

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Tuesday 26 January 2021

at 4.00 pm

**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

PLEASE NOTE: this will be a 'remote meeting', a web-link to the public stream will be available on the Hartlepool Borough Council website at least 24 hours before the meeting.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE:

Councillors Hamilton, Harrison, Lauderdale, Lindridge, Little, Moore, Smith.

Co-opted Members: Jo Heaton, C of E Diocese and Joanne Wilson, RC Diocese representatives.

School Heads Representatives: Mark Tilling (Secondary), David Turner (Primary), Zoe Westley (Special).

Six Young Peoples Representatives

Observer: Councillor Little, Chair of Adult and Community Based Services Committee

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2020 (*previously circulated and published*).

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

No items.



5. KEY DECISIONS

- 5.1 Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block 2021/22 – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 5.2 Dedicated Schools Grant – School Budget Shares 2021/22 and Central School Services Block 2021/22 – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 5.3 School Admission Arrangements for 2022-23 – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020 – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 6.2 To Nominate a Local Authority Representative to Serve on the Governing Body of Throston Community Primary School – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Fostering Service Interim Report - 1 July 2020 – 30 September 2020 – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 2 March 2020 at 4.00 pm



CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

26 January 2021



Report of: Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning

Subject: DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT –
HIGH NEEDS BLOCK 2021/22

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

- 1.1 This report is for key decisions - test (i) and (ii) applies.
- 1.2 The forward plan reference is **CJCS 107/20**

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Members of the funding allocation for the High Needs Block in 2021/22 and to seek approval for the 2021/22 budget. The High Needs Block forms part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Updated High Needs Block funding allocations for 2021/22 were published in December 2020. As with other areas of the DSG, funding for the High Needs Block is via a National Funding Formula (NFF).
- 3.2 As with the Schools Block, the High Needs Block NFF for 2021/22 includes new funding for Teachers Pay Grant (TPG) and Teachers Pension Employer Contribution Grant (TPECG). Until April 2021, these grants were paid outside of the NFF to special schools and the Horizon School (Pupil Referral Unit).
- 3.3 By excluding the new TPG and TPECG funding so as to provide a like for like comparison, Hartlepool has benefited from a 12% (£1.563m) increase in 2021/22 (16% in 2020/21). This is the second successive year of significantly increased funding.
- 3.4 Council officers have started work to establish a three-year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for provision for pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

- 3.5 The MTFS will take a longer term view of forecast demand and level of need for pupils with SEND in Hartlepool. This will provide a clearer understanding of budget requirements and affordability of budget options over the three year period.
- 3.6 Upon completion, the MTFS will be shared with Schools' Forum and subsequently presented to this Committee for approval.
- 3.7 The increases in funding for 2020/21 and 2021/22 have allowed Schools' Forum to consider potential budget changes for 2021/22 in order to fund both maintained schools and special schools at a higher rate.

4 HIGH NEEDS BLOCK FUNDING 2021/22

- 4.1 The High Needs Block allocation for 2021/22 is shown in the following table.

High Needs Block		2021/22 Funding £m
DSG High Needs Block Allocation (before funding of academies)		14.769
Recoupment for academy funding		(2.080)
Total High Needs Funding 2021/22		12.689

- 4.2 Members are asked to note that final allocations remain subject to change, from changes known as import/export adjustments, during 2021/22 depending on volumes of pupils accessing provision outside of their home authority. These updates take place in June 2021.
- 4.3 Unlike recent years, no block transfer from the Schools Block to support the High Needs Block is proposed.

5. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK BUDGET PROPOSAL 2021/22

5.1 The planned high needs budget for 2021/22 is shown in the table below:

High Needs Block Budget Requirement 2021/22		£m
Place Funding - Maintained		1.366
Independent School Fees		3.081
Out of Authority Top-ups		0.482
Alternative Provision (including Horizon School)		0.753
Top-ups and Support		5.365
Post-16 Top-ups		0.720
High Needs Services		0.467
Contribution to Reserves (repay deficit)		0.173
Provision for MTFS proposals		0.282
Total Budget		12.689

- 5.2 Work to establish the three-year MTFS is underway. The MTFS will provide information to support planned budgets over a three-year planning period. Until the MTFS work is complete, any budget changes have been reviewed for 2021/22 only.
- 5.3 The planned budget at paragraph 5.1 includes two proposals for implementation for 2021/22 only, pending the completion of the three-year MTFS.
- 5.4 The first proposal is to increase the SEND top-up ranges payable to schools to fund additional provision and support for pupils with SEND. The top-up ranges were approved by this Committee and implemented during 2018/19. Rates have not been inflated since implementation in 2018/19 as high needs funding from government has been insufficient to cover the known budget requirement.
- 5.5 At their meeting on 9 December 2020, Schools' Forum voted unanimously to recommend application of inflation at the rate of 2.75% for each of the financial years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. This equates to inflation of an overall 8.5% to be applied in 2021/22 only.
- 5.6 The cost of this proposal in 2021/22 is estimated at £0.135m. This cost is considered fully affordable within the High Needs Block funding available.
- 5.7 The second proposal is to increase the level of Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) payable to special schools (Springwell Primary School and Catcote Academy). This Committee approved and implemented the MFG arrangement in 2018/19. Since 2020/21, the regulations have required that special schools receive protection of at least 100.00% of their prior year MFG budget. Authorities are able to provide protection of above 100.00% at Member's discretion.
- 5.8 At their meeting on 9 December 2020, Schools' Forum voted unanimously to recommend the application of protection at 103.00% - an additional 3%

above the minimum requirement within the regulations. Schools' Forum recommend that the additional 3% is applied across financial years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. This equates to inflation of an overall 9.3% to be applied in 2021/22 only.

- 5.9 The cost of this proposal in 2021/22 is estimated at £0.178m. This cost is considered fully affordable within the High Needs Block funding available.

6. RISK AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Although there is a high level of confidence regarding the affordability of budget proposals presented at paragraphs 5.5 and 5.8 of this report, this position may not be sustainable in future years.
- 6.2 To mitigate this risk, both proposals are restricted to one financial year (2021/22) whilst the MTFS is completed.
- 6.3 The MTFS will allow for a greater consideration of risk for the demand and complexity of SEND provision over a three-year planning period.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The local authority is required to set an annual budget for its High Needs Block.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 All schools have been consulted on budget proposals for the High Needs Block for 2021/22 via Schools' Forum.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 There are no specific child and family poverty considerations.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 There are no specific equality and diversity considerations.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no specific considerations.

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no asset management considerations.

13. CONCLUSIONS

- 13.1 The planned budget for high needs spending in 2021/22 is shown at paragraph 5.1 of this report.
- 13.2 The Council will receive an increase of 12% (£1.563m) for High Needs Block funding in 2021/22, following on from a 16% increase in 2020/21.
- 13.3 Schools' Forum are recommending two growth proposals for 2021/22 only as outlined in section 5 of this report. The proposals amount to a combined estimated cost of £0.313m.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 It is recommended that Members:
- a) note the contents of this report;
 - b) approve the recommendation from Schools' Forum to increase the SEND top-up ranges in 2021/22 at an estimated cost of £0.135m as described in paragraph 5.5 of this report;
 - c) approve the recommendation from Schools' Forum to apply an additional 3% protection to special schools MFG budget in 2021/22 at an estimated cost of £0.178m as described in paragraph 5.8 of this report;
 - d) approve the 2021/22 budget shown at the table in paragraph 5.1 of this report. Please note that the table assumes that recommendation b) and c) above are approved.

15. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 To ensure the local authority establishes an appropriate budget for High Needs in 2021/22 that meets expected demand.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 Schools' Forum report of 24 September 2020 – High Needs Block Budget Proposals 2021/22.
- 16.2 Schools' Forum report of 19 November 2020 – High Needs Block Budget Proposals 2021/22.

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Director of Resources and Development



Chief Solicitor



CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

26 January 2021



Report of: Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

Subject: DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT –
SCHOOL BUDGET SHARES 2021/22 AND
CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK 2021/22

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

- 1.1 This report is for key decisions – test (i) and (ii) applies.
- 1.2 The forward plan reference is CJCS 104/20. Key decisions relating to forward plan reference CJCS 106/20 are also included within this report.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide details of the 2021/22 schools block funding allocation and to propose school budget shares for 2021/22. The schools block funding forms part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) published indicative National Funding Formula (NFF) allocations for 2021/22 during July 2020. On 17 December 2020, updated allocations based on the October 2020 school census were released by ESFA.
- 3.2 The most significant change for 2021/22 is migration of the currently separate Teachers Pay Grant (TPG) and Teachers Pension Employer Contribution Grant (TPEGC) into the Schools Block NFF for mainstream schools.

- 3.3 Members will recall that Hartlepool agreed to adopt the “hard” formula that mirrors the NFF. This approach continues to be supported by the Schools’ Forum for 2021/22.
- 3.4 In adopting the “hard” formula, local authorities are still required to consider how they set their individual school budgets (ISBs) for 2021/22. Any transfers to and from the schools block from other DSG blocks must be considered. Also, a local approach to setting a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) and Cap must be agreed and implemented.
- 3.5 Consultation on setting individual school budgets (ISBs) took place with Schools’ Forum during September and October 2020. These discussions were on the basis of the indicative NFF published in July 2020.
- 3.6 At their meeting on 22 October 2020, Schools’ Forum voted in favour of applying the maximum possible MFG, without an associated cap. The regulations allow an MFG of up to 2%.
- 3.7 Unlike recent years, no block transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block is proposed. Schools’ Forum agreed to the transfer of £0.199m from the Central School Services Block (CSSB) to the Schools Block. The transfer represents CSSB funding remaining, after planned expenditure on historic and ongoing commitments.

4. 2021/22 INDICATIVE SCHOOLS BLOCK FUNDING

- 4.1 The following table shows the Hartlepool schools block allocation of £70.779m for 2021/22 based on October 2020 census numbers.
- 4.2 To provide a meaningful comparison with 2020/21 funding, the new TPG and TPECG funding for 2021/22 of £2.987m is removed. This shows an increase of £1.912m for 2021/22, or 2.90%.

Schools Block	Pupil Numbers (Oct 2020)	2021/22 Funding (£m)
Primary	7,812	36.904
Secondary	5,507	33.054
Premises		0.604
Growth		0.217
NFF Schools Block 2021/22		70.779
Less TPG and TPECG Funding		(2.987)
Net of TPG and TPECG Funding		67.792
NFF Schools Block 2020/21		65.880
Funding increase		1.912
Percentage increase in funding		2.90%

- 4.3 Unit values for basic per pupil funding (known as AWPU) have been increased by 3% from the current financial year, along with similar increases across other formula factors.
- 4.4 The guarantee of a minimum per-pupil funded amount per school remains within the NFF for 2021/22. The minimum per pupil funding levels in 2021/22 have increased to £4,180 (from £3,750) for all primary schools and £5,415 (from £5,000) for all secondary schools. However, these increases include the £180 (primary) and £265 (secondary) for TPG and TPECG.
- 4.5 As with the 2020/21 NFF, in addition to the guarantee of a minimum per-pupil funded amount, the funding floor calculation will ensure that all schools receive a minimum 2% increase compared to their 2020/21 baseline pupil-led funding per pupil in 2021/22.
- 4.6 Before any block transfers, the minimum funding guarantee for Hartlepool is estimated to be £0.304m. This amount reflects the 2021/22 level of ESFA protection against the hard formula. This amount has significantly reduced owing to annual increases against core formula factors. In 2019/20, the protection was £1.363m and this reduced to £0.512m in 2020/21. If government were to implement the NFF fully, schools block funding for Hartlepool could reduce by this estimated £0.304m. This is sometimes referred to as the “cliff edge”.

5. PROPOSED BLOCK TRANSFERS

- 5.1 The Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) of the DSG funds local authorities for the statutory duties and other commitments they hold for maintained and academy schools.
- 5.2 CSSB funding of £0.769m for 2021/22 (£0.828m in 2020/21) has been confirmed based on October 2020 census numbers. The historic cost element of the CSSB (originally approximately 50% of the block) has been reduced by 20% in 2021/22 for the second successive year as part of government's strategy to gradually remove funding for historic items that are expected to reduce in cost over time.
- 5.3 Although a number of historic items for Hartlepool no longer require CSSB funding, there are two historic items remaining that will not reduce or come to an end in the short to medium term. These relate to the school contribution to licences and the pension costs associated with the former Brierton school closure. Although the government's 20% reduction will eventually result in a financial pressure, this is not expected to materialise until 2025/26.
- 5.4 Schools' Forum is required to agree each element of spending against the CSSB on an annual basis. At their meeting on 24 September 2020, Schools' Forum agreed to fund the elements amounting to £0.570m shown in the table below and for the balance of CSSB funding (£0.199m) to be transferred to the schools block for 2021/22.

Historic Commitments		£m
Licenses		0.067
Termination of Employment costs		0.031
Total		0.098
Ongoing Responsibilities		£m
Retained Education Services		0.229
Admissions		0.136
Copyright licences		0.071
Servicing Schools Forum		0.036
Total		0.472
Grand Total		0.570

6. INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL BUDGETS

- 6.1 At their meeting on 22 October 2020, Schools' Forum voted unanimously to apply an MFG of 2.0% (the maximum allowed), with no school being capped.
- 6.2 The table below summarises the proposed individual school budgets for 2021/22. Individual school budgets for 2021/22 would mirror the NFF plus the transfer of funding from CSSB. The increase from 2020/21 budgets excludes the new TPG and TPECG funding to provide a meaningful comparison.

School Budget Shares 2021/22	Proposed Budget £m
Schools Block funding (ESFA)	70.779
Transfer-in from CSSB	0.199
School Budget Shares Proposed 2021/22	70.978
TPG and TPECG funding	(2.987)
School Budget Shares Proposed 2021/22 (excl TPG and TPECG funding)	67.991
School Budget Share Increase from 2020/21 (£m)	2.163
School Budget Share Increase from 2020/21 (%)	3.3%

7. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 If individual school budgets are not approved, the local authority may not meet its statutory requirement to notify the ESFA of individual school budgets by 21 January 2021. In addition, individual schools will not be able to plan their budgets.
- 7.2 Members are asked to note that budget details can be submitted to ESFA by the deadline, stating the planned approval date as the date of this Committee.

8. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 As outlined in this report, although protection of £0.304m of schools funding is confirmed for 2021/22, there is uncertainty regarding this protection if the government imposes the hard formula from 2022/23 or beyond.

9. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The local authority is required to consult all schools on annual changes to their formula, along with any proposed block transfers.

10. CONSULTATION

- 10.1 All schools have been consulted on individual budget share options for 2021/22 via Schools' Forum.

11. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no specific child and family poverty considerations.

12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no specific equality and diversity considerations.

13. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 There are no specific considerations.

14. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 14.1 There are no asset management considerations.

15. CONCLUSIONS

- 15.1 The government funding arrangements for Schools Block in 2021/22 include a guaranteed 2% increase for each school in comparison to their 2020/21 baseline. For Hartlepool schools, this 2% provides protection estimated at £0.304m.
- 15.2 Following consultation, Schools' Forum recommended a block transfer of £0.199m from the CSSB.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- a) Note the contents of this report;
- b) Note the agreement by Schools' Forum to centrally retain funding of £0.570m, with the residual £0.199m being transferred to the schools block as detailed in paragraph 5.4;
- c) Agree the MFG to be used for 2021/22 as outlined in paragraph 6.1 of this report and noting the recommendation from Schools' Forum of applying an MFG of 2%;
- d) Approve the individual school budget share for 2021/22 as summarised in the table at paragraph 6.2 of this report.

17. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 17.1 It is a statutory requirement for local authorities to consult and agree individual school budget allocations so that figures can be confirmed to ESFA by the deadline of 21 January 2021. Members are asked to note that figures will be provided to ESFA by the deadline, stating the planned date of approval as the date of this Committee. The submission will assume that the recommendations listed at section 16 of this report are agreed.

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 18.1 Schools' Forum reports of 24 September 2020 and 22 October 2020.

19. CONTACT OFFICERS

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 Director of Resources and Development
 Chief Solicitor



CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

26 January 2021



Report of: Director of Children's & Joint Commissioning Services

Subject: SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS
FOR 2022-23

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key Decision test (ii) applies. Forward Plan Reference Number: CJCS 108/20

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To consider and agree the proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Hartlepool for 2022-23 academic year. As the local authority, the Council is the admission authority it is therefore responsible for determining the admission arrangements for these schools.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 It is a mandatory requirement of the national School Admissions Code that all schools must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted to schools, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school (oversubscription). Admission arrangements are determined by admission authorities. The local authority (LA) is the admission authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, while the Governing Body is the admission authority for Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools, and the relevant Trust for an Academy or Free School.

3.2 All admission authorities must set admission arrangements and their published admission number annually. Where changes are proposed to admission arrangements, the admission authority must first consult on those arrangements. If there are no changes proposed they only need to be consulted on at least every seven years. Consultation must be for a minimum of six weeks and must take place between 1 October and 31 January of the school year before those arrangements are to apply. The consultation period

allows parents and carers, other schools, religious authorities and the local community to raise any concerns about proposed admission arrangements.

4. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 It is a statutory requirement of all admission authorities must determine arrangements every year, even if they have not changed from previous years and a consultation has not been required. Admissions authorities must determine admissions arrangements for entry in September 2022 by 28 February 2021 and these must be published on their website for the whole offer year. The LA must receive a copy of the admission arrangements of other admission authorities, including Academies, before 15 March in the determination year and provide details on its website of where these can be viewed. Information on how to refer objections to the Schools' Adjudicator (which must be made by 15 May 2021) will also be available on the website.
- 4.2 The LA must publish online, with hard copies available for those who do not have access to the internet, a composite prospectus for parents by 12 September 2021, which contains the admission arrangements for each of the state-funded schools in the LA area to which parents and carers can apply.

5. PROPOSALS - CONSULTATION FOR ADMISSIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2022-23 ACADEMIC YEAR

- 5.1 It has been seven years since consultation took place for community and voluntary controlled schools (please refer to 3.2 above). During that time no changes have been proposed. However, for the 2022-23 academic year, minor changes to admissions arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools are proposed. These being:
- a) introduction of a new criterion for children previously in state care outside of England, to coincide with recent advice from the Department for Education;
 - b) removal of reference to children with a Statement of Special Education Needs, as statements have now been replaced fully by Education, Health and Care Plans;
 - c) removal of reference to ordnance survey address point;
 - d) explanation of the process to be used to decide between two or more applications that cannot otherwise be separated. For example, two applicants who live at an equal distance from the school, ie, a block of flats. The Local Authority's computerised system will use random selection.
- 5.2 Consultation on these proposals took place during the autumn term 2020. One response was received which didn't object to the proposed changes above but made comments on current over-subscription criteria. The points raised and responses provided are detailed below:

- 5.2.1 To review use of the straight-line measurement tool and investigate other digital tools that reflect the actual journey and take into account physical features such as walls, fences, streams etc.. This may assist with the tie-breaker.

Response: Prior to 2014-15, the oversubscription distance measurement was shortest safest walking route. Using this method proved extremely challenging in that there were instances where a significant number of routes to a particular school could be taken. Following consultation and formal approval, the straight-line measurement method was introduced. A large number of admission authorities use the straight-line method and we feel this is the fairest way to allocate places if oversubscribed on a particular criteria.

- 5.2.2 To update admission boundary maps, to reflect current street names to provide clarity on the actual school admission zone (current map attached).

Response: During the main primary round of admission, parents receive notification of the school admission zone in which they reside. This enables them to make an informed choice of which preference(s) to request. Residing within a particular schools' admission zone doesn't always guarantee a place at that school. All dwellings which are located within boundary are currently within your school admission zone. Unfortunately there was no attachment to your email but I am familiar with the map you refer to. Housing developments within Hartlepool are still to be completed, therefore the zones are likely to be reviewed as the developments progress. This will also provide us with an opportunity to update the map.

- 5.2.3 To consider moving Criteria 5 above Criteria 4.

Response: We wouldn't envisage moving the Exceptional Social/Medical criterion (currently proposed 5) above Admissions Zone (currently proposed 4) as it's very rare that a pupil's social or medical needs could only be met at one particular school.

- 5.3 The published admission numbers (which haven't changed) for each Community and Voluntary Controlled schools is detailed in **APPENDIX 1** to this report which Committee are asked to approve.
- 5.4 The admission arrangements including the proposed over-subscription criteria in respect of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools are included in **Appendix 2**.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 No material financial implications.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There will be a breach of statutory duty imposed on the LA if admission arrangements for 2022/23 are not determined by 28 February 2022.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Admissions Forum briefing paper (November 2020) explained that consultation was taking place for admissions arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools.

9. CHILD AND POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 There are no child and poverty considerations.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 There are no equality and diversity considerations.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no staff considerations.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 Members are recommended to agree the following in respect of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, when determining the admission arrangements for 2022/23:
- that the admission numbers (which haven't changed), as recommended in **Appendix 1**, be approved
 - that the admission arrangements, detailed in **Appendix 2**, be approved

13. CONTACT OFFICER

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Sign Off:-

Director of Finance and Policy



Chief Solicitor





PROPOSED ADMISSION NUMBERS 2022/23

Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools	2022/2023
Clavering Primary School	60
Fens Primary School	60
Golden Flatts Primary School	30
Grange Primary School	50
Greatham C of E Primary School	15
Kingsley Primary School	60
Lynnfield Primary School	55
Rift House Primary School	36
Rossmere Primary School	55
St. Helen's Primary School	45
Throston Primary School	60



Hartlepool Borough Council
School Admissions Arrangements
2022/23

**ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR
COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS
PROPOSED ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR 2022/23**

The admissions policy for entry to community and voluntary controlled primary schools, effective from 2022/23 admissions round, is as follows:

In accordance with the Education Act (1996), children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan are required to be admitted to the school named in the Plan.

The remaining places will be awarded in the following priority order:

Oversubscription Criteria:

1. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order¹.
2. Children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted².
3. Those children who have brothers or sisters who will be attending the school at the time of admission;
4. Those children who live in the school's admission zone;
5. Those children who are distinguished from the great majority of other applicants whether on medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances and who would suffer significant hardship if they were unable to attend the school;
6. Those children who live closest to the school as determined by a straight line distance measurement; from the address point for the child's home to the address point of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

¹ A looked after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority in England, or is being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

An adoption order is an order made under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

A child arrangement order is an order made outlining arrangements as to the person with who the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989.

Special guardianship order is an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians (Section 14A of the Children Act 1989).

² A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

Tie-breaker:

If more children qualify under a particular criterion than there are places available, priority will be given to those children who live closest to the school (as described under criteria 6). Should it not be possible to separate two or more applications, for example, two applicants who live at an equal distance from the school, the Local Authority's computerised system will use random selection.

Definitions:

Sibling: Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/guardian's partner and, in every case, the child should be living in the same family unit at the same address. In all cases the responsible parent will hold the child benefit for those children permanently living at that address. A brother or sister living at the same address must be attending the preferred school at the same time as the child who is applying. *Please note, this criteria only applies to siblings who are of compulsory school age, not younger siblings who attend a nursery setting attached to a school*

Twins or multiple birth children: If you have more than one child who are twins or part of a multiple birth going through the application process this year, you must make a separate application for each child and indicate on each online or paper form that your child has a sibling also going through the process. For community and voluntary controlled schools, we will offer a place to the other child(ren) if one of your twins/multiple birth children is offered the last place available and you have applied to the same school for the other child(ren).

Distance: Distance will be measured by a straight line measurement from the address point of the child's home address to the address point of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

Admission Zone: All Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Hartlepool have a defined geographic area called an Admission Zone. Do not assume that you live within a particular school's admission zone as some streets are split. To find out which admission zone you live in contact the School Admissions Team on telephone number 01429 523765 or 01429 523768. Please note, a child is not guaranteed a place at an admission zone school.

Medical Grounds/Exceptional Circumstances: A panel of specialist officers will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this criterion. If you think your child has a particular medical or social need to go to a certain school, you must provide supporting evidence from a doctor, psychologist or other professional involved with your child. The supporting evidence must relate specifically to the school you are claiming medical grounds/exceptional circumstances for, and clearly demonstrate why it is only that school that can meet your child's needs in a way that no other school can. If you are applying on-line for a place under this criterion, please send your supporting evidence to the Admissions Team by the National closing date, which should include your child's name and date of birth.

NB: Exceptional social reasons do not, in the view of the Authority, include domestic inconvenience arising from parents' work patterns, child-minding problems, separation from particular nursery/primary school friends. Problems of this kind are widespread and cannot be classed as exceptional. Medical reasons do not include temporary conditions. They are permanent medical conditions which require special treatment available at the preferred school only. Medical evidence must be provided and the Authority's officers must be satisfied that the child would suffer to a significant degree if he/she went to any other school.

NOTES:

Criteria 1 Applications

- Applications from children who are looked after must be accompanied by a letter from the Social Worker confirming the legal status of the child and the reasons for the school preferences. Any change of legal status and/or placement arrangements must be notified to the Admissions Team.
- Applications for previously looked after children must be accompanied by a copy of any Special Guardianship Order, Adoption Order or Child Arrangements Order.

Criteria 2 Applications

Applications for children previously in state care outside of England must provide evidence of their child's previously looked after status with accompanying paperwork to evidence this eg a UK adoption order or a copy of the adoption order from the child's country of origin.

Criteria 3 Applications

To obtain a school place under the sibling criteria the sibling must still attend the school at the time when the child for whom the place is sought joins the school. This criterion only applies to siblings who are of compulsory school age, not younger siblings who attend a nursery setting attached to a school.

Criteria 5 Applications

A panel of officers will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the requirements for this rule. The evidence must relate specifically to the school applied for under Criteria 5 and must clearly demonstrate why it is the only school that can meet the child's needs. Criteria 5 applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application, unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.

All schools in Hartlepool have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school. Few applications under Criteria 5 are agreed. All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

- specific professional evidence that justifies why only one school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or
- professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet the child's needs
- if the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate
- medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only one specific school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate.

Examples of cases which have been accepted under Criteria 5

- A child with limited mobility who is only able to walk to their nearest school, as their admission zone school is further away.
- A child for whom only one school is suitable due to child protection issues.

Examples of cases which have not been accepted under Criteria 5

- Case made for continuity of child minding arrangements, such as using a childminder that children are already familiar with who caters for children attending certain schools, or childminding by family members living close to a specific school. These cases were not upheld because they are not exceptional. Many families rely on complex childminding arrangements.

- Cases made for children with specific learning and/or behavioural needs where the professional evidence submitted is not school specific. All schools are able to support children with a wide variety of individual needs. If a child's individual needs warrant an Education, Health and Care Plan, this will name the appropriate school.
- Medical cases where even though there is a severe illness, more than one school could deal with the child's needs.

How to apply under Criteria 5

- Parents/guardians should submit all relevant information including professional evidence, with their application. If applying online, written information should be received before the closing date for applications and include the child's name and date of birth. Information provided after the closing date will only be considered when there are significant changes of circumstances.
- Applications under Criteria 5 will only be considered when supported by a letter from a professional involved with the child or family, for example, a doctor, psychologist or police officer. Supporting evidence should demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child or family.
- Applications under Criteria 6. Should it not be possible to separate two or more applications the Local Authority's computerised system will randomly select.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

26th January 2021



Report of: Director of Childrens and Joint Commissioning Services

Subject: CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT 2020

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide members with the latest findings of The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020 attached as **Appendix 1**.

2.2 For members to approve the publication of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020 attached as **Appendix 1**.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Childcare Act 2006 and 2016 provides the legal framework for the Local Authority's (LA) duties in relation to early years and childcare. The duties are made clear in the Department for Education's 'Early education and childcare: statutory guidance for local authorities, June 2018'.

3.2 There is a statutory requirement to undertake an annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and to share the findings with elected members.

4. LOCAL AUTHORITY DUTIES

4.1 In brief the LAs statutory duties include:

- securing sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents

- securing prescribed early years provision free of charge for eligible children aged 2,3 and 4 years
- providing information, advice and assistance to parents
- providing information, advice and training to childcare providers
- preparing and publishing an annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

5. EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

5.1 Childcare information is available to parents in a number of ways; this includes 'Hartlepool Now' which can be accessed at www.hartlepoolnow.co.uk and via Ofsted at www.gov.uk/find-registered-childminder. Parents that do not have access to the internet can contact The Early Years and Childcare Team on 01429 284881 for all their childcare information needs.

5.2 The early education and childcare national offer can be summarised as follows:

- some 2 year old children can get up to 570 hours per year of funded childcare (aimed at low income families)
- all 3 and 4 year old children can get up to 570 hours per year of funded childcare (universally available to all 3 and 4 year old children)
- some 3 and 4 year old children can get an additional 570 funded hours (aimed at working parents – 'the extended offer')
- Tax free childcare is available to working parents who have childcare costs for children aged 0-11 years (16 if the child is disabled)
- Universal Credit claimants can claim back up to 85% of their childcare costs (subject to means testing)
- Tax Credit claimants can claim up to 70% of their childcare costs (subject to means testing).

6. THE CHILDCARE MARKET

6.1 Childcare is registered and approved by Ofsted and is subject to inspection requirements. The Local Authority is notified of all childcare registrations for their borough and offers support to both parents and providers as appropriate.

6.2 The attached Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (Appendix A) indicates the types of provision, the number of providers, the number of registered or approved places, the average costs and the current take up rates.

6.3 The Local Authority should not deliver childcare, it should be a provider 'as a last resort' when the private, voluntary and independent sector are unable to meet market need.

- 6.4 Childcare is crucial for parents and carers that train and work. In the vast majority of cases, Hartlepool's current childcare market is able to meet parental needs.

7. ACTIONS

- 7.1 The early years and childcare team has identified a number of key actions to take forward in the next year. These include –
- ensuring eligible early years children take up their provision with a provider that is at least 'good' or 'outstanding'
 - ensuring that speech, language and communication is a priority for early years and childcare provision
 - that children with additional needs are able to access childcare and that the costs of such provision are appropriately met
 - that the funding provided to the Local Authority by government for early years and childcare is sufficient to cover the costs of actual service delivery.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Childcare is needed to enable parents to train and work. If there is no suitable childcare available there is a risk that parents are not able to take up the opportunities presented to them.
- 8.2 The COVID-19 pandemic has raised serious concerns about the sustainability of childcare provision across the country. A combination of parents working from home, parents furloughed or out of work means that demand for childcare has dropped significantly. The government is currently supporting registered providers however there is uncertainty over how long this will continue.

9. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Hartlepool Schools Forum has been investigating concerns over funding shortfalls in early years. This includes in particular concerns that Hartlepool has more eligible two year old children than it is funded for. Considerations for how to manage this will be brought to committee in due course, although this will not result in an additional pressure on the Council's General Fund budget.

10. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 The council has a legal duty to comply with all early years and childcare duties as set out in the Childcare Act 2006 and 2016.

11. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 11.1 Early years and childcare forms a crucial aspect of tackling child and family poverty. Children that attend childcare that is 'good' or 'outstanding' are more likely to go on to success at school, thus impacting on their likelihood to work.

12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 Early education and childcare must be fully inclusive and able to meet the needs of all our children and families.

13. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 None

14. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 14.1 None

15. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 That members note the latest findings of The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020 attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 15.2 For members to approve the publication of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020 attached as **Appendix 1**

16. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 16.1 It is a statutory duty to prepare and publish a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment annually.

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020 (**Appendix 1**)

18. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Director of Finance and Policy ☒

Chief Solicitor ☒

Hartlepool Borough Council

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

2019- 2020

1. Introduction and Local Authority Legal Requirements

The Childcare Act 2006 and 2016 legislates for all Local Authority (LA) duties in relation to early years and childcare. The duties are made clear in the Department for Education's 'Early education and childcare: statutory guidance for local authorities, June 2018'.

In brief the LAs duties include:

- Securing sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents
- Securing prescribed funded early years provision for eligible children aged 2,3 and 4 years
- Providing information, advice and assistance to parents
- Providing information, advice and training to childcare providers
- Preparing and publishing an annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

2. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) is a measurement of the nature, extent and supply of childcare within the borough. It is intended to help the LA identify where there are potential gaps in the childcare market and plan how to support the market to address them. The process of managing the childcare market is a difficult one not least because the LA does not control the schools or the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector that provides the childcare in the town. This report therefore provides the LA with essential detail on the supply of childcare in Hartlepool and makes clear any actions the LA needs to take to effectively manage the market.

3. 'Funded' childcare

Childcare information is available to parents via 'Hartlepool Now' or via Ofsted at <https://www.gov.uk/find-registered-childminder> . Parents that do not have access to the internet can contact The Early Years and Childcare Team on 01429 284881 for all their childcare information needs.

In summary:

- Some 2 year old children can get up to 570 hours per year of funded childcare (aimed at low income families)
- All 3 and 4 year old children can get up to 570 hours per year of funded childcare (universally available to all 3 and 4 year old children)
- Some 3 and 4 year old children can get an extended 570 funded hours (aimed at working parents – 'the extended offer')

Help towards the cost of childcare includes:

- Tax free childcare support is available to working parents through HMRC, this is for parents who have childcare costs for children aged 0-11 years (16 if the child is disabled)
- Universal Credit claimants can claim back up to 85% of their childcare costs as part of their claim
- Tax Credit claimants can claim up to 70% of their childcare costs as part of their claim.

4. Methodology

The data used to inform the CSA is based on October 2019 headcounts. In order to prepare the assessment the following methodology was used:

- An analysis of Ofsted childcare data using the Early Years Register and the Compulsory and Voluntary parts of the Childcare Register
- An analysis of the availability and take up of Early Education and Childcare
- Collection of vacancy information from childcare providers in order to understand their occupancy levels.

It must be noted that this analysis represents a brief snapshot in time and that the childcare market is constantly changing. Providers tend to have a low take up of places in the Autumn term (September) as children move on to their full time school places but build their capacity up as the year progresses.

5. Context

Hartlepool is a small unitary authority with a population of 93,200. Accordingly to the HBAI survey approximately 17,800 are children aged 0-16 years. According to the North East Child Poverty Commission 35.9% of our 0-15 year olds live in poverty. Recognising poverty is important in the context of childcare. For some early years children living in poverty this will mean that they are eligible for an enhanced early years offer. Furthermore, if poverty levels are high then this suggest parents are not in work or are working part time and therefore the need for early years childcare is limited in terms of demand.

6. Childcare supply

The following tables provide a snapshot of Hartlepool's childcare supply. It should be noted that childcare providers, available childcare places and vacancies change on a regular basis. There is often a difference between the numbers of registered/ approved childcare places compared to those that the childcare provider actually makes available to the public. This is often due to staffing availability or by provider choice in order to maintain levels of quality.

Table 1 Childcare providers, available childcare places, average cost of care, January 2020

Childcare provider types	Number of active childcare providers	Number of childcare places	Range in the cost of care
Childminder	54	366	£4.00 - £6.00 per hour
Daycare (day nursery)	15	800	£150.00 a week - £225.00 a week
Holiday care (excludes ad hoc play schemes)	5	268	£23.75 a day - £28.00 a day
Before school	25	991	Free to £10.00 a session
After school	18	722	£2.00 - £13.00 per session

Sessional (ie playgroup)	2	24	£12.00 a session
Total	119	3171	

In 2019 the number of daycare settings remained the same. The number of childminders remained the same (of which 3 are assistants). During the same period the number of holiday clubs increased from 4 to 5. The number of sessional settings increased from 1 to 2, and breakfast clubs increased from 23 to 25. The opening and closure of settings can be attributed to financial viability of settings linked to parental demand.

Table 2 Out of hours childcare, January 2020

	Weekend care	Pre 7.30am	After 6pm	Overnight care	Bank Holiday	Professional Dev (PD) days
Total number of childcare providers	2	18	2	4	6	61

Table 3 Childcare providers by ward, January 2020

Ward	Childminder	Daycare	Before School	After School	Holiday	Sessional care/ playgroup
Hart	10	0	2	1		0
De Bruce	1	1	3	2	1	1
Jesmond	5	1	2	2		0
Victoria	3	4	4	3	2	0
Burn Valley	8	2	1	0		0
Rural West	3	1	1	1		1
Foggy Furze	6	1	2	2		0
Manor House	4	1	2	1		0
Fens and Rossmere	9	2	3	3	1	0
Headland and Harbour	2	1	2	1		0
Seaton	3	1	3	2	1	0
TOTAL	54	15	25	18	5	2

Table 4 Out of School / Extended Provision January 2020

	PVI	School	Maintained
Breakfast Club	4	21	0
Afterschool Club	4	13	1
Holiday Club	3	1	1

7. Occupancy

The following table provides a snapshot of Hartlepool's childcare occupancy levels in January 2020 and gives an indication of available vacancies. It should be noted that provider vacancies change on a regular basis and that not all providers responded to the survey.

Table 5 Childcare Provider Occupancy Levels, January 2020

Childcare Provider type	0-20% occupancy level	21-40% occupancy level	41-60% occupancy level	61-80% occupancy level	81-100% occupancy level
Childminder	5	1	5	13	30
Daycare	0	1	8	4	2
Holiday care (excludes ad hoc play schemes)	0	0	3	2	0
Before school care	1	0	5	4	15
After school care	0	0	4	7	7
Sessional/ playgroup	0	0	0	2	0

8. Quality

Ofsted inspects schools and childcare settings. The following table shows the available inspection results as at January 2020.

Table 6 Childcare Provider Inspection Results, January 2020

Setting type	Outstanding	Good	Meets Requirements	Requires Improvement	Only registration visit carried out	Not Met with Actions
Childminders	8	31	2	0	7	2
Daycare	3	11	0	0	1	0
Sessional care	0	0	0	1	1	0
Holiday care	2	3	0	0	0	0
Before school	4	15	0	4	2	0
After school	3	12	0	2	1	0

In terms of how Hartlepool compares to national statistics:

- nationally 17% of registered childminders are graded outstanding (Hartlepool is lower at 14.8%)
- nationally 78 % of registered childminders are graded good (Hartlepool is lower at 57.4%)

- nationally 24% of registered daycare providers are graded outstanding (Hartlepool is lower at 20%)
- nationally 73% of registered daycare providers are graded good (Hartlepool is higher at 73.3%)

9. Extended school provision

There are 6 secondary schools, 31 primary schools and 1 Pupil Referral Unit in Hartlepool. The majority of schools in Hartlepool are extended schools providing services to children, families and in some cases the wider community beyond the school day. All secondary schools open early and close later than the usual school hours. 18 primary schools in the town provide formal childcare including before, after, holiday and/or integrated early years care. In addition a wide range of extended services are available outside of the school day and many parents take advantage of this provision in order to support their childcare choices.

10. Comparison of childcare places

The table below shows the changes in the childcare market over the past two years. In summary there has been an increase in childcare providers and places but this is not necessarily an indicator of demand.

Table 7 Comparison of childcare places 2017 – 2020

	No. of childcare providers	Total number childcare places	No. of child-minders/ no of places	No. of daycare providers/ no of places	No. of holiday providers/ no of places	No. of before school providers/ no of places	No. of after school providers/ no of places	No. of sessional care providers/ no of places
2017/2018	109	2783	47/327	15/701	5/180	24/778	18/653	1/12
2018/2019	115	3058	54/316	15/694	4/186	23/1201	18/615	1/12
2019/2020	119	3171	54/366	15/800	5/268	25/991	18/722	2/24

11. Early education and childcare

Two Year Olds

Hartlepool continues to perform well in Early Education and Childcare with participation rates amongst the best in the country. Eligibility criteria for funded places has changed over time. Places are now available to children in families in receipt of key benefits, to some families that are in receipt of Universal Credit, families working but on a low income, children in foster care, children looked after, children under special guardianship, adopted children, children with additional needs (DLA) and asylum seeker families. Places are allocated to eligible two year old children the term *after* their second birthday.

Table 8 Current and proposed two year old funded provision, January 2020

WARD	No. of childcare providers currently taking 2 year old funded children (January 2020)				No of 2 year olds placed
	SCHOOLS	DAYCARE	CHILDMINDERS	SESSIONAL	
Hart	0	0	10	0	1
*De Bruce	2	1	0	1	76
*Jesmond	1	2	8	0	34
*Victoria	2	2	1	0	103
*Burn Valley	1	4	8	0	54
Rural West	0	2	2	1	4
*Foggy Furze	1	1	7	0	43
*Manor House	3	1	3	0	68
*Fens and Rossmere	1	2	7	0	43
*Headland and Harbour	3	2	2	0	35
Seaton	1	0	3	0	3
TOTAL	15	16	51	2	523

Wards marked * have higher levels of disadvantage and therefore have a higher demand for two year old places.

Three and Four Year Olds

Every 3 or 4 year old child can access up to 570 hours of early education and childcare across the year in an approved setting. This is called 'universal provision'. Children are eligible for a place the term *after* their third birthday. The table below shows the take up of three and four year olds universal provision in maintained and PVI providers.

Table 9 Take up of universal early education and childcare 2017 - 2020

	No of children taking up a place in schools	No of children taking up a place in a PVI provider
2017-2018	959	119
2018-2019	925	149
2019-2020	1223	185

12. '30 Hours Extended Offer'

Some children are able to access an extended 570 hours per year early education and childcare. To be eligible a parent must earn the equivalent of at least 16 hours at minimum/national living wage and earn less than £100,000 a year. If you are a couple, both parents need to be earning equivalent of 16 hours at minimum/national living wage and each parent earning less than £100,000 a year.

Table 10 Comparison of 30 hours extended offer places 2017 - 2020

	No of children taking up extended offer places in schools	No of children taking up extended offer places with a PVI provider
2017-2018	218	236
2018-2019	179	329
2019-2020	201	232

Table 11 Distribution of 30 hours extended offer places by ward 2020

Ward	Childminder	Daycare	School	Number of children placed
Hart	10	0	2	20
De Bruce	0	2	3	53
Jesmond	7	1	2	12
Victoria	1	2	3	53
Burn Valley	8	4	2	38
Rural West	2	2	2	48
Foggy Furze	5	1	3	40
Manor House	3	1	3	31
Fens and Rossmere	7	2	3	49
Headland and Harbour	2	1	4	26
Seaton	3	1	2	25
TOTAL	48	15	29	395

13. Disability Access Fund (DAF)

The DAF is available for all childcare providers to claim for a child attending their setting who is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA). It was introduced in April 2017 and is only for children who are claiming universal 3 and 4 year old Early Years Education.

Table 12 – Providers accessing DAF Funding

	Summer 2017	Autumn 2017	Spring 2018
Number of providers receiving funding	0	6	4
	Summer 2018	Autumn 2018	Spring 2019
Number of providers receiving funding	2	3	4
	Summer 2019	Autumn 2019	Spring 2020
Number of providers receiving funding	8	0	7

Table 13 – Number of Children DAF Funded

	Number of Children
2018 – 2019	10
2019 - 2020	17

14. Early Years Pupil Premium

Introduced in April 2015 this is an extra fund for providers to use for disadvantaged children. It can be used for a variety of things including resources, training and trips. It is £100.70 per child per term.

Table 14 – Access to EYPP funding

	No of children in schools	No of children in PVI providers
2018-2019	438	68
2019 - 2020	379	35

15. Priorities for the Local Authority

Based on enquiries into the Early Years and Childcare Team together with knowledge and experience of Officers working with early education and childcare providers the following priorities have been identified:

A) TACKLING INADEQUATE GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

A national funding formula is in place for early years with the Local Authority paid based on census dates at two key points over 12 months. This process has led to under-funding of two year olds and must be addressed at a national level. A Task and Finish Group set up by Schools Forum has identified potential solutions.

Action

- Formally confirm and put into action the Task and Finish group recommendations to address the two year old funding shortfall.
- Raise the issue of the two year old funding formula with DfE as the process is unfair and leads to a funding shortfall.

B) FUNDED PLACES FOR TWO, THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS

Take up and demand for early years places needs to be closely monitored. Where providers begin to reach capacity, the opportunity to increase provision needs to be explored. Where children do not appear to be taking up a place, particularly in disadvantaged wards, action must be taken.

Action

- Market and promote eligibility criteria to ensure continued good levels of participation.
- Raise awareness with parents on how to take up a place.
- Work with existing and new providers to develop provision where there is evidence of demand.
- Ensure there continues to be flexibility in the market to meet demand.
- Track take up by ward and tackle those areas with improved direct work with parents where take up is low.

C) COSTS OF CHILDCARE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND)

Generally, there are enough childcare places to match parental demand. However, the cost of care for a child with additional needs remains above the cost of standard care and finding suitable ways to fund this continues to prove challenging. The government introduced new funding for children with SEND in their revised 2017/18 Early Years formula. This includes a fund that providers can seek support from for the additional costs of care.

Action

- To support childcare providers in accessing various funding streams for SEND.

- To raise awareness of the DAF fund and ensure all eligible children are claimed for in order to make best use of the funding.

D) CHILDCARE COSTS

There are a number of ways in which parents can get help with childcare costs. The current system is complex and varies depending on the parents' benefit and/ or employment situation. For example HMRC Tax Credits offer up to 70% funding for childcare costs; Universal Credit offers up to 85% funding; there is a tax free childcare account designed to help working parents with up to 20% childcare costs. The system is complicated and there is a risk that parents are not getting the funding they are entitled to.

Action

- Ensure parents are aware of all available help towards childcare costs and are fully informed of their options.
- Make available this information in a variety of formats in order to support parents in their childcare costs.
- Ensure providers are confident in promoting and encouraging the use of tax free childcare

E) THE QUALITY OF CHILDCARE PROVISION

Quality of childcare provision is a high priority. Children should attend a setting that is at least 'good' and ideally 'outstanding'. Recruitment of a Senior Officer to lead on the quality of provision offering support, advice, guidance and training is a key area of focus.

Action

- To work with childcare providers to identify support and training required.
- To complete audits in relation to Safeguarding, Welfare requirements and Quality.
- To tier levels of support required targeting those settings judged less than 'good' by Ofsted.

F) TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROVIDERS

Training remains available for all early years and childcare providers however it is recognised that specific areas of CPD need addressing for practitioners to continue to deliver a high quality level of childcare experiences to young children.

Action

- Support sessions to be identified with providers through audit, questionnaires, feedback and actions from Ofsted inspections.
- To produce a training plan that meets the needs that have been identified.
- To offer briefing sessions relevant to key local, regional and national priorities.
- Participants from the Achievement for All training session to establish a working group to improve SEND service and offer within their own provision and support other providers in the area.

G) TRANSITION

Parents and providers have expressed concern regarding the transition of their children from home to setting and PVI to school settings.

Action

- Ensure providers and parents understand the requirements and expectations as set out within early years legislation.

- Participate in the new Transition working group and ensure early years transition is addressed.

H) SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

Feedback from a recent peer challenge indicates that a more co-ordinated approach to speech, language and communication in the early years is required.

Action

- Early years and childcare team to take an active role in the task group that will lead on the peer challenge recommendations.

16. Final Comments

Childcare in Hartlepool continues to be a strong market and fulfils a vital role for parents that train and work. Whilst it is impossible to ensure every parent is accommodated according to their specific needs, generally childcare in Hartlepool meets the needs of parents and their children. The majority of parents locate and choose childcare themselves through word of mouth, recommendation by family and friends and by searching the internet/ social media pages. Where a parent cannot find the childcare they need the Early Years and Childcare Team works hard to come up with practical solutions.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and going forward into 2021 early years and childcare provision may look and operate differently. Working from home and the ability to work flexibly negates the need for childcare for some children. The Local Authority is continuing to give tailored support to all settings to ensure sufficient, sustainable and affordable childcare is available through the above actions.

For more information about the childcare market in Hartlepool contact Penny Thompson or Lorraine Hutchinson. If you would like copies of any of the previous CSA's please contact Early Years and Childcare Team on 01429 284284 alternatively email childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk.

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

26th January 2021



Report of: Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

Subject: TO NOMINATE A LOCAL AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE TO SERVE ON THE GOVERNING BODY OF THROSTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL.

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 This is a Non Key decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To consider a nomination for the role of Local Authority Governor at Throston Community Primary School.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Under the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 the process for appointing Local Authority Governors to school governing bodies requires the local authority to consider nominations to vacancies before they are presented to the relevant governing body for formal approval.

An application has been received for the position (**Appendix A**). **This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government), (Access to Information), (Variations Order 2006) namely, information relating to any individual (Para 1).**

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The report seeks the committee's decision on the application form for nomination as Local Authority Governor at Throston Community Primary School.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no risk implications

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial considerations

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no legal considerations

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Discussions have taken place between the applicant, Chair of Governors and Head teacher regarding the skills the applicant can contribute to the Governing Body. The application received in respect of the vacancy is from a serving Local Authority Governor on the Governing Body, whose term of office will expire in January 2021.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 There are no child and family considerations

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 There are no equality and diversity considerations.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no staff considerations

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no asset management considerations

13. RECOMMENDATION

- 13.1 The committee gives consideration to applicant as set out in Appendix B in respect of local authority nomination to Throston Community Primary School.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 To ensure that the nomination of a local authority governor will contribute to the effectiveness of the governing body to which they are appointed.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 15.1 There are no background papers

16. CONTACT OFFICER

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Sign Off:-

Director of Finance and Policy ☒

Chief Solicitor ☒

VACANCIES FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNORS ON SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

SCHOOL	VACANCY	APPLICATION RECEIVED	NOMINEE RECOMMENDED FOR CONSIDERATION AND APPOINTMENT BY GOVERNING BODY
<p>THROSTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL</p> <p>The applicant is currently a serving member of the governing body in the position of Local Authority Governor. The applicants and term of office in this position will expire in January 2021.</p> <p>The applicant is a member of highly skilled and effective governing body and the applicants financial background and knowledge through his employment is a strength which the school would wish to retain.</p>	One vacancy	One application has been received	The applicant is recommended for appointment

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

26 January 2021



Report of: Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

Subject: FOSTERING SERVICE INTERIM REPORT
1st July 2020 – 30th September 2020

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Children Service's Committee with information relating to the activity of the Fostering Service for the second quarter of 2020. The Fostering Service is a regulated service and as such there is a requirement to provide the executive side of the Council with performance information.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The work of the Fostering Service is subject to National Minimum Standards applicable to the provision of Foster Care for children looked after. The National Minimum Standards, together with regulations for fostering and the placement of children looked after, form the basis of the regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 for the conduct of Fostering Agencies.

3.2 The report provides details of the staffing arrangements in the service, training received by both staff and Foster Carers, the constitution of the Fostering Panel, activity in relation to the recruitment, preparation and assessment of prospective Foster Carers and progress in relation to the priorities set out in the Fostering Annual Report.

3.3 The Fostering Services Minimum Standard 25.7 requires Fostering Services to ensure that the Executive of the Local Authority:

- Receives a written report on the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency once every 3 months;
- Monitors the management and outcomes of the service in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and achieving good outcomes for children;
- Satisfies themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of the registration.

4. **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION (as of 30th September 2020)**

4.1 The fostering team continues to recruit and assess prospective Foster Carers to limit the Authority's dependence upon more costly, external provision for children.

4.2 There are currently 148 Foster Carers (an overall increase of 4 households since 30th June 2020) of whom 42 are approved as Connected Carers (an increase of 1 CC household since 30th June 2020, as 4 have resigned in this quarter). These Carers provide placements for 236 children and young people in total (11 more than 30th June 2020), 163 in 'Mainstream' provision (13 fewer than in June) and 58 children/young people are with Connected Foster Carers (9 more than in June). The remaining 15 children/young people will be with carers who have been approved on a temporary basis under Regulation 24 (Care Planning Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010). There are 23 young people in Staying Put placements, which is for post 18 care leavers and this represents an increase of 9 young people since June.

4.3 Of the 148 approved Fostering households, there were 8 which were 'on hold' due to, either, the individual circumstances of the Carer, or in order to 'shield'. This equated to 9 placements. There are a small number of placements that cannot be used due to the specific matching needs of the children/young people already in that foster placement.

4.4 The most significant influence upon the Fostering service in this quarter continues to be the COVID pandemic. There has been a month on month increase in children becoming looked after during this time, the overall number rising from 328 in June, to 360 in September. Of those staff members who stepped up in the last quarter to offer 'none connected' emergency care, two have gone on to request full assessment and have taken part in September's digital 'Skills to Foster' preparation programme.

4.5 It is hoped and anticipated that their joining Hartlepool's Foster Care 'family', alongside the other 26 families being assessed and 11 awaiting assessment, will enable the Local Authority to continue to meet demand. Realistically, however, for some of those children (who are unable to reunite with their

family) who will therefore need permanence via Foster Care, their needs will need to be met by the independent sector.

- 4.6 In a bid to continue to attract prospective carers from the Hartlepool community, there has been additional recruitment activity in quarter 2. Foster Carers, staff and a young person have appeared on camera to talk about the need for, the rewards from and the impact of Fostering for our children and young people. The reach of the short videos – which went out on Social Media - was very wide, one item having reached 18,000 people within 48 hours. This led to an increase in enquires, though not to an increase (as yet) in initial visits. Whilst the improved enquiry rate is positive, it is well known that a quick and proactive response is crucial to maintaining interest and momentum so that families are ultimately progressed through to approval. To provide this there needs to be adequate staff capacity, this is not the case currently (due reasons already outlined) and additional staff will be appointed via agency.
- 4.7 Approved Foster Carers have continued to take children outside of their ordinary terms of approval to keep them close to their homes, families and support services – a total of 13 Fostering Households having received a one off specialist fee in recognition of the additional responsibilities they have taken on.
- 4.8 The one off payment was introduced in April 2020 (£369.50) and has cost the Local Authority, to date, a total of £4,803.50. It is worthy of note that, in this second quarter, despite the increased demand for placements, the use of independent agency foster care has increased by only 1, ie from 36 (June 20) to 37 at the end of September. It is safe to assume that is as a result of the recruitment strategy, decisions around remuneration, the general good will of the Foster Carers and Social Workers doing their utmost to retain children within their family network. Had the 32 additional children and young people who became looked after in this quarter been placed in external provision (at an average cost of £850 per week) the cost across the three months would have been in the region of £353,600.00.
- 4.9 The table below provides details of the impact of recruitment activity, which has taken place in second quarter of 2020.

Initial Enquiries – including survey of where did people hear about the service	16 (7 more than Q1)
Information packs sent	15 (8 more than Q1)
Initial Visits (Virtual due to COVID) How many proceeded	4 (1 LESS than Q1) 1 so far
Preparation Groups	A digital Skills to Foster Group was held on 16 th /17 th and 18 th September 9 'households' attended

How many prospective Carers are in the assessment process?	14 Connected Carers and 11 awaiting allocation 14 'Mainstream' Carers
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5. FOSTERING PANEL

5.1 In this quarter, the Fostering Panel has met on seven occasions (twice more than last quarter) demonstrating the increased demand on the whole of Children's Social Care services. Panel made recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker on the following fostering matters:

- Two 'mainstream' Foster Carer approvals
- Five Connected Carer approvals
- Four Connected Carer resignations
- One FC Review (change to terms of approval)
- Best Interest decisions for;
 - Three sibling groups of two
 - 1 child alone
- The match of a brother and sister with long term Foster Carers (IFA)
- The match of another brother and sister with long term Foster Carers (IFA)
- The match of 3 siblings with long term Foster Carers (IFA)
- The match of one little boy with long term Foster Carers (Hartlepool's)
- The match of one little girl with long term Foster Carers (Hartlepool's)

5.2 There are effective processes in place for the recommendations made by Panel to be considered by the Agency Decision Maker and the timescale for this is within 5 working days of the Panel meeting taking place.

6. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 In this quarter, a Social Worker from the Throughcare team has joined the Fostering service for 10 months, to cover a maternity absence. The team's Placement Support Worker has returned to the team and is focusing upon supporting children and Carers whose placements are under pressure, ensuring that recruitment material is visible across the town and helping Foster Care applicants to complete 'stage 1' of the process. This means that, once the Social Worker who was appointed to work 3 days against another worker's two is in post (November 2020), the team will be at its full staffing establishment.

6.2 Despite this, the team has been unable to absorb the level of work which needs to be completed and the service is in the unusual position of being unable to allocate Connected Care assessments. These assessments are essential for ensuring that children's placements are safe and regulated –

and are often court ordered, so this is not a position which the Local Authority can afford to be in. Agreement has been given to appoint an Agency Social Worker whilst consideration is given to increasing staffing establishment on a permanent basis.

- 6.3 The Fostering Team retains the role of a designated 'Family Finder' who drives the search for permanent placements for those children and young people for whom Long Term Foster Care is the agreed plan. In this quarter, the number of children seeking permanence has increased and whilst some will be placed with Hartlepool Foster Carers and those plans to 'match' are progressing, 20 will probably need an Independent Placement. This is entirely due to having almost reached 'saturation' point in house and not because external provision is better or preferred.

7. SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

- 7.1 In September, the service ran its first digital 'Skills to Foster' preparation Group. The technology was a challenge for the team, however, worked well and has given confidence to run future events in this way. Attendee evaluations are still being collated, which will inform future sessions.
- 7.2 The service wishes to consult with Foster Carers about the documents which they complete for their reviews, the Foster Care Charter and Foster Care Family profiles. The digital communication platform 'Microsoft Teams' is now available for this purpose and will be applied to consultation exercises in October, having been planned this quarter.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Increasing demand and the implication this has for Hartlepool being able to care for its own children and young people continues to be a risk. This would also put greater pressure on budgets should the impact mean an increased use of independent provision. This would be mitigated by increasing capacity in terms of staffing (beyond solely the return to work of those on maternity leave) which means greater 'availability' to carers who need the best support possible to keep our children safe and stable.

9. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 There are no specific financial considerations within this report.

10. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 There are no specific legal considerations within this report.

11. CONSULTATION

- 11.1 Foster carers are supported by their supervising social worker and the social workers make contact with them regularly. Their views are heard and responded to. As children and young people have returned to education and family time become increasingly actual rather than virtual, Carers have generally continued to show flexibility in supporting ever changing approaches to meeting need. Anxiety has increased, however, from the point that Hartlepool was announced as receiving 'enhanced support' from the Government (26.9.20). Foster Carers are worried that their facilitation of family time may mean them falling foul of new advice and guidance. Regional guidance on this essential element of a child's care has been developed and circulated to staff so that carers can be supported to understand exemptions to the guidance. The service understands the worries and does what it can to mitigate them in what will continue to be a fluid situation.

12. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 The Fostering service ensures that it supports all Foster Carers to enable them to support our children and young people.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 The service continues to recruit and assess prospective Foster Carers to provide placement choice with a range of Fostering Families which reflect the needs of the children we care for.

14. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 14.1 There are no staff considerations for Hartlepool Borough Council employees beyond those outlined earlier in this report.

15. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 15.1 There are no asset management considerations.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 16.1 The Children's Service Committee is asked to note the report in relation to the work of the Fostering Service.

17. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 17.1 The Fostering Service is required to fulfill its statutory responsibilities to children looked after by the local authority and provide regular reports to the Children Services Committee to enable the Committee to satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration.
- 17.2 Children's Services Committee has an important role in scrutinising the activities of the Fostering Service to ensure that performance in this area is robust.

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Fostering National Minimum Standards Services 2011;
- Fostering Regulations 2011;
- Fostering Annual Report 2019/20
- DfE Coronavirus (COVID19):guidance for children's care services

19. CONTACT OFFICERS

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