically a new school with a full inspection expected within three years of conversion. Due to the suspension of inspections nine of these schools are now 'overdue' inspection.

23. As previously described, in the Autumn term, 2020 Ofsted undertook school visits. The aim of these visits was to talk about the barriers that the school faced in managing the return to opening fully, how pupils were getting back into expected routines and their behaviour, and the school's safeguarding arrangements. Inspectors also spoke to school leaders about how remote learning fitted into their wider curriculum plans. As these visits were not inspections, they did not result in a grade, but a short letter published on the Ofsted reports website. The 18 visits included schools of different types and of all Ofsted grades: 1 'outstanding' school, 5 'good' schools, 3 'requires improvement' schools and 9 schools in an Ofsted category were visited.

24. From January 2021, Ofsted resumed monitoring inspections of schools judged inadequate at their previous inspection and some schools graded as requires improvement. These do not result in a grade, but a judgment as to whether the school is taking effective action. During 2020/21 there were 10 inspections with the outcome that the school was 'taking effective action', including one which converted to a full inspection moving the school from 'Serious Weakness' to 'Requires Improvement'

25. Emergency inspections of schools continued as they had done throughout the pandemic, in response to any serious concerns raised with Ofsted. For the academic year 2020/21 no emergency inspections were triggered.

26. Routine inspections, which result in a school being awarded a new grade or being confirmed in its current grade were recommenced September 2021.

Covid Impact on Apprenticeships

27. The Covid-19 pandemic has challenged Apprenticeship delivery in Worcestershire, reducing numbers across 2020 and 2021. Initially in the first few months, the impact was felt by those wishing to become apprentices, as

opportunities were limited where businesses started to internally focus on applying covid measures such as social distancing and furlough. Education establishments also faced challenges in delivering careers interventions exacerbated by the impact of online learning and engagement levels.

28. HM Government responded to this, developing an initiative to offer financial incentives to businesses to encourage thinking about Apprenticeships and opening up opportunities. By the end of the academic year 2019/20 Apprenticeships in Worcestershire were at 78% of the previous year levels, but recovery of this position commenced in 2020/21 with the county having achieved 106% of the previous year's level.

29. Over this time, Worcestershire County Council added to the successful Worcestershire Apprenticeships brand and introduced its own measures to support young people and potential apprentices. This was through offering online webinars to engage in apprenticeships, finding ways to engage young people within school settings and through its new Careers Worcestershire helpline to offer advice and support to young people around their next steps from Education.

30. Worcestershire County Council has also opened up its own Levy to transfer to smaller businesses in county and assist with costs of training apprentices, as well as leading the way by supporting our own schools and internally within the County Council to increase our own numbers of apprentices.

31. The first quarter of 2021/22 is showing a recovery position for Apprenticeships, with Apprenticeship starts up 52% on the previous year, and positively showing numbers of new entrants to professions increasing - recruitment of Under 19s up 92% and Under 24s up 56%.

Purpose of the Meeting

The Panel is asked to:

- Consider the information in the update;
- Determine whether any further information or Scrutiny was required; and
- Agree whether it would wish to make any comments to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education.

Contact Points

Alyson Grice/Alison Spall, Overview and Scrutiny Officers Tel: 01905 844962/846607
Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children's Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and minutes of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on [16th March 2021](#)

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

10 MARCH 2022

PERFORMANCE AND IN-YEAR BUDGET MONITORING

Summary

1. The Panel will be updated on performance and financial information for services relating to Children and Families.
2. The Cabinet Members with Responsibility (CMRs) for Children and Families and for Education have been invited to attend the meeting to respond to any queries from Panel Members.

Performance Information

3. Performance and financial information provide a further tool for the Scrutiny Panels in maintaining Members' understanding of services provided to the public, the effectiveness of current policies, and early knowledge of any issues or areas for further scrutiny.
4. Attached at Appendix 1 is a dashboard of performance information which covers the indicators from the Directorate level scorecard which relate to services relevant to this Scrutiny Panel's remit for Quarter 3 (October-December 2021).
5. The Corporate Balanced Scorecard is the means of understanding progress against the Council's Corporate Plan. The Scorecard contains a range of indicators linked to key priorities and themes.
6. The Children's Services corporate scorecard is under review and will be re-launched as part of the new Corporate Strategy.
7. Historical Corporate Balanced Scorecard information for each Directorate is reported to Cabinet and is available on the Council's website [here](#)

Financial Information

8. Presentation slides, which can be found at Appendix 2, provide the Financial Update for Quarter 3.

Purpose of the Meeting

9. Following discussion of the information provided, the Scrutiny Panel is asked to determine:

- any comments to highlight to the CMRs at the meeting and/or to Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board at its meeting on 23 March 2022
- whether any further information or scrutiny on a particular topic is required.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Dashboard of Performance Information

Appendix 2 – Budget Monitoring 2022/23 Quarter 3 (Presentation Slides)

Contact Points

Alyson Grice/Alison Spall, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844962/846607

Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

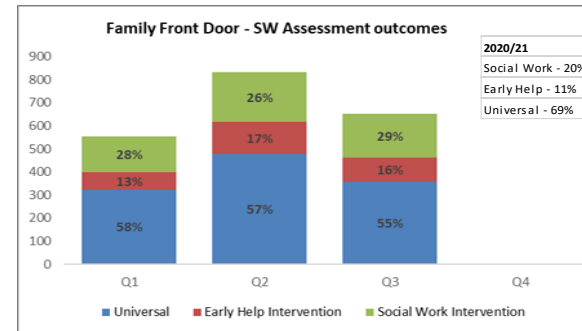
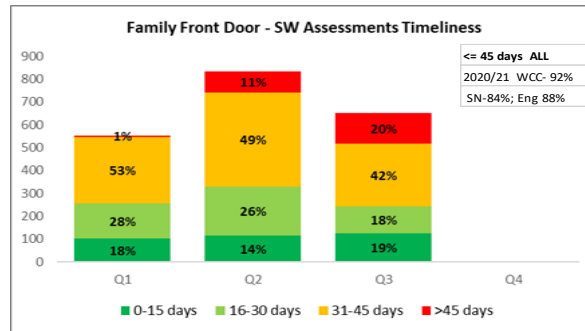
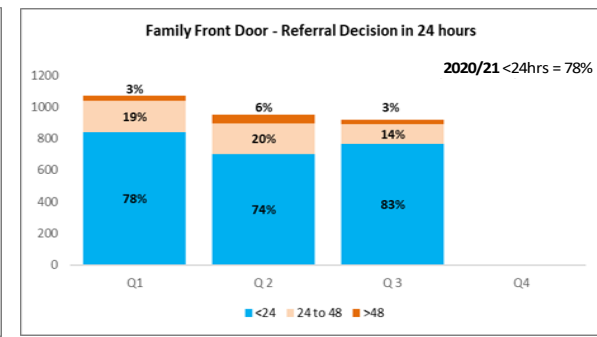
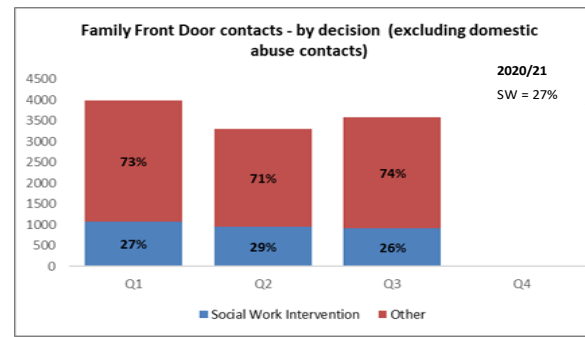
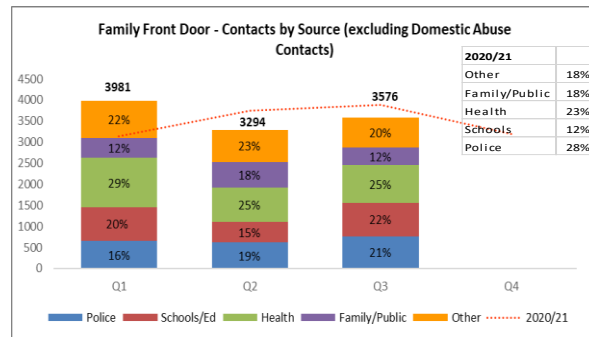
Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

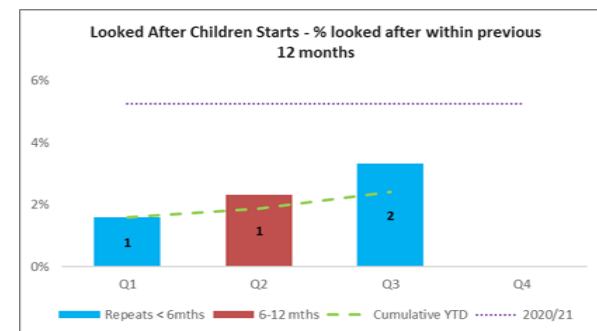
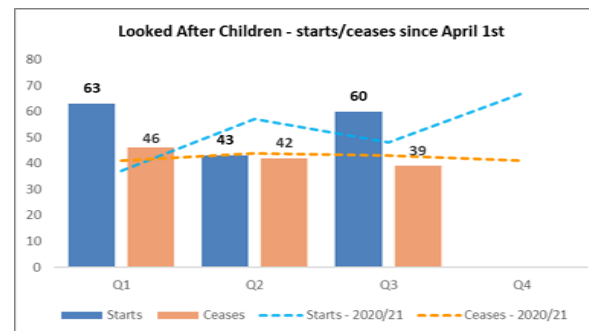
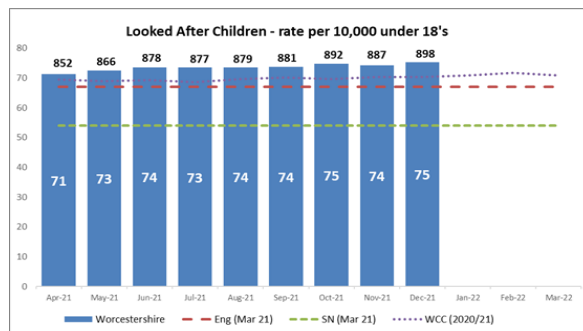
- Agendas and minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board on 22 July, 23 September and 19 November 2020 and 3 February and 21 July 2021
- Agendas and minutes of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 29 January, 16 July, 22 September and 12 November 2021, 17 July, 8 September, and 13 November 2020

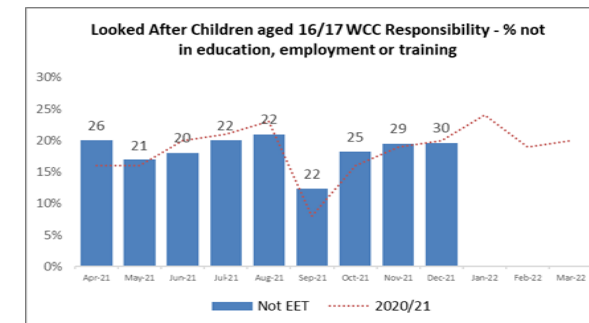
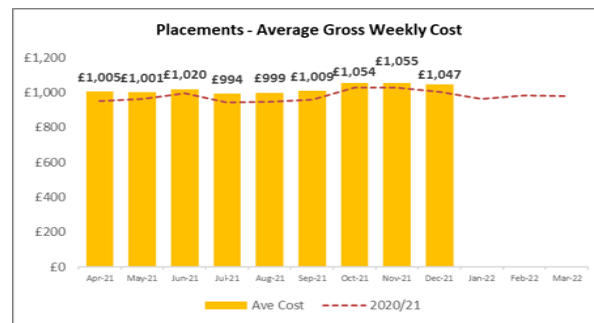
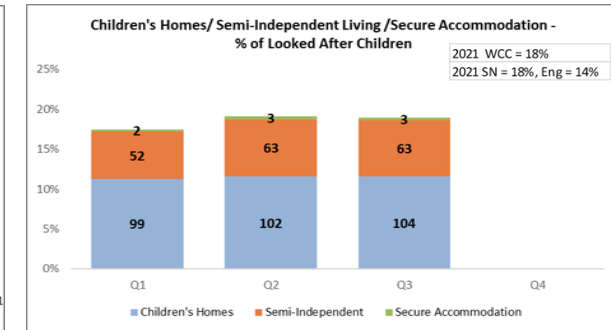
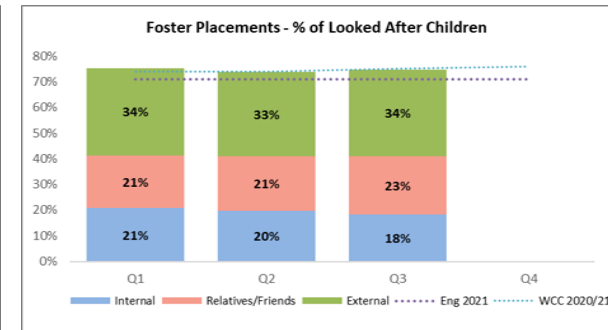
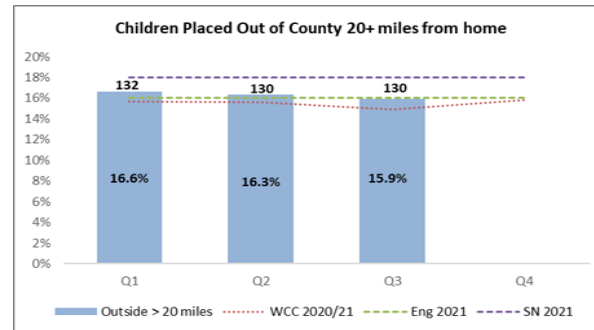
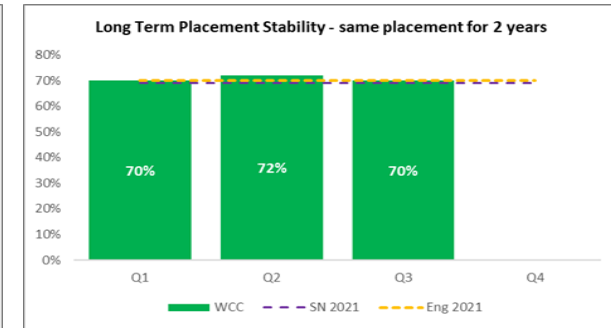
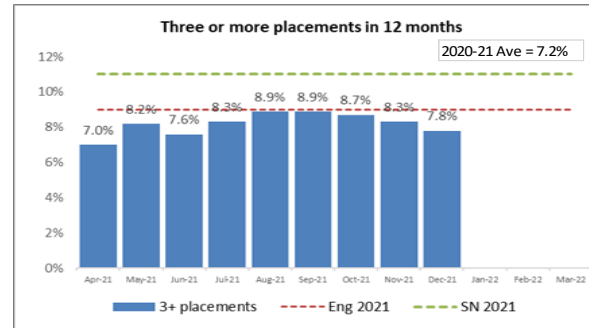
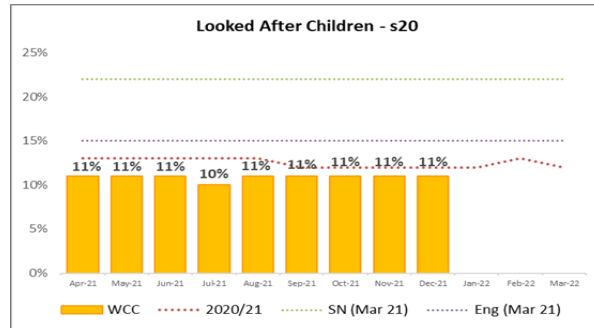
[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)

Family Front Door

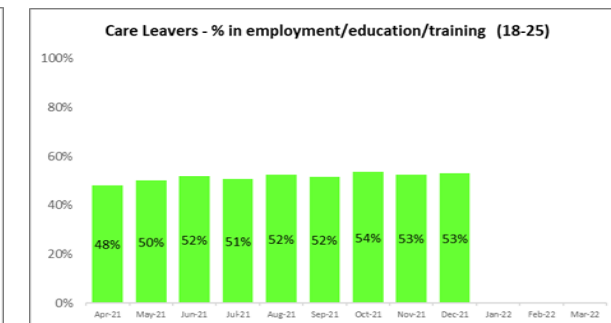


Through Care - Looked After Children and Care Leavers



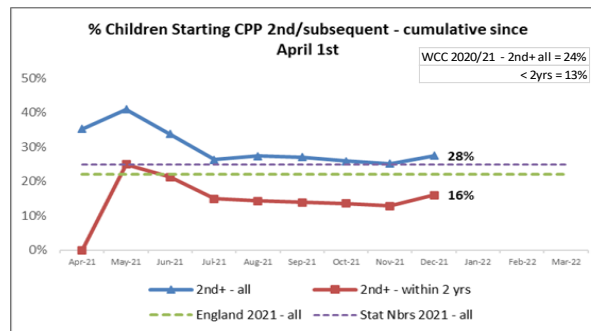
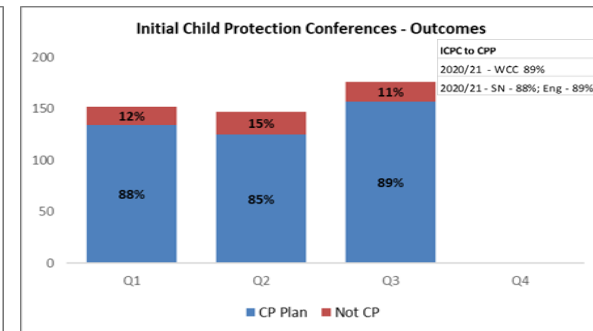
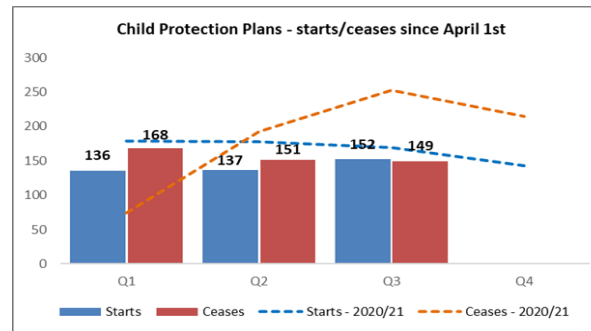
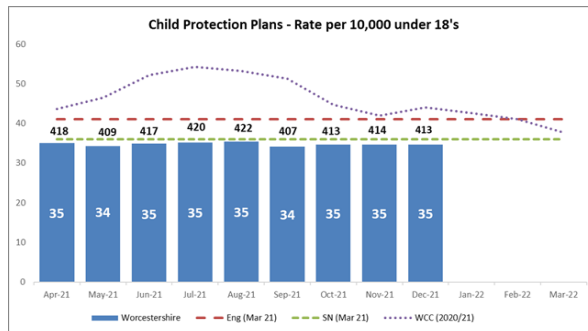


No comparator data is available for this indicator

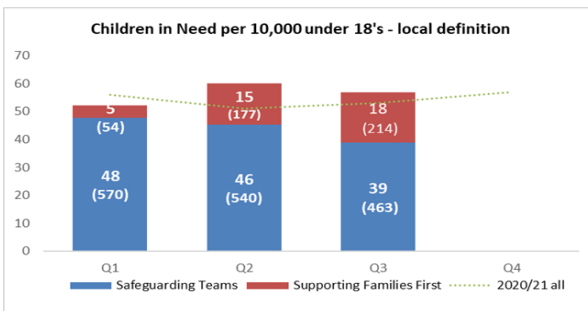


Care Leavers 19-21 in Employment, Education or Training as at 31 Dec 2021: **56%**. Latest comparative figure for age 19-21 using national annual snapshot methodology (2020/21) - Statistical Neighbours: **50%**, England: **52%**

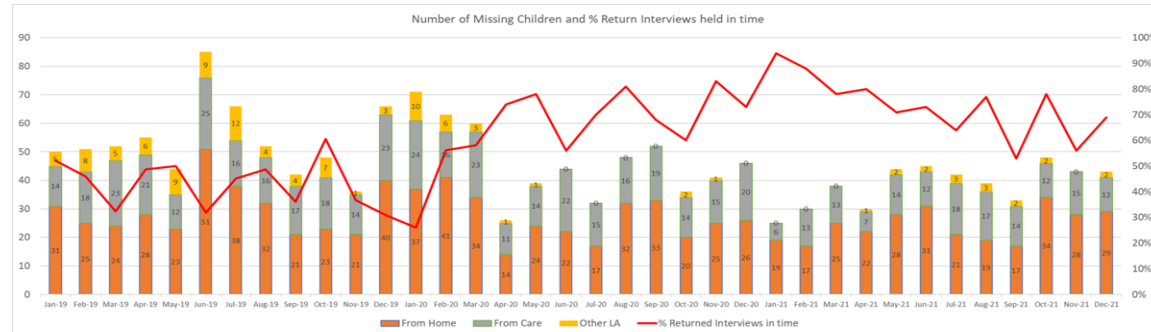
Child Protection

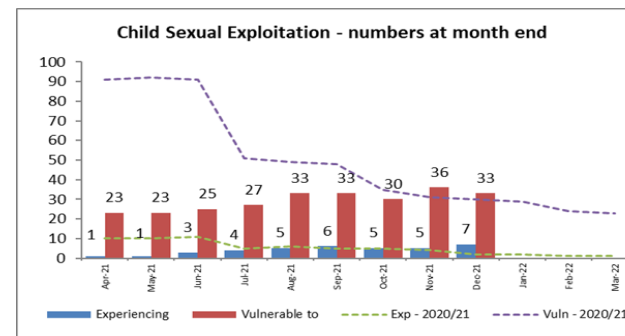
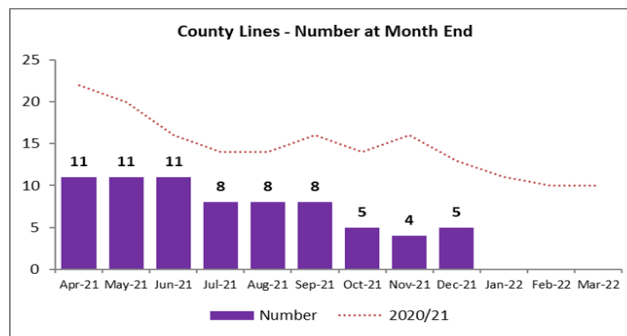


Children In Need

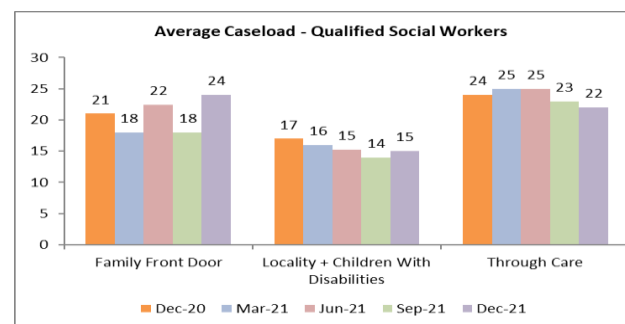
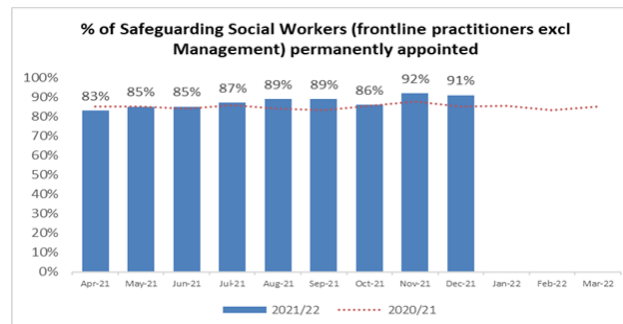


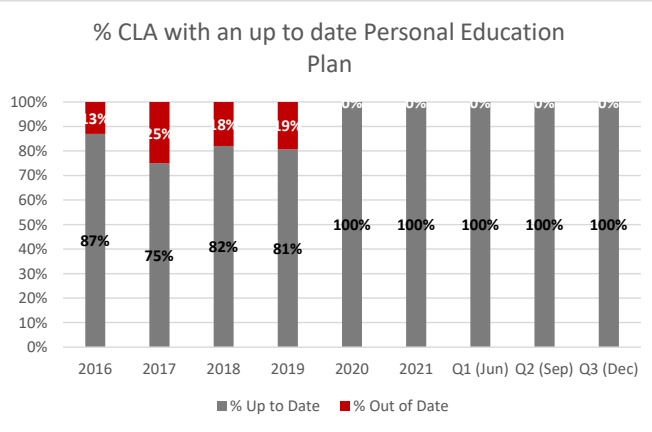
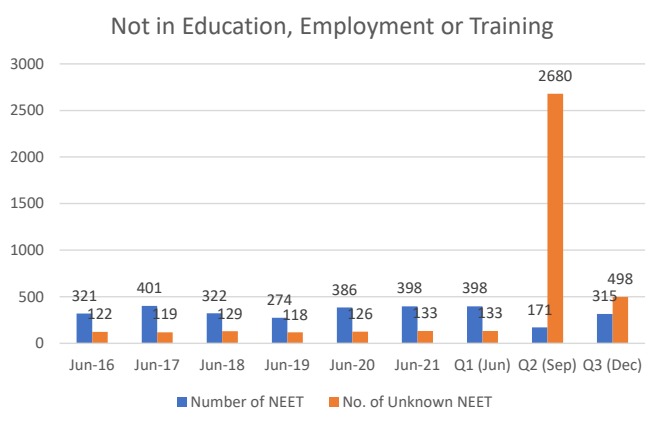
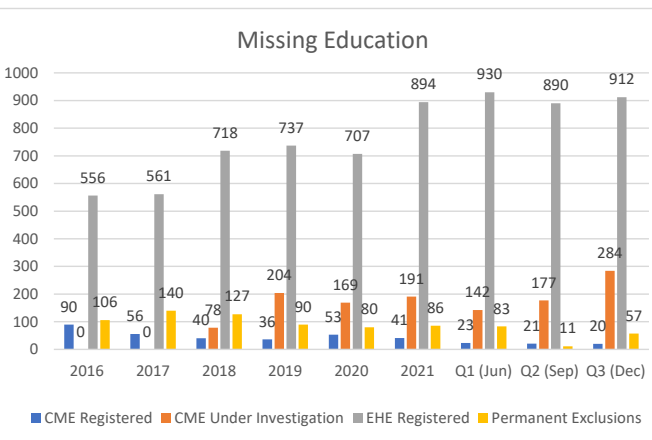
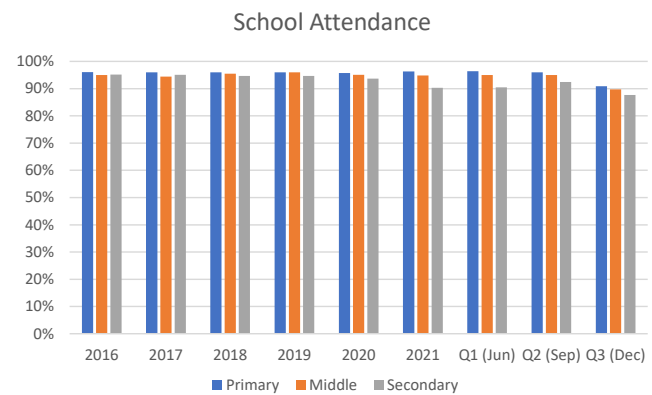
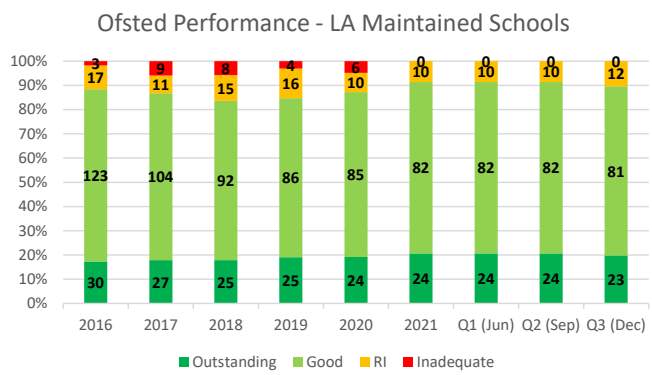
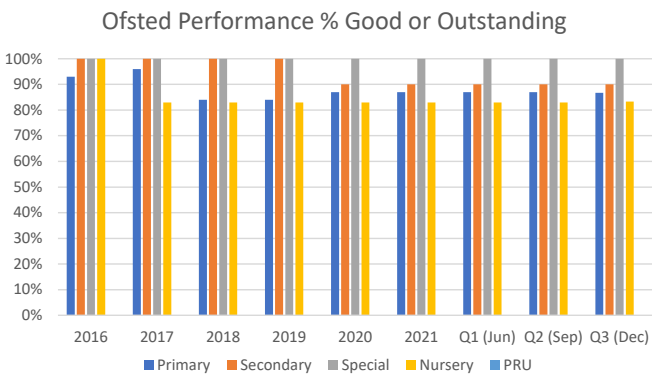
Child in Need Census (wide definition) - rate per 10,000 at 31 March 2021 - WCC= 269; Statistical Neighbours = 283; England = 321





Staffing





Ofsted Performance - % Good or Outstanding - All Schools by phase

As at end of Academic Year unless stated								
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Q1 (Jun)	Q2 (Sep)
Primary	89%	88%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%
Secondary	93%	96%	84%	84%	87%	87%	87%	87%
Special	100%	100%	100%	100%	90%	90%	90%	90%
Nursery	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
PRU	100%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%
All Worcs.	90%	90%	86%	84%	84%	84%	84%	82%
England	89%	89%	84%	86%	86%	86%	86%	87%

Ofsted grades - LA Maintained Schools

As at end of Academic Year unless stated								
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Q1 (Jun)	Q2 (Sep)
Outstanding	30	27	25	25	24	24	24	23
Good	123	104	92	86	85	82	82	81
RI	17	11	15	16	10	10	10	12
Inadequate	3	9	8	4	6	0	0	0
Total	173	151	140	131	125	116	116	116
% O & G	88.4%	86.8%	83.6%	84.7%	87.2%	91.4%	91.4%	89.7%

Ofsted - Free Schools and Academies

As at end of Academic Year unless stated								
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Q1 (Jun)	Q2 (Sep)
Outstanding	17	21	22	20	17	17	17	17
Good	43	62	66	73	77	79	79	79
RI	2	2	6	8	10	10	10	11
Inadequate	1	2	9	11	14	20	20	20
No Ofsted Judgement	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Total	63	87	103	112	119	127	127	128
% O & G	95.2%	95.4%	85.4%	83.0%	79.0%	75.6%	75.6%	75.0%

School Attendance

As at end of Academic Year unless stated								
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Q1 (Jun)	Q2 (Sep)
Primary	96.1%	96.0%	96.0%	96.0%	95.7%	96.3%	96.4%	90.9%
Middle	95.0%	94.4%	95.5%	96.0%	95.1%	94.8%	95.0%	89.7%
Secondary	95.2%	95.1%	94.7%	94.7%	93.7%	90.3%	90.5%	87.7%
PRU	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	65.4%	79.2%	66.0%
Special Schools	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	80.3%	79.9%	84.0%
National	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020			
Primary	96.0%	96.0%	95.8%	96.0%	n/a			
Secondary	94.8%	94.6%	94.5%	94.5%	n/a			

Missing Education

As at end of Academic Year unless stated								
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Q1 (Jun)	Q2 (Sep)
CME Under Investigation	n/a	n/a	78	204	169	191	142	284
CME Registered	90	56	40	36	53	41	23	20
CME Regd & Closed	n/a	n/a	116	134	158	123	108	39
EHE Registered	556	561	718	737	707	894	930	912
Permanent Exclusions	106	140	127	90	80	86	83	57

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET - 16 to 18 Year olds)

	Jun-16	Jun-17	Jun-18	Jun-19	Jun-20	Jun-21	Q1 (Jun)	Q2 (Sep)
Number of NEET	321	401	322	274	386	398	398	171
No. of Unknown NEET	122	119	129	118	126	133	133	2680

% School age Looked After Children with an up to date Personal Education Plan

As at end of Academic Year unless stated								
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Q1 (Jun)	Q2 (Sep)
% Up to Date	87%	75%	82%	81%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% Out of Date	13%	25%	18%	19%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Commentary

As expected, routine Ofsted inspections recommenced from September 2021.

Since September there have been eleven published inspection reports. Seven schools retained a 'Good' judgement, 1 school retained a 'Requires Improvement' judgement and 3 schools declined from 'Good' or 'Outstanding' to 'Requires Improvement'.

Of the eleven inspections, six were of primary/first schools, two were of special schools, two were of secondary schools and one was of a PRU.

All maintained schools judged to be 'Requires Improvement' will receive intensive support from the School Improvement Team that will include half termly 'team around the school' meetings to provide support and challenge regarding the school's improvement action plan.

Commentary

Pre-Covid, year on year, attendance had been the same or better for each phase and this is also reflected in National figures. The Q1 2021 figures were showing a return to pre-pandemic figures for Primary and close to pre-pandemic figures for Middle but Secondary figures continued to be affected especially by Yr 11 and Yr 13 students attendance once grading had been completed. In Q2 all phases attendance were all still affected by the pandemic with Secondary figures showing the largest drop. This decrease continued throughout Q3 with all phases being affected not only by absences due to Covid illness but wider mental health/anxiety issues. Please note: figures are based on attendance codes not on whether a student was physically in school during lockdown

Commentary

During the Q3 snapshot 284 Children Missing Education (CME) were each being supported by a CME caseworker either 'under investigation' to establish whereabouts and circumstances, or, as 'registered CME' cases. An additional 39 registered CME cases were successfully closed and reintegrated back into education within the same period. There has been a significant increase in the last quarter, and we are also finding that CME cases are becoming more complex than prior to Covid-19.

CME cases in Q3, (since September) have included parents/carers requiring assistance to re-register and reintegrate their children back into school following a period of Elective Home Education (EHE). CME officers continue to provide extensive support to families displaying ongoing covid related anxieties with regard to returning to the school environment.

Schools, partners, external agencies and the public continue to be encouraged to use centralised reporting mechanisms to provide details for the LA to identify, track, monitor and support CME.

The Missing Mondays multi agency forum continues to strategically support the most complex registered CME cases to collectively secure the best outcomes for each vulnerable learner and lessen days lost from education.

Our EHE numbers continue to rise, and at the end of Q3 there are 912 current EHE children and young people. We continue to support these families through our processes and support with a return to school when this is needed.

Commentary

Pre-Covid, NEET figures had been falling year on year due to the hard work of the team and working with stakeholders and identifying and removing barriers to participation where possible. The first Covid lockdown had an immediate impact on figures with a significant rise in June 2020. This has continued through 2021 with Q1 continuing to show this increase and is also affecting the 2021/22 academic year with Q3 continuing to show high NEET figures. This increase is considered to be due to disengagement and mental health issues caused by the impact of the pandemic. Please note: September Unknown Peak - Due to young people moving through education in September, there are a large number of unknowns that need to be tracked. Until these individuals are identified, the unknown figure remains high and is at its peak in September. This peak is understood by the DFE.

Commentary

Statutory School Age Personal Education Plan

All CLA Pre-school to Year 11 receive three Personal Education Plan (PEP) contacts from a Virtual School Learning Advocate each year. This supports our children/young people who attend school both in and out of Worcestershire. The (PEP) meeting is undertaken via Micorsoft Teams or face to face, this is dependent on the needs of the CLA and the context. The Designated Teacher (DT) and Social Worker (in consultation with the carer) are expected to upload relevant information to the (PEP) **prior to the meeting** and attend the meeting/consultation call. This enables effective conversations, focusing on evaluation of strategies to specifically meet the needs of individual CLA and methods of monitoring outcomes to measure success. Additional contacts are made throughout the term, with the DT, where transitions are imminent, complexity of situation or those identified as a result of (VS) pupil progress meetings. **There is a high rate of (PEP) completion each term (100%).** All (PEP) meetings scheduled to take place are completed. There is an improving quality of information in the (PEP) document due to: professional development for Designated Teachers and Social Care colleagues, clarity of information and expectations from the Virtual School (VS) and support / guidance offered by (VS) staff which impacts on the quality of information shared in the (PEP) process. The VS quality assures various aspects of the PEP process and content.

Post 16 Personal Progression Plans (PPPs)

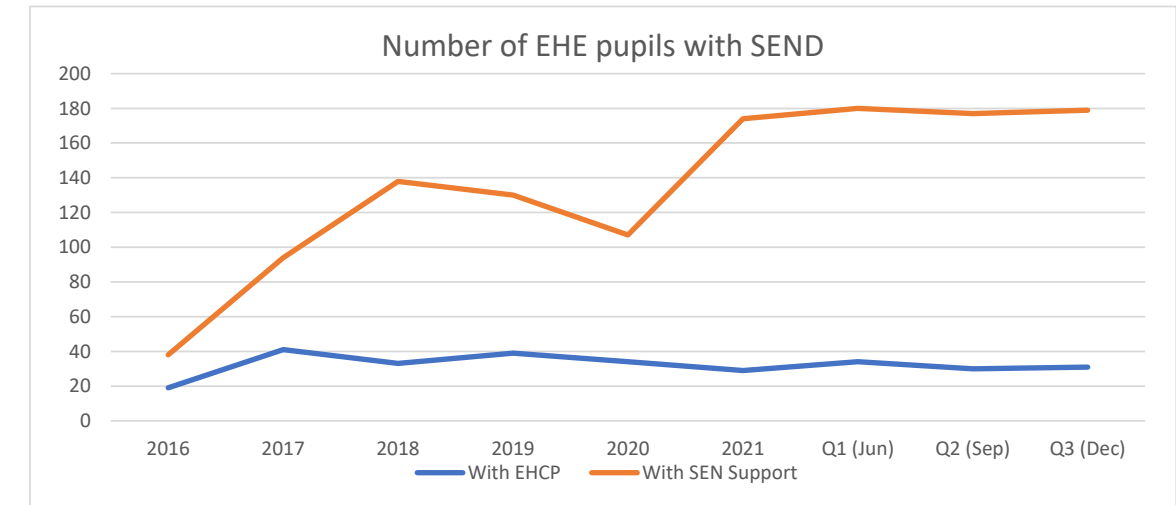
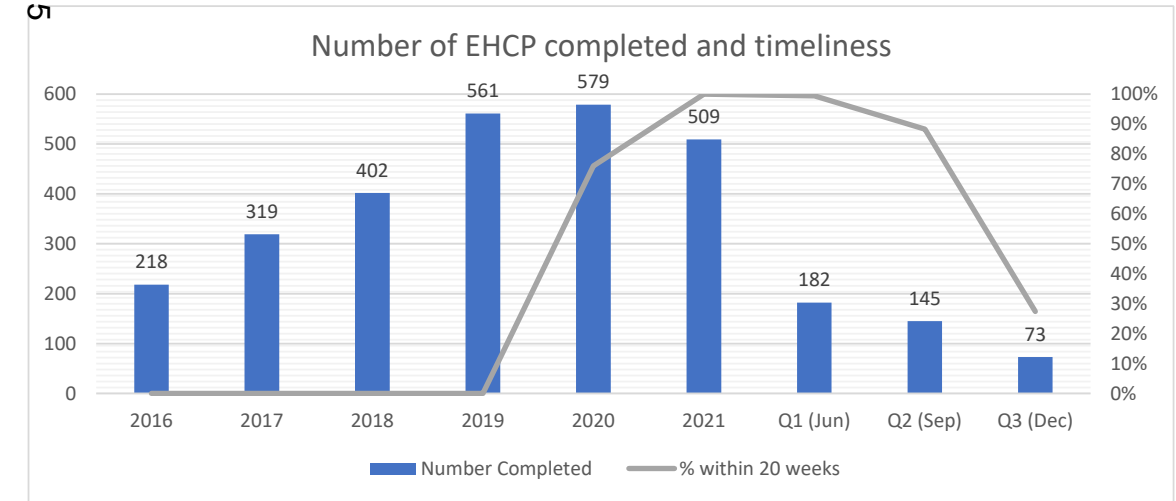
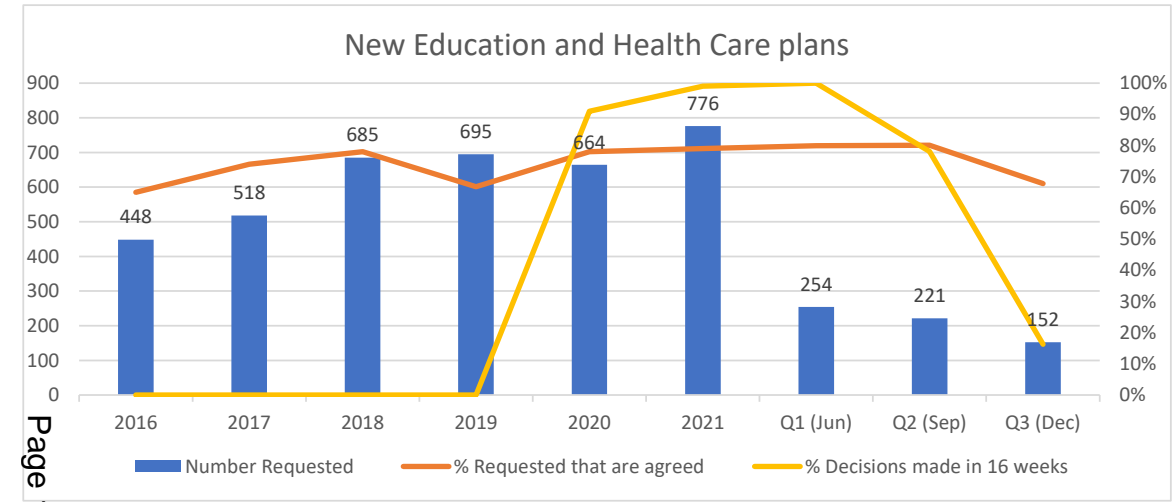
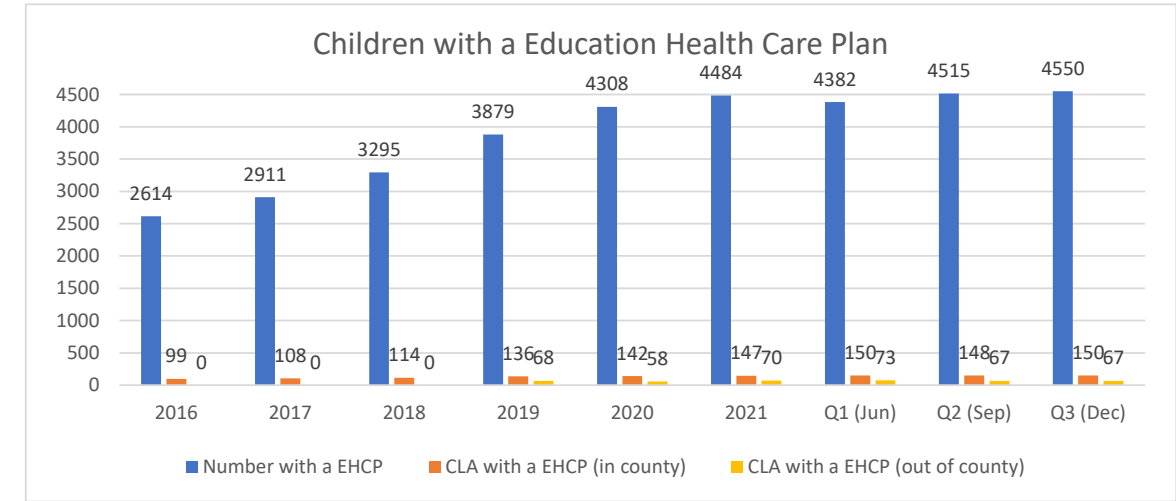
Folowing a successful pilot in summer term 2021 all year 12 and13 CLA have a scheduled (PPP) in Autumn term 2021. These are facilitated by VS Post 16 Learning Advocates. This is a new role within the VS. The Designated Practitioner/Teacher (DT) and Social Worker (in consultation with the carer) are expected to upload relevant information to the (PPP) **prior to the meeting** and attend the meeting/consultation call. All Post 16 CLA are on track to undertake PPP process each term.

Pupils Causing Concern

There are regular meetings with Social Care to discuss pupils at risk of CME, less than 25 hours of education and those where there is a delay in placing in school provision. Half termly pupil progress meetings are held within the (VS), these focus on pupils who are not making progress against their own challenging targets and those who have a negative approach to their learning. The discussions result in individual plans of action for prioritised CLA.

Quality Assurance

Half termly quality assurance activities focus on specific groups of CLA or themes, these reflect the priorities within the Virtual School Improvement Plan



Children with a Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

As at end of Academic Year unless stated									
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Q1 (Jun)	Q2 (Sep)	Q3 (Dec)
Number with a EHCP	2614	2911	3295	3879	4308	4484	4382	4515	4550
CLA with a EHCP (in county)	99	108	114	136	142	147	150	148	150
CLA with a EHCP (out of county)	n/a	n/a	n/a	68	58	70	73	67	67
CIN with a EHCP	n/a	n/a	n/a	74	113	65	79	72	66
CPP with a EHCP	n/a	n/a	n/a	16	22	24	24	22	18
EH plans with a EHCP	n/a	n/a	n/a	43	0 (covid)	31	42	32	39

New Education and Health Care Plans (Statutory Timescales minus exceptions)

As at end of Academic Year unless stated									
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Q1 (Jun)	Q2 (Sep)	Q3 (Dec)
Number Requested	448	518	685	695	664	776	254	221	152
% Requested that are agreed	65%	74%	78%	67%	78%	79%	80%	80%	68%
% Decisions made in 16 weeks (minus exceptions)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	91%	99%	100%	78%	16%

Number of EHCPs completed and % within 20 weeks (Statutory Timescales minus exceptions)

As at end of Academic Year unless stated									
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Q1 (Jun)	Q2 (Sep)	Q3 (Dec)
Number Completed	218	319	402	561	579	509	182	145	73
% within 20 weeks (minus exceptions)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	76%	100%	99%	88%	27%

Number of EHE pupils with SEND

As at end of Academic Year unless stated									
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Q1 (Jun)	Q2 (Sep)	Q3 (Dec)
With EHCP	19	41	33	39	34	29	34	30	31
With SEN Support	38	94	138	130	107	174	180	177	179

Commentary

The total number of EHCP has continued to increase over the last quarter as we had anticipated. The growth rate has started to reduce and plateau compared to the higher growth rate of previous years. There is national and local evidence that there maybe further increase in demand as a consequence of COVID on SEND need of SEMHE. The number of plans that cease can occur in any quarter but are more frequent in qtr. qrt1 & 2 at the ending of an academic year. The analysis Of children and young people with additional needs identified as CLA, CPP and CIN remains fairly consistent across the quarters

Number of requested agreed as returned to closer to previous years this quarter although the annual will be in line with the observed increase of the two previous years

The number of requests of assessment is still rising but at a slower rate. There has been a significant drop in performance of completing assessments within timescales. There was some significant staff turn over in June/July time that disrupted services but we are back at 87% of post permanently recruited to, and agency cover in place for others. Additionally the Group Manager responsible for oversight of timeliness left in early December. We have an excellent new agency GM, that is restoring that overview and we are revising the workflow to shift the balance of time from the first stage to second stage of assessments, starting in late February.

The improvements in performance achieved, have been badly effected by the recruitment challenges of EPs , due to National shortage, which affected obtaining educational psychology advice in a timely way. Actions have been taken to mitigate for any further risk with successful recruitment to vacant positions, by April anticipate being back at FTE 9.5 EPs. The EP service has developed a priority and recover plan to improve performance.

Commentary

The number of children with an EHCP who are EHE remains similar to previous quarter, but with smaller difference than quarter 1, which impart maybe explained by increase in choice of EHE following positive experiences of home schooling during COVID, either in parents enjoying and seeing progress for the child in a very focused, bespoke curriculum or from the reduction in stress by not having points of conflict of meeting external demands, ready in time for transport, school routines etc.

Appendix 2 – Budget Monitoring 2021/22 – December Q3

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel

10th March 2022

Dedicated Schools Grant December (Period 9) Budget Monitoring Position

DSG year-end position is a forecast overspend of £5.4m with a forecast deficit of £12m at the end of 2021/22:

		Overspends		
		R	Over 5%	
		A	1% to 5%	
		G	0 to 1%	
2021/22 Budget Monitoring Period 09 - December 2021	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	Variance
	£000	£000	£000	%
Schools DSG Block	124,528	124,528	0	0.0%
High Needs DSG Block	59,275	64,804	5,529	9.2%
Early Years DSG Block	36,476	36,476	0	0.0%
Central DSG Block	3,377	3,230	(147)	-4.4%
DSG	223,656	229,038	5,382	

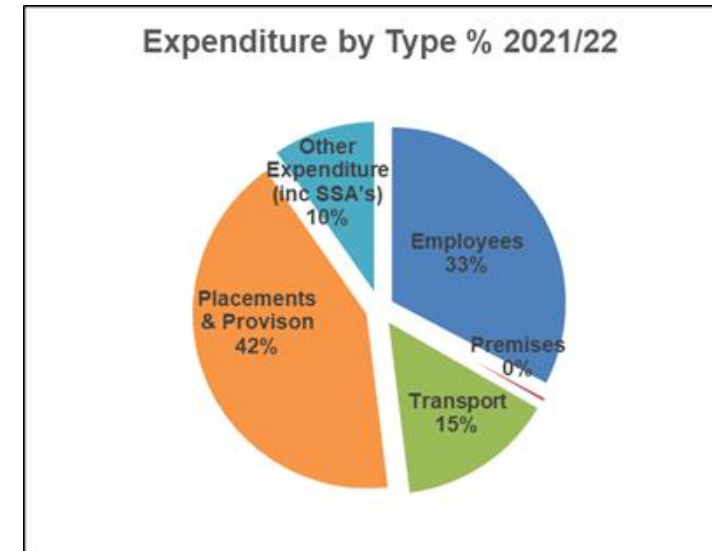
Summary Position for Dedicated Schools Grant	
	£m
Accumulated Deficit 1 April 2021	6.5
Projected High Needs Deficit 2021/22	5.5
Projected Saving on Other Blocks	-0.1
School Funding Position	0.0
Projected Accumulated Deficit 31 March 2022	11.9
Potential Future call on Early Years and Schools Block Pupil Growth	3.1
Projected High Needs Shortfall 2022/23	4.0
Projected Accumulated Deficit 31 March 2023	19.0

- Key pressures remain as previously reported to panel – specifically Out of County provision and Post-16 provision in the High Needs block. Worcestershire High Needs pressures are in line with known national picture.
- This deficit will sit on the WCC balance sheet as an unusable reserve and carried forward against future DSG income. In October 2019, the DfE introduced legislation to stop local authorities contributing to the DSG budgets, in effect allowing a negative balance to be carried forward. WCC will not be required or able, without the express permission of the government, to underpin the overspend on the DSG, however this legislation expires at the end of 2022/23 where this deficit will revert to the County Council.

Budget Overview 2021/22

- The full-year WCF budget is currently £128m of which over half is the 'demand led' budgets of Placements and Home to School Transport.

WCF Budget 2021/22	£000's
Employees	42,567
Premises	748
Transport	19,122
Placements & Provison	54,863
Other Expenditure (inc SSA's)	12,643
Gross Expenditure	129,943
Sales, Fees and Charges	-2,162
WCF Budget / Contract Price	127,781



- When we set the budget, we highlighted the inherent risk on placements could exceed the budget for 2021/22 of up to £2m and this will be mitigated by the £1.9m risk reserve and close monitoring will be required during the year and prompt action will be needed if performance and forecasts vary materially from budget.

Forecast Outturn at Qtr 3 2021/22 - £0.45m overspend or 0.4%

As at P9, WCF is forecast to have an in-year deficit of £0.45m, which is 0.4% of the contract sum. At the same point last year, the forecast was for a £0.2m deficit, which was eventually turned around by the Company to a small surplus position at year-end.

Worcestershire Children First Budget Monitoring Statement - by Expenditure Type

	Latest Budget £000	YTD £000	Full-year Projection £000	Variance £000	Variance %	Change since last month £000
Contract Income	127,781	105,983	127,781	0	0.00%	0
Government Grants	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0
Interest	0	0	2	2	0.00%	1
CCG Income	0	-750	0	0	0.00%	0
Sales, Fees and Charges	2,162	1,809	2,279	118	5.44%	73
Total Income	129,943	107,042	130,063	120	0.09%	73
<i>less expenditure</i>						
Employees	42,567	29,473	40,480	-2,087	-4.90%	-191
Premises	748	146	646	-103	-13.71%	-112
Transport	19,122	10,577	19,000	-122	-0.64%	-5
Supplies & Services	16,640	11,426	17,921	1,281	7.70%	254
Third Party Payments	50,848	40,655	53,069	2,221	4.37%	-201
Transfer Payments	4	0	3	-2	-40.91%	0
Education Payments	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0
Reserves	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0
Support Services	14	33	14	0	0.00%	0
Total Expenditure	129,943	92,309	131,131	1,188	0.91%	-256
Projected Surplus/(Deficit) before Corporation Tax	0	14,733	-1,069	-1,069		328

The story is very similar to last year – pressures on Placements for Looked After Children is causing an overspend in that area, which the service is attempting to mitigate by finding reductions in other areas. This is illustrated on the next page where the forecast is shown at service level.

Forecast Outturn at Qtr 3 2021/22 - £0.45m overspend or 0.4%

Worcestershire Children First Budget Monitoring Statement - by Service Heading

	Latest Budget £000	YTD £000	Full-year Projection £000	Variance £000	Variance %	Change since last month £000
WCF Management & Board	786	411	586	-200	-25.42%	-2
Training	191	55	164	-27	-14.02%	0
Resources Teams	4,331	2,225	4,082	-249	-5.74%	-7
Support Service Payments	7,531	5,661	7,507	-25	-0.33%	-25
Resources	12,839	8,351	12,339	-500	-3.89%	-33
CSC Safeguarding Services	12,410	9,154	13,211	801	6.45%	-46
Integrated Family Front Door	5,156	3,232	4,892	-264	-5.12%	-20
Placements & Provision	58,158	44,240	58,718	560	0.96%	-120
Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board	0	-9	0	0	0.00%	0
CSC Through Care	5,562	3,970	5,752	190	3.42%	-7
CSC Targeted Family Support	4,362	2,874	4,407	46	1.05%	-1
Social Care	85,649	63,462	86,981	1,333	1.56%	-193
Efficiency & Safeguarding	681	300	628	-54	-7.85%	-50
Quality and Improvement	1,867	1,021	1,875	8	0.43%	-79
SEND & Vulnerable learners	8,032	5,271	8,314	282	3.50%	27
Education and Early Help	10,580	6,592	10,816	236	2.23%	-102
Home to School Transport	18,206	11,057	18,206	0	0.00%	0
Home to School Transport	18,206	11,057	18,206	0	0.00%	0
Youth Offending Services	507	254	507	0	0.00%	0
Youth Offending Services	507	254	507	0	0.00%	0
TOTAL	127,781	89,716	128,850	1,069	0.84%	-328
Contract Income	127,781	105,983	127,781	0	0.00%	0
Covid Costs from Council	0	0	614	614	0.00%	0
Projected Surplus/(Deficit) before Corporation Tax	0	16,267	-455	-455		328

Resources Directorate is forecast to be underspent due to several posts held vacant and not expecting to be filled until the new Financial Year. Directorate restructure completed and £0.65m savings delivered. Takes account of savings from revised Senior Leadership Structure that went live on 1 October 2021.

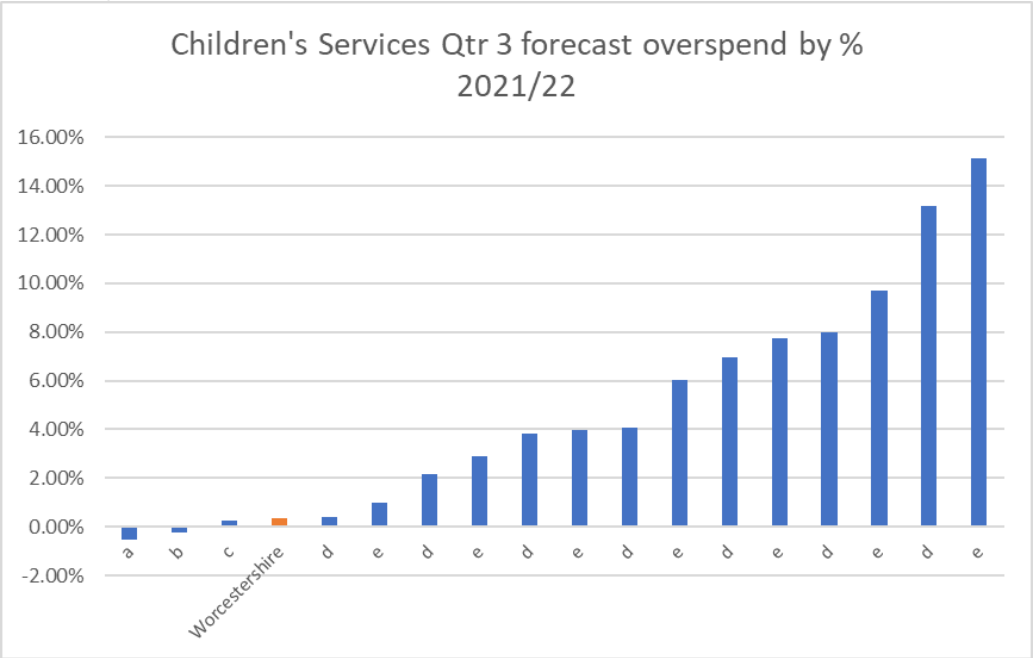
Social Care Service placements forecast overspent due to being demand led and to the high cost of some of these places. The success of other Social Care areas in terms of budgetary control (by holding vacancies where possible) continues. Whilst the external placement numbers are increasing locally and nationally. Our robust commissioning and management approach have resulted in cost avoidances which limited price increases. There are pressure on short breaks for children with disabilities, however this is avoiding some high-cost packages in place.

The forecast overspend in the Education and Early Help Directorate is driven by pressure on Educational Psychology, where there is an income shortfall forecast of around £0.020m, coupled with an increase in staffing costs as the service has a number agency arrangements in place.

The required savings of £2.95m have been delivered for 2021/22 – the increased trading income of £0.6m is forecast to achieved and orders placed from schools are slightly above target.

Comparison with Other Local Authorities Children's Services

- In comparison with OLA's WCF are managing well the pressures of this demand let budget.
- The chart below set out a range of LA's / Trusts forecast at Quarter 3.
- WCF show a positive outcome (£m forecast overspend at P9) against all below including statistical neighbours. Data anonymized as taken from Cabinet reports as all Council's report differently.
- WCF attended Staffordshire MTFS working group to share examples of our financial management and specifically our approach to placements and Children in Care.





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Any questions?

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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 10 MARCH 2022

WORK PROGRAMME

Summary

1. From time to time the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel will review its work programme and consider which issues should be investigated as a priority.

Background

2. Worcestershire County Council has a rolling annual Work Programme for Overview and Scrutiny. The 2021/22 Work Programme has been developed by taking into account issues still to be completed from 2020/21, the views of Overview and Scrutiny Panel Members and the findings of the budget scrutiny process.
3. Suggested issues have been prioritised using scrutiny feasibility criteria in order to ensure that topics are selected subjectively and the 'added value' of a review is considered right from the beginning.
4. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is responsible for scrutiny of:
 - Children's Social Care and Families
 - Public Health relating to Families
 - Education and Skills
5. The current Work Programme was agreed by OSPB on 21 July and was approved by Council on 9 September 2021.

Dates of Future Meetings

- 10 May 2022 at 2pm
- 7 July 2022 at 10am
- 20 September 2022 at 2pm
- 3 November 2022 at 10am

Purpose of the Meeting

6. The Panel is asked to consider the 2022 Work Programme and agree whether it would like to make any amendments. The Panel will wish to retain the flexibility to take into account any urgent issues which may arise.

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 – Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2022

Contact Points

Alyson Grice / Alison Spall, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844962 / 846607
Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance), the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes for Council on 9 September 2021
- Agenda and Minutes of OSPB on 21 July 2021

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme

Date of Meeting	Issue for Scrutiny	Date of Last Report	Notes/Follow-up Action
10 March 2022	Education Covid Recovery - impact on Educational Outcomes 2021 including Apprenticeships		
	Performance (Q3 October to December) and In-Year Budget Monitoring		
10 May 2022	Update on GET SAFE		To include the experience of young people who have experienced the service
	Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report		
Possible Future Items			
7 July 2022	Performance (Q4 January to March) and Year End Budget Monitoring		
20 September 2022	Performance (Q1 April to June) and In-Year Budget Monitoring		
3 November 2022	Performance (Q2 July to September) and In-Year Budget Monitoring		
TBC	Update on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Accelerated Progress Plan	23 February 2022	Following the Ofsted and CQC Joint Area Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Revisit in Worcestershire 1-3 November 2021 (initial Inspection 16 May 2018)
TBC	Worcestershire Children First Independent Fostering Service Ofsted Inspection (reinspection)	23 February 2022	

TBC	Delivery Model for Medical Education Provision – Update	16 March 2021	
TBC	Future of Youth Work in Worcestershire (was Positive Activities)		
TBC	Ofsted Inspecting local authority children’s services (ILACS) Inspection – Feedback from focused visit post July 2021	11 September 2019	ILACS inspection due post July 2022
TBC	Current organisation of Education within the County (2 tier/3 tier)		Requested by Panel 16 July 2021 To be considered when further KS2 data available
TBC	Vulnerable Learners (to include children missing education, Elective Home Education, Young People not in education, employment of training (NEETS), exclusions and alternative provision)		To remain on the work programme (Requested 12 Nov 2021). More up to date data requested
TBC	Update on the Assessment Pathway for children who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).		Requested by Panel 11 January 2022
TBC	All Age Disability (0-25) Service (ongoing Scrutiny of the transformation of the Service)	11 January 2021	(Jointly with Adult Care and Well Being O&S Panel) To provide feedback on consultation, timeline, KPIs. Consideration for reporting to be alternated between the two Panels.
Standing Items			
March	Education Performance outcomes		Annually
July	WSCP Annual Safeguarding Report		Annually
November/January	Budget Scrutiny		
March/July/September/November	Quarterly Performance and In-Year Budget Monitoring		

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