

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Tuesday 19 November 2024

at 5.00 pm

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

MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Creevy (C), Dunbar, Harrison, Holbrook, Jorgeson, Little and Sharp (VC).

Co-opted Members: C of E Diocese (vacant) and Joanne Wilson, RC Diocese representatives.

School Heads Representatives: Adam Palmer (Secondary), Sue Sharpe (Primary), Zoe Westley (Special).

Parent Governor Representative: Martin Pout

Six Young Peoples Representatives

Observer: Councillor Allen, 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 10 September 2024 (*previously circulated and published*).

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

No items

CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone.

The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.

5. KEY DECISIONS

- 5.1 Dedicated Schools Grant (Former Education Services Grant Rate Per Pupil) – Disapplication Request – *Executive Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services and Director of Finance, IT and Digital*

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

No items

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Sendiass Annual Report – *Executive Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 7.2 School Attendance and Absence – *Executive Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 7.3 Children Missing Education – Annual Report – *Executive Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 7.4 Elective Home Education – *Executive Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 7.5 Permanent Exclusions – *Executive Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 10 December 2024 at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool



CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

19TH NOVEMBER 2024



Subject: DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (FORMER EDUCATION SERVICES GRANT RATE PER PUPIL) –DISAPPLICATION REQUEST

Report of: Executive Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services and Director of Finance, IT and Digital

Decision Type: Key Decision Ref CJCS 153/24

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

| |
|---|
| Hartlepool will be a place: |
| - where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives. |
| - of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all. |

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To inform members of the outcome of Schools' Forum held on the 15 October 2024 and their decision in relation to the 2025/26 Education Services General Duties Rates.
- 2.2 To agree that the local authority should present a disapplication request to the Secretary of State in order to ensure that the local authority can discharge its statutory responsibilities.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 National funding arrangements introduced in 2017/18 shifted responsibility for funding statutory duties from a specific grant to the Dedicated Schools Grant. The government provided no additional funding to schools to cover this cost shift. Members will recall that since 2017/18 the Council has had to apply for disapplication, in order to secure this funding.

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 For the financial year 2025/26, the local authority proposed a rate of £60 per pupil. The rate is unchanged from 2017/18, which means the rate will have remained the same for nine years.
- 4.2 Schools' Forum considered this proposal and did not agree to transfer the funding to the local authority. Schools were clear that it was **not** because of concerns about the quality of services provided by the local authority, but they considered that funding statutory duties from school budgets is a budget cut and this funding should be provided by the government. Regulations state that if agreement cannot be reached with maintained schools the matter would need referring to the Secretary of State for a decision.
- 4.3 This has been the consistent view of Schools' Forum for the past eight financial years – from 2017/18 to 2024/25 inclusive. In each of these financial years, the local authority has successfully applied to the Secretary of State for disapplication of the Regulations. This means that the local authority is able to remove the required element of funding to ensure that statutory responsibilities are discharged.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In relation to the 2025/26 rate, should the Secretary of State not agree to the request of £60 per pupil/place, the local authority would not have enough funding to discharge essential statutory services to schools. This is considered low risk as applications by the Council have been approved for the previous eight financial years.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 If the Secretary of State does not agree to the request of £60 per pupil/place, the local authority would not have enough funding to discharge essential statutory services to schools.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The Schools Revenue Funding 2024 to 2025 Operational Guide (2025/26 not yet published) states that local authorities should set a single rate for the Education Services General Duties for 5 to 16 year olds. Local authorities may choose to establish differential rates for Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units.

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

| | |
|--|--|
| CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY | There are no specific child and family poverty considerations. |
| EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS | There are no specific equality and diversity considerations. |
| STAFF CONSIDERATIONS | There are no staff considerations, |
| ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS | There are no asset management considerations. |
| ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS | There are none. |

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1 At their meeting of the 15 October 2024, the maintained schools members of Schools' Forum were consulted on the rate of £60 per pupil/place.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The maintained schools members of Schools' Forum at the meeting on 15 October 2024 did not agree to the transfer of £60 per pupil/place to the local authority for the provision of statutory duties. Regulations state that if agreement could not be reached with maintained schools, the matter would need referring to the Secretary of State for a decision.
- 10.2 Based on the decision made by the Secretary of State in relation to the 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 Education Services Grant rates, the Council has demonstrated the case for the funding required to discharge statutory responsibilities. Therefore, this provides a good basis for seeking approval for the 2025/26 rates, which it is proposed is maintained at £60 for the ninth consecutive year.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 It is recommended that Members:

- a) Agree the 2025/26 funding rate at £60 per pupil/place.
- b) Agree to submit the disapplication request to the Secretary of State to set the Education Services General Duties rate at £60 per pupil/place for 2025/26.
- c) Note this will be the ninth consecutive year the local authority has applied for disapplication and that the previous eight applications have been successful.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 Without this element of funding the local authority would not be able to discharge some of its statutory responsibilities in respect of schools.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1 Schools' Forum Report 24 September 2024 and Schools' Forum Minutes 15 October 2024.

14. CONTACT OFFICERS

Sally Robinson
Executive Director of Children's and Commissioning Services
sally.robinson@hartlepool.gov.uk
(01429) 523914

James Magog
Director of Finance, IT and Digital
james.magog@hartlepool.gov.uk
(01429) 523003

Sign Off:-

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Managing Director | Date: 30/10/2024 |
| Director of Finance, IT and Digital | Date: 30/10/2024 |
| Director of Legal, Governance and HR | Date: 04/11/2024 |

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

19TH November 2024



Subject: SENDIASS ANNUAL REPORT

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

Decision Type: For information

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

| |
|---|
| Hartlepool will be a place: |
| - where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives. |
| - where people will be safe and protected from harm. |

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To present to members the Annual Report of the Hartlepool Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) for September 2023 - August 2024.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Hartlepool SENDIASS is an arm's length service which the Local Authority have commissioned in-house, as part of their statutory obligation as defined in Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, Chapter 2 of the Department for Education SEND Code of Practice (2015) and within the Minimum Standards for SEND Information, Advice and Support Services (2018). The purpose is to provide free confidential, impartial support and advice to children, young people (aged 0 – 25 years) and their parent/carers, about matters related to their or their child's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). The service is situated within Children's and Joint Commissioning Directorate.
- 3.2 The SENDIASS Annual Report (**Appendix 1**) provides a key overview of the information, advice and support being offered to children, young people (aged 0 – 25 years) and their parent/carers about matters related to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). It summarises information in relation to the service purpose, aims, offer developments and priorities, during this reporting period.

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 Between September 2023 and August 2024, SENDIASS has provided information, advice and support for 182 cases (Combination of new (first-time contacts) and pre existing (currently/previously known to the service). There has often been multiple enquiries/involvements for each case recorded, which means the work involved is greater than the overall single case number recorded.
- 4.2 The service uses the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) intervention levels to help monitor the complexity of casework and the level of support needed, as this can vary greatly. Details of the different intervention levels are included within the annual report.
- 4.3 Over the last 12 months the service has been asked by parent/carers, children and young people to attend an increased number of face-to-face and virtual meetings to offer support around the following:
- SEN support and reasonable adjustments;
 - Requests for EHC needs assessment;
 - Fixed-term and permanent exclusions;
 - Lack of spaces in both mainstream and specialist provisions;
 - Challenging and appealing decisions;
 - Challenges in communication with professionals and services; and
 - School attendance/Non-attendance including issues around anxiety, mental health and those going through the Neuro Development pathway process.
- 4.4 Over the next 12 months, SENDIASS will continue it's work to:
- Provide and develop a service that can meet local demand and increase knowledge of SEND guidance and legislation for parents/carers, children, young people and professionals.
 - Develop and enhance the digital offer and resources to parents/carers, children and young people so appropriate up to date advice, support and information is available in formats which are accessible to all.
 - Provide varied drop-ins, events and training to parents/carers, children, young people and professionals about SEND information, advice and topics where further information is beneficial.
 - Enhance, obtain and review feedback from parents/carers, children and young people on the service to influence and support service design and delivery.
 - Access and attend events and training to further develop knowledge and skills within the service to enrich the service offer to parents/carers, children, young people.

- Review data collection methods and analysis in relation to themes around SEND issues and service interventions.
- Benchmark against all of the Minimum Standards for SEND Information, Advice and Support Services as set out by the Council for Disabled Children (CDC).

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

| | |
|--|--|
| RISK IMPLICATIONS | None |
| FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| SUBSIDY CONTROL | None |
| LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS | SENDIASS services are defined in Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, Chapter 2 of the Department for Education SEND Code of Practice (2015) and within the Minimum Standards for SEND Information, Advice and Support Services (2018). |
| CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY | The SENDIASS service is available to all children and young people with special educational needs and their families and provides advocacy to improve life chances. |
| EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS | Disability is a protected characteristic. The delivery of the SENDIASS service provides advocacy and support for children with SEND and their families |
| STAFF CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| CONSULTATION | None |

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 That members of Children's Services Committee note the contents of the Annual Report of SENDIASS 2023/24 and that the report will be published online.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Annual Report regarding SENDIASS is presented to the relevant Policy Committee and published on the Council's website.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

Rebecca Stephenson
Assistant Director Early Intervention, Performance and Commissioning
Rebecca.stephenson@hartlepool.gov.uk
(01429) 284134

Micky Froud
SENDIASS Manager
Micky.Froud@hartlepool.gov.uk
(01429) 284876

Sign Off:-

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Managing Director | Date: 16/10/2024 |
| Director of Finance, IT and Digital | Date: 15/10/2024 |
| Director of Legal, Governance and HR | Date: 15/10/2024 |

Hartlepool **SENDIASS**

Hartlepool Special Educational Needs and Disability
Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

Annual Report
September 2023 - August 2024

Content of Report

| | |
|---|-----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Who we are | 1 |
| We are here to | 2 |
| Our aim is | 2 |
| How we operate | 2-3 |
| Our service offer to Parents/Carers, Children or Young People | 4 |
| Our service offer to Professionals | 5 |
| Our work | 6-7 |
| Our work with professionals and services | 8 |
| Our Developments and Priorities | 9 |

Introduction

Welcome to Hartlepool Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) Annual Report. This report aims to provide a helpful insight and overview of the service, our work and our developments and priorities.

From 1st September 2014 Parent Partnership Services (PPS) in every local authority became Information, Advice and Support Services (IASS). Each IASS provides support similar to that of a PPS, although the type of support and who is entitled to receive it has been significantly expanded. This now includes young people and children in their own right, along with the additional expectation to provide information and advice on all matters relating to health and social care.

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires local authorities to provide children with information, advice and support relating to their SEN or disability. Many children will access information, advice and support via their parents. However, some children, especially older children and those in custody, may want to access information, advice and support separately from their parents, and local authorities must ensure this is possible.

The Send Code of Practice 2015 in chapter 2 states: 'Local authorities must arrange for children with Special Education Needs (SEN) or disabilities for whom they are responsible, and their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEN or disabilities, including matters relating to health and social care. This must include information, advice and support on the take-up and management of Personal Budgets. In addition, in carrying out their duties under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, local authorities must have regard to the importance of providing children and their parents and young people with the information and support necessary to participate in decision.

Who we are

Hartlepool Special Educational Needs and Disabilities information, advice and support service (SENDIASS) provides free confidential, impartial support and advice to children, young people (aged 0 – 25 years) and their parent/carers, about matters related to their or their child's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), including matters relating to health and social care.

We are a self-referral, in-house statutory service which is funded by Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC), situated within Children's and Joint Commissioning Directorate.

We are here to

- Support Children and Young People who have or may have special educational needs.
- Offer free impartial advice and information to Parents/Carers, Children and Young People.
- Recognise the importance of Parents/Carers, Children and Young People's 'voice' and 'views'; to be at the centre of SEND processes.
- Help Parents/Carers, Children and Young People, Local Authority, Schools, Health, Social Care and professionals to work together to meet the needs of Children and Young People.

Our aim is

- To provide a service that can meet local demand and ensure that it is accessible for all children, young people, and parents/carers.
- Increase children, young people, parents/carers and professionals knowledge of SEND guidance and legislation.
- Allow children, young people, parents/carers and professionals to access appropriate information and virtual support and training in respect of SEND guidance and legislation.
- Provide information to children, young people, parents/carers and professionals about the public, private and voluntary and community sectors to improve the accessibility to appropriate advice and support.

How we operate

- **Referrals:** Referrals are made directly by a Parent/Carer, or Child/Young Person themselves. Referrals are made via a dedicated telephone line, email or virtual/face-to face interactions at a range of drop-ins, events and training sessions.
- **Neutral and Impartial:** We don't take sides; we provide Parents/Carers, Children and Young People with impartial factual information and advice, based on SEND guidance and legislation, so they feel empowered and enabled to make informed decisions about their next steps, which is unbiased and is not influenced by any particular party's point of view or local policy.
- **Confidential:** We will not discuss Parents/Carers, Children and Young Peoples circumstances or information with anyone without their verbal or written consent.
- **Informative:** We offer Parents/Carers, Children and Young People information on an extensive range of topics in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including Health and Social Care.
- **Supportive:** We enable Parents/Carers, Children and Young People to understand and make effective use of the information and advice provided.
- **Accessible:** We provide a free, all year round and flexible service which is open during normal office hours and includes:

- A direct helpline with 24 hour answer machine,
 - A call back and sign posting service, including links to the national SEND helpline and other sources of support for outside of office hours and 24/7 access to dedicated website.
- **Arms-length:** The service must legally operate arm's length from HBC Education and Social Care Services, as well as Health services such as the Integrated Commissioning Board (ICB).

The service maintains an "arm's length" position by;

- *Being measured against The Children and Families Act 2014, The SEND Code of Practice 2015, and The Council for Disabled Children (CDC) National Minimum Standards 2018, rather than locally agreed parameters.*
- *Having a ring fenced delegated budget and protected recording system restricted to members of SENDIASS only.*
- *Keeping secure all information specifically communicated (either orally or in writing) by Parents/Carers, Children and Young People which is completely separate to LA's Education, Health and Social Care services.*
- *Having and maintaining its own service website.*
- *Service staff have undertaken nationally provided training which ensures they have knowledge and understanding of SEND law and guidance.*
- *Having working links and networks both nationally and regionally.*
- *Service staff do not take part in any LA local decision making processes.*
- *Impartiality is a core element of practice.*

Our service offer to Parents/Carers, Children or Young People

We:

- Accept referrals from Parents/Carers, Children and Young People and provide telephone, email, virtual and face-to face information, advice and support, which is factual and unbiased. This is based only on relevant SEND legislation and national guidance, so individuals feel empowered and enabled to make informed decisions and able to apply it to their own situation. We work with new referrals and don't re-address an enquiry where advice has already been given.
- Provide Parents/Carers, Children and Young People with someone impartial to talk to in confidence to help them understand the child/young person's legal rights in relation to SEND, to listen to any views and concerns they might have and advise on overcoming issues in relation to SEND Law.
- Provide Parents/Carers, Children and Young People with a straightforward explanation of educational procedures. We don't offer to automatically complete forms or check EHCP's for errors unless we have been asked about a particular section we are supporting Parents/Carers, Children or Young People with.
- Help Parents/Carers, Children and Young People to express their views and advocate for change to help influence and shape policies and procedures.
- Meet with Parents/Carers, Children and Young People virtually/in person and attend meetings with them relating to their Child or Young person's educational support when appropriate and required.
- Support, problem solve and resolve issues with Parents/Carers, Children and Young People with a wide range of issues related to SEND including (but not limited to) needs not being met, supporting communication and trust with services, SEN support (known as a graduated approach), assessment of need, Education, Health and Care Plans, provision at risk of breaking down, supporting appropriate challenge, complaints, exclusions, mediation, appeals, tribunals and advice around legislation. We don't make decisions for Parents/Carers, Children or Young People or on their behalf or attend meetings in their absence.
- Signposting and information about what support is available (the Local Offer, Voluntary and National Organisations).
- Provide representation at local and regional meetings for IASS, Education, Health and Social Care when appropriate and required.
- Endeavour to respond to all queries in a timely manner.

Our service offer to Professionals

Our service covers all aspects of special educational needs and disabilities related areas, from promoting inclusion and reasonable adjustments, navigating and understanding SEND processes and SEND law, supporting with education, social care and health concerns (where SEND may or has been identified), signposting to other services, supporting with disagreement resolution and so forth.

Professionals can;

- Use our service to learn about our function as 'SENDIASS', and the information, advice and support service that we offer.
- Get advice from us without discussing individuals, as well as use the information we offer to build on their own knowledge and understanding.
- Work with us by signposting Parents/Carers, Children and Young People in need to SENDIASS and encouraging them to visit our website, where they can find resources and contact information.
- Help us provide effective information, advice and support to Parents/Carers, Children and Young People by being clear about any additional support needs individuals may have. This will mean that we are able to make adjustments in how we make information available. For example, those that may need shorter meetings or simplified information.
- Contact us for training and information sessions on SEND e.g. navigating and understanding SEN support from early years to post-19, reasonable adjustments, ways of accessing services to support education, and signposting to other services, Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and Annual Reviews, SEND Law, disagreement resolution – complaints, exclusions, appeals and tribunals.
- Work in partnership with us to support children and young people with special educational needs, and their parent/carers, in enabling children and young people with SEND to reach their best possible outcomes in life.

Our work

Staffing and Training: The service is staffed by 1 full-time SENDIASS Manager, who has successfully completed levels 1-3 of the Independent Parental Special Education Advice (IPSEA) SEN Advisers Legal Training.

Casework: The service creates a case file and record for each Parent/Carer, Child or Young Person who accesses the service. We use the following intervention levels below set by the Council for Disabled Children (CDC). This helps us to monitor the complexity of casework and the level of support needed, as this can vary greatly. The number of cases worked on within this academic year is **182** (Combination of new (first-time contacts) and pre existing (Currently/previously known to the service). However under '**1 case**' there has often been multiple enquiries/involvements which sometimes again doesn't not fully reflected the work involved. An example of this is;

- A parent/carer, child or young person contacts the service for some generic service offer information then contacts the service again for advice and support on SEN Support / Graduated Approach, then again when going through statutory assessment process, then to make support them with a complaint, and then to support them with an appeal to the tribunal. All of those pieces of work would come under '**1 case file and record**'

The intervention levels are detailed below;

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Level 1 | <u>Information</u> General Information and Signposting | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Clarification of SENDIASS' remit and SEND Law.- Signposting to services/groups, local offer and relevant resources/websites. |
| Level 2 | <u>Advice</u> Information tailored to specific circumstances and advice around options and processes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Some casework and advocacy is required.- Help with communicating with School/LA/Services.- Navigating the EHCNA/EHCP process.- Understanding SEND Law and documentation. |
| Level 3 | <u>Support</u> To go through processes, advocacy and representation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Complex and ongoing casework/advocacy.- Assistance in overcoming serious breakdown in communications with school/LA/other services.- Assistance in overcoming breaches of SEND Law.- Assistance with complaints procedures.- Requiring intensive support due to personal circumstances (e.g. low literacy levels, learning |

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| | | <p>or sensory difficulties, or English as an additional language).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representation at/for a series of School/Professional Meetings and EHCP/Annual Review Multi-agency meetings. - SENDIASS undertaking key working roles with other agencies. |
| Level 4 | <u>Intensive Support</u> To go through processes, advocacy and representation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation and/or representation with Mediation and First Tier (SEND) Tribunal (including Disability discrimination). - Preparation and/or representation with complaints to First Tier (SEND) Tribunal, Ombudsman, Judicial Review, or relevant services. |

- Over the last 12 months the service has been asked by parent/carers, children and young people to attend an increased number of face-to-face and virtual meetings to offer support due to experiencing difficulties around the following:-
 - SEN support and reasonable adjustments.
 - Requests for EHC needs assessment.
 - Fixed-term and permanent exclusions.
 - Lack of spaces in both mainstream and specialist provisions.
 - Challenging and appealing decisions.
 - Challenges in communication with professionals and services.
 - School attendance/Non-attendance including issues around anxiety, mental health and those going through the Neuro Development pathway process.

Our work with professionals and services

- **North East SENDIASS Regional Network Group (NEIASS):** The service continues its membership of being a part of the regional SENDIASS group, comprising of the 12 local authorities SENDIASS represented in the region. Managers/Lead representatives from each local authority meet up to 4 times a year. The group provides a confidential and supportive space for the managers/leads to discuss and share issues, national and regional developments, explore new funding initiatives and access tools and resources, as well as to access and develop training opportunities to increase knowledge and skills to enrich the service offers across the region and serves as a link to the National IAS Network.
- **Parent Carer Forum and Hartlepool Carers:** The service continues to work in partnership with the Parent Carer Forum - 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future (PCF) and Hartlepool Carers to raises awareness amongst Parent/Carers, Children and Young People of the services and support available. We provide SENDIASS drop-in sessions at Hartlepool Carers and attend monthly Multi-agency Parent Carer drop-in sessions arranged by PCF. Whenever possible, the service also attends regular information days and steering group meetings which are organised by PCF and information shared via the PCF Face Book page.
- **SEND Operational Group:** The service continues to engage and contribute to the Local Authority's SEND Operational Group and SEND Improvement Plan. This allows us to work collaboratively with the Local Authority, Parent Carer Forum, Health and other services to discuss and review the current local offer of services and provide verbal feedback. We also attend training and workshop events to increase the knowledge and skills of SENDIASS staff as and when appropriate.
- **Hartlepool Family Hubs and In-Studio:** The service is currently working with Hartlepool Family Hubs, In-Studio and the Parent Carer Forum to develop a brand new website. We hope this will increase the digital offer to Parent/Carers, Children and Young People to enable greater access to up- to date advice, support and information in a way which is accessible to all.

Our Developments and Priorities

Over the next 12 months we will look to continue our work towards the following developments and priorities to;

- Continue to provide and develop a service that can meet local demand and increase parents/carers, children, young people and professional's knowledge of SEND guidance and legislation.
- Continue to develop and enhance our digital offer and resources to parents/carers, children and young people so appropriate up to date advice, support and information is accessed, in formats which is accessible to all.
- Continue to provide varied drop-ins, events and training to parents/carers, children, young people and professional's about SEND information, advice and topics where further information is beneficial.
- Enhance, obtain and review feedback from parents/carers, children and young people on the service to influence and support service design and delivery.
- Continue to access and attend events and training to further develop knowledge and skills within service to enrich the service offer to parents/carers, children, young people.
- Review data collection methods and analysis in relation to themes around SEND issues and service interventions.
- Continue to benchmark against all of the Minimum Standards for SEND Information, Advice and Support Services as set out by the Council for Disabled Children (CDC).

Please contact us if you need any further information regarding our report **OR** if you need any information, advice and support, **we are here to help!**

Hartlepool Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

Location: Centre for Excellence in Teaching & Learning, Brierton Lane,
Hartlepool, TS25 4AF

Opening Times: Monday - Thursday 9am - 5pm and Fridays 9am - 4.30pm.

Telephone: 01429 – 284876 (If not available, then please leave us a message on our 24hr voicemail system)

Email: sendiass@hartlepool.gov.uk

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

19TH NOVEMBER 2024



Subject: SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

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

Decision Type: For information

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:

- where people will be safe and protected from harm.
- of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on pupil attendance and absences in Hartlepool and to inform members on legislation changes which took effect in September 2024.
- 2.2 The report will also highlight what actions are being taken to support improvements in school attendance.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 School attendance is not only important for academic achievement and well-being but also supports the holistic development of children and young people as citizens within their community.
- 3.2 This report highlights pupil attendance and absence data for the previous three academic years. The data for the academic year 2023/24 is for the autumn and spring terms combined.

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Secondary School and Academy Attendance

- 4.1 The table below displays attendance rates across the local authority for all secondary schools and academies compared with national data figures.

| | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24* |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|----------|
| School All | 90.1% | 89.3% | 89.7% |
| School Boys | 90.3% | 89.4% | 90.3% |
| School Girls | 89.8% | 89.1% | 89.0% |
| National All | 91.4% | 91.0% | 91.3% |
| National Boys | 91.7% | 91.4% | 91.6% |
| National Girls | 91.0% | 90.6% | 91.0% |

*Autumn term 23 and Spring term 24 combined

Primary School and Academy Attendance

- 4.2 The table below displays attendance and absence rates across primary schools and academies compared with national data figures.

| | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24* |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|----------|
| School All | 93.6% | 93.9% | 94.4% |
| School Boys | 93.5% | 93.8% | 94.3% |
| School Girls | 93.7% | 94.0% | 94.5% |
| National All | 93.8% | 93.7% | 94.0% |
| National Boys | 93.7% | 93.6% | 93.9% |
| National Girls | 93.9% | 93.8% | 94.2% |

*Autumn term 23 and Spring term 24 combined

- 4.3 The tables below display the level of persistent absence across the local authority for primary and secondary schools and academies compared with national data figures.

| Secondary | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| | 2021-22 | | 2022-23 | | 2023-24* | |
| School All | 1786 | 29.6% | 1942 | 31.7% | 1773 | 28.6% |
| School Boys | 885 | 26.4% | 983 | 26.4% | 853 | 27.0% |
| School Girls | 901 | 30.3% | 959 | 32.0% | 920 | 30.3% |
| National All | - | 26.7% | - | 27.7% | - | 23.8% |
| National Boys | - | 25.5% | - | 26.3% | - | 23.2% |
| National Girls | - | 27.8% | - | 29.2% | - | 24.3% |

*Autumn term 23 and Spring term 24 combined

| Primary | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| | 2021-22 | | 2022-23 | | 2023-24* | |
| School All | 1347 | 19.2% | 1143 | 17.2% | 1154 | 16.6% |
| School Boys | 706 | 19.7% | 609 | 17.9% | 582 | 16.4% |
| School Girls | 641 | 18.8% | 534 | 16.5% | 572 | 16.8% |
| National All | - | 18.2% | - | 17.7% | - | 17.3% |
| National Boys | - | 8.6% | - | 18.5% | - | 17.5% |
| National Girls | - | 7.6% | - | 17.9% | - | 16.9% |

*Autumn term 23 and Spring term 24 combined

- 4.4 The Department for Education (DfE) considers a pupil persistently absent if their attendance rate is 90% or less (missing 10% of possible sessions). Once a pupil has been absent for 21 days (42 sessions), regardless of the reason for absence, they cannot move out of the persistent absence category and will remain a persistent absentee for the whole academic year.
- 4.5 The above tables show Hartlepool primary schools and academies are performing above the national average for attendance and below the national average for persistent absence. However, despite an increase in the overall attendance rate and a decrease in the persistent absentee rates across the secondary sector, the gap between national averages continues with a 1.6% gap. The persistent absence rate is 4.8% higher than the national average. In the academic year 2023-24.
- 4.6 The tables below display the levels of severely absent pupils across the local authority for primary and secondary schools and academies. The DfE considers a pupil severely absent if their attendance rate is 50% or less. National comparisons are currently not published by the DfE for this cohort, however, DfE has collected such data since 2022-23.

| Secondary | | | | |
|--------------|---------|------|----------|------|
| | 2022-23 | | 2023-24* | |
| School All | 334 | 5.5% | 383 | 6.2% |
| School Boys | 161 | 5.2% | 171 | 5.4% |
| School Girls | 173 | 5.8% | 212 | 7.0% |

*Autumn term 23 and Spring term 24 combined

| Primary | | | | |
|--------------|---------|------|----------|------|
| | 2022-23 | | 2023-24* | |
| School All | 22 | 0.3% | 23 | 0.3% |
| School Boys | 13 | 0.4% | 14 | 0.4% |
| School Girls | 9 | 0.3% | 9 | 0.3% |

*Autumn term 23 and Spring term 24 combined

- 4.7 The reasons for irregular attendance are multiple and there is usually no single cause for poor attendance. The main reasons for absence across the school-age population in Hartlepool are outlined in the tables below.

Secondary Schools and Academies Absence Codes

| Reasons for absence | | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| Code | Description | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24* | National |
| E | Suspended | 4.6% | 6.2% | 9.7% | 2.9% |
| I | Illness | 40.2% | 30.1% | 25.7% | 50.8% |
| O | Other Unauthorised | 37.8% | 45.3% | 45.9% | 28.8% |

Primary Schools and Academies Absence Codes

| Reasons for absence | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| Code | Description | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023.24* | National |
| I | Illness | 46.5% | 46.5% | 58.% | 65% |
| G | Family Hol (Not Agreed) | 12.0% | 15.4% | 16.7% | 13.1% |
| O | Other Unauthorised | 12.1% | 15.6% | 12% | 8.1% |

- 4.8 Illness, unauthorised holidays in term time, unauthorised absence and suspensions are the main reasons for absence. Unauthorised absence in both primary and secondary schools and academies is above the national average. The noticeable difference between secondary schools and academies is linked to attendance policies in several academy trusts which challenge the reasons for absence when a pupil's attendance falls below 97%.

The Attendance Service

- 4.9 The Attendance Team currently consists of an Inclusion Coordinator, an Assistant Inclusion Coordinator, four Attendance Officers and one Attendance Assistant. The team undertakes the statutory duties concerning:

- School Attendance;
- Children Missing or Not Receiving a Suitable Education;
- Child Employment and Licensing; and
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion from schools or academies.

- 4.10 The Attendance Team offers a statutory service and a traded service to all schools and academies within Hartlepool. Traded services are provided in

line with Working Together to Improve Attendance guidance which became statutory from the 19th August 2024 (**See Background Papers**).

4.11 The statutory service offered to all schools and academies includes the following:

- Every school and academy is allocated a named Attendance Officer to provide advice and guidance about attendance concerns.
- Every school and academy is offered Targeted Support Meetings based on their attendance profiles.
- The Attendance Officer will attend the Team around the School Meetings.
- The team accepts referrals from schools and academies when attendance is 80% or below. At least 40 sessions of absences must be unauthorised in the 20 school weeks before the referral. In line with the statutory guidance, schools and academies must be able to demonstrate that they have attempted to address any barriers to school attendance in a supportive multi-agency way, which must be evidenced at the point of referral.
- The team accepts a referral if a pupil has had an unauthorised absence for two continuous weeks or more and the school or academy has been unable to make contact with the parent/carer.
- The team issues Penalty Notices in line with the new national framework (issued by the DfE). Penalty Notices are issued for unauthorised absence of 10 or more sessions in a 10 week period.
- On receipt of a 'Children Missing from Education' referral form, the Team will attempt to locate a pupil who is missing from education or has failed to start school (when a child has reached compulsory school attendance age).

4.12 Chapter 2 of Working Together to Improve Attendance Statutory Guidance specifies what services the Local Authority can trade with schools and academies. In response, the Council has revised the service offer and is now working jointly with schools supporting them to deliver the expectations of schools and academies to provide a support-first approach to attendance. Packages are bespoke to each school and academy.

4.13 75% (28 out of 37 schools and academies) have continued to purchase additional traded services from the Attendance Team. The additional services purchased range from three days across an academic year to three days per week, depending on circumstances. The Team is also now delivering services to two schools within a neighbouring authority.

4.14 The Local Authority Attendance Team has access to several legal actions for the offence of irregular school attendance. These include the following:

- School Attendance Order;
- Parenting Contract ;
- Education Supervision Order;

- Fine (Penalty Notice); and/or
- Prosecution under sections 444 and 444 (1a) of The Education Act 1996.

- 4.15 In the academic year 2023/24 the Attendance Team issued 192 Penalty Notices and prosecuted on 181 occasions. The use of legal sanctions is only to be considered as a last resort when all interventions and support have failed to bring about an improvement in attendance.

New Guidance

- 4.16 In August 2024 the Department for Education issued new statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. The guidance states that school attendance should no longer be a single agency responsibility and now places emphasis on improving school attendance by use of a multi-agency approach and that barriers to attendance can be removed with the right support from the most appropriate agencies.
- 4.17 From September 2024 all schools and academies must upload and share attendance data with the DfE portal on a daily basis. The portal allows the Local Authority to access all schools and academies' attendance and absence data in a timely manner.

What's Happening Now.

- 4.18 The Local Authority held an attendance conference with Kevin Burns from the DfE in July 2024 with officers from across services including the voluntary sector. Following on from this a working group has been convened with meetings planned across the academic year to look at key priorities to improve attendance.
- 4.19 A Penalty Notice Code of Conduct (**Appendix 1**) has been agreed by all schools and academies which follows the National Framework issued by the DfE. The penalty notice fine has increased from £60 and £120 reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. If the fine is not paid this increases to £160 payable by day 28. When a second penalty notice is issued there is no reduction for early repayment, the fine is £160 payable within 28 days. A parent can only be issued two penalty notices per child in three years. This means that should a referral be received for a third penalty notice within the timescale, the Local Authority must consider other legal options such as prosecution.
- 4.20 The Local Authority is promoting the DfE campaign "Moments Matter, Attendance Counts" with all key stakeholders. This reinforces that all the parents/carers and children's workforce understand the serious implications of poor school attendance on long-term life opportunities.

- 4.21 The Attendance Team is working closely with schools, academies and stakeholders to implement the changes outlined within the statutory guidance. The Team will hold monthly virtual attendance drop-in sessions with schools that provide support to anyone working with a child where school attendance is a concerning issue.
- 4.22 The Local Authority is reviewing current policies and procedures in relation to the new legislation regarding irregular school attendance. We aim to create a clearly defined pathway for schools, families and other professionals to support them in setting clear expectations around attendance and identify and support vulnerable groups by responding to attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.23 The Attendance Team is working jointly with Children's Social Care and has created the Hartlepool Attendance Referral Panel (HART). The panel will meet half-termly to discuss referrals from schools and academies for pupils who are identified as severely absent. The panel will provide the school or academy with advice and guidance about the referrals.
- 4.24 The Virtual School & Attendance Team are now co-located and will focus on collaborating with schools, academies and relevant professionals to monitor and improve the attendance of vulnerable children.
- 4.25 The five secondary schools in Hartlepool have been invited to take part in an Attendance Mentoring programme lead by ETIO on behalf of the DfE. This is still in very early stages and the details are to be finalised with a view to rolling out in March 2025.

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

| | |
|--|--|
| RISK IMPLICATIONS | There are no risk implications. |
| FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS | There are no financial considerations contained in this report. |
| LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS | There are no legal considerations contained in this report. |
| CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY | There are no child and family poverty considerations contained in this report. |
| EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS | There are no equality and diversity considerations contained in this report. |

| | |
|--|--|
| STAFF CONSIDERATIONS | There are no staffing considerations contained in this report. |
| ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS | There are no asset management consideration contained in this report. |
| ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS | There are no environment, sustainability and climate change considerations contained in this report. |
| CONSULTATION | No consultation was required in the production of this report. |

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Children's Services Committee is asked to note this report and the work of the School Attendance Team in delivering the Local Authority statutory functions regarding the offence of irregular school attendance.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The recommendation is to ensure the Local Authority is compliant with statutory duties relating to the offence of irregular school attendance.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Department for Education Working Together to Improve Attendance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf301e253aee7aafdbdfea/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf

9. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Jackie Webb
Inclusion Coordinator
jackie.webb@hartlepool.gov.uk
(01429) 522352

Sign Off:-

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Managing Director | Date: 21/10/2024 |
| Director of Finance, IT and Digital | Date: 21/10/2024 |
| Director of Legal, Governance and HR | Date: 21/10/2024 |

Appendix 1



Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices for school absence – September 2024

School Attendance Team – Updated July 2024

Introduction

1. The purpose of this code of conduct is to ensure that Penalty Notices for school absence are issued in a manner that is fair and consistent across Hartlepool Borough Council. The code sets out the arrangements for administering Penalty Notices in Hartlepool and must be adhered to. The code complies with relevant regulations and the Department for Education's National Framework for Penalty Notices as set out in the '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' statutory guidance.

Consultation

2. This code has been drawn up in consultation with Head Teachers and governing bodies of state-funded schools and the local Police force.

Legal basis

3. Penalty notices may be issued to a parent as an alternative to prosecution for irregular school attendance under s444 of the Education Act 1996. They can only be issued in relation to pupils of compulsory school age in maintained schools, pupil referral units, academy schools, AP academies, and certain off-site places as set out in section 444A(1)(b).
4. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (and subsequent amendments) set out how Penalty Notices for school absence must be used.
5. A Penalty Notice can only be issued by an authorised officer, which for Hartlepool Borough Council will be a Local Authority Officer.
6. The National Framework for Penalty Notices is published in statutory guidance '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)'. It provides further National guidance on the operation of Penalty Notice schemes for school absence in England.
7. Penalty Notices can be issued to anyone who has parental responsibility for a child or who has care of the child, as set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996. Penalty Notices can be issued to those who have day-to-day responsibility for the pupil's attendance, or any parent/carers who has allowed the absence (regardless of which parent/carers has applied for the leave of absence).

Rationale

8. Research published by the Department for Education in May 2022 found pupils with higher attainment at KS2 and KS4 had lower levels of absence over the key stage compared to those with lower attainment.
 - Pupils who did not achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and Maths in 2019 had an overall absence rate of 4.7% over the key stage, compared with 3.5% among pupils who achieved the expected standard and 2.7% among those who achieved the higher standard.
 - Pupils who did not achieve grade 9 to 4 in English and Maths GCSEs in 2019 had an overall absence rate of 8.8% over the key stage, compared with 5.2% among pupils who achieved a grade 4 and 3.7% among pupils who achieved grade 9 to 5 in both English and Maths.

9. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and often the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.
10. Where difficulties arise with school attendance, professionals should take a 'support first' approach in line with the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance, only resorting to legal enforcement when necessary. The aim is that the need for legal enforcement is reduced by taking a supportive approach to tackle the barriers to attendance and intervening early before absence becomes entrenched.
11. The National Framework for Penalty Notices is based on the principles that Penalty Notices should only be used in cases where:
 - support is not appropriate (e.g. a term time holiday) or where support has been provided and not engaged with or not worked, and
 - they are the most appropriate tool to change parent/carer behaviour and improve attendance for that particular family.

When may a Penalty Notice for absence be appropriate?

12. When a school becomes aware that the National threshold has been met, they must consider whether a Penalty Notice can and should be issued or not. The National threshold has been met when a pupil has been recorded as absent for 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) within 10 school weeks, with one of, or a combination of the following codes:
 - a) code G (the pupil is absent without authorisation for the purpose of leave in term time),
 - b) code O (none of the other rows of Table 3 in regulation 10(3) of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies), and
 - c) code U (the pupil attended after the taking of the register ended but before the end of the session, where no other code applies)
13. Hartlepool Borough Council will consider issuing Penalty Notices within the National framework in the following circumstances:
 - Ongoing unauthorised absence - When:
 - a pupil has had a minimum of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a period of 10 school weeks;
 - a school has offered support in relation to school attendance and;
 - despite the support offered by the school, there has been little improvement in the pupil's attendance; or a notice to improve has been issued but there has not been the required improvement over a six-week period.
 - Unauthorised Leave in Term Time - When:
 - a pupil has been taken on an unauthorised "leave of absence" (code G) from school or a place of alternative educational provision for minimum of 10 continuous sessions (five days) and;
 - the school have followed the relevant procedures and referred to the Local Authority in order for, a Penalty Notice to be considered.
 - Where a request for a leave of absence has not been completed by parent/carer, and school have reason to believe that the child was taken on an unauthorised holiday in term time, the onus is on the parent/carer to

provide evidence to the School to the contrary, to avoid a Penalty Notice being considered.

- **Suspended Child in a Public Place - When:**
 - a child of compulsory school age is suspended on disciplinary grounds, the parent of that child, provided they have been served with Notice under Section 104 of the act, must ensure that the child is not present in a public place during school hours during the first five days of that exclusion without reasonable justification. Where parents fail to ensure their child is not in a public place under these circumstances, a Penalty Notice may be issued.
14. If in an individual case the Local Authority believes a Penalty Notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. This will be in exceptional circumstances only, and the issuing of Penalty Notices in these circumstances can only be authorised by a manager within the Attendance Service.
15. If repeated Penalty Notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool. The National Framework for Penalty Notices sets out that a maximum of 2 Penalty Notices per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period. If the National threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, the Local Authority will consider direct prosecution under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996.
16. For the purpose of the escalation process, previous Penalty Notices include those not paid (including where prosecution was taken forward if the parent/carer pleaded guilty or was found guilty) but not those which were withdrawn. Where Penalty Notices are not paid for the first offence, the Local Authority will go straight to prosecution for a second offence under section 444 (1) of the Act.
17. Though not a requirement of the framework, the Local Authority may, in cases of high levels of unauthorised absence including where unauthorised leave in term time of 30 school days or more has been taken, decide not to issue a Penalty Notice, but instead prosecute the parent/carer under sections 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Act.

Key considerations prior to the issue of a Penalty Notice for school absence

18. The following considerations will be made by the Local Authority before issuing a Penalty Notice to ensure consistency of approach:
- In cases where support is not appropriate (for example, for leave in term time), consider on a case-by-case basis:
 - Is a Penalty Notice the best available tool to improve attendance and change parental behaviour for this particular family or would one of the other legal interventions be more appropriate?
 - Is issuing a Penalty Notice in this case appropriate after considering any obligations under the Equality Act 2010
 - Is it in the public interest to issue a Penalty Notice in this case given the Local Authority would be accepting responsibility for any resulting prosecution for the original offence in cases of non-payment?
 - In cases where support is appropriate, consider on a case-by-case basis:

- Has sufficient support already been provided? Sufficient support will usually include an offer of Early Help; the offer of a formal support meeting; and the offer of an attendance contract.
- Is a Penalty Notice the best available tool to improve attendance and change parent/carer behaviour for this particular family or would one of the other legal interventions be more appropriate?
- Is issuing a Penalty Notice in this case appropriate after considering any obligations under the Equality Act 2010
- Is it in the public interest to issue a Penalty Notice in this case given the Local Authority would be responsible for any resulting prosecution for the original offence in cases of non-payment?

If the answer to the above questions is 'yes', then a Penalty Notice (or a notice to improve in cases where support is appropriate) will usually be issued.

Notice to improve

19. A notice to improve is a final opportunity for a parent/carer to engage in support and improve attendance before a Penalty Notice is issued, in cases of ongoing unauthorised absence from school. If the National threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent/carer, or have not worked, a Notice to Improve may be sent to give parent/carer(s) a final chance to engage in support. The Local Authority can choose not to use one in any case, including cases where support is appropriate, but they do not expect a Notice to Improve would have any impact on a parent/carer's behaviour (e.g. because the parent/carer has already received one for a similar offence).
20. Decisions as to whether a Notice to Improve or other actions should be taken will be made by the Local Authority once a referral is made by the school.
21. If a Notice to Improve is issued, the Local Authority will notify the school and ask for the child's attendance to be monitored for a maximum of six weeks. Should there be any further unauthorised absence accrued within the improvement period, the Local Authority must be advised immediately by the school and a Penalty Notice will be considered.
22. Hartlepool Borough Council issues all education Penalty Notices in Hartlepool.
23. In order to request for a Penalty Notice or disposals to be considered the school must complete the referral form within two weeks of the threshold being reached, and include the evidence specified on the referral form and send it to:
AttendanceTeam@hartlepool.gov.uk
24. On receipt of the referral the Local Authority will review the evidence and decide whether sufficient support has been provided before issuing a Penalty Notice.
25. The Local Authority will inform the school about whether Penalty Notices are paid, withdrawn or prosecuted for non-payment. They will do this by contacting the school by email as soon as possible regarding the outcome of the referral.

26. Where pupils move between Local Authority areas, Hartlepool can be contacted on penaltynotice@hartlepool.gov.uk to find out if Penalty Notices have been issued previously.
27. Where pupils attend school in Hartlepool but live in a neighbouring Local Authority Hartlepool Borough Council will work with neighbouring Local Authorities to set out how we will work together. This might include how the Local Authority will liaise with the home Local Authority in cases where a Penalty Notice is being considered and support is appropriate, and that support is being provided by the home Local Authority.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

19TH NOVEMBER 2024



Subject: CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION – ANNUAL REPORT

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

Decision Type: For information

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:

- Where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide an up-to-date report about number of children identified and tracked as a child missing education.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Children Missing Education (CME) statutory guidance places statutory functions on Local Authorities for tracking and identifying children who are missing from or not receiving a suitable education.
- 3.2 The statutory guidance sets out the expectations and responsibilities for local authorities and schools to work collaboratively and effectively to identify, monitor, track and trace all children who are at risk of or missing from education. Schools must notify and provide the local authority with the full details and contact information of all children who they admit to the school register. In Hartlepool, children on a school roll are added to the EYES system at the point they are admitted to a school. All maintained schools and academies update the details and destination of pupils and this information is imported into this database daily. Details of pupils who are admitted to and removed from the roll of independent schools are sent directly to the

Attendance Team. Local Authorities are required to make joint “reasonable” enquiries to locate children who are missing from education.

- 3.3 New statutory guidance was issued in August 2024, clearly outlining the circumstance when pupils be removed from the school roll. These are listed in Annex A of the guidance. There are 12 sections listed in Annex A and removal from the school roll for any reasons not listed in Annex A is illegal.
- 3.4 The explanation of Annex A has been shared with all schools in Hartlepool and it is on the reverse of the CME referral form.
- 3.5 Ofsted has placed an increasing focus on the off rolling of pupils nationally as the off rolling of pupils and the safeguarding implications relating to children missing education alongside its relationship to children who are home educated is a government priority.
- 3.6 Key messages around CME is disseminated to school staff with an increasing focus on the link between children who are electively home educated and children missing education. Information on the illegal removal from the roll is discussed with school staff during Targeted Support Meetings with all schools and academies. All schools and academies share their daily attendance on the DfE Portal, allowing the School Attendance Officers to see any child who has been removed from the roll. The School Attendance Officer will check that the school has a destination for all leavers if they haven't then these pupils will be referred as a CME.
- 3.7 The Attendance Team work with school attendance champions to ensure schools are fully aware of their responsibilities relating to Children Missing Education by providing support, guidance and challenge where appropriate.
- 3.8 Amendments to the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance assists with the tracking of children missing education as schools should have more than one contact for children they admit on to the school roll. Schools and academies now have email addresses for the majority of families; using emails addresses to make contact with families has enhanced the tracking of some pupils, as parents and carers do not change their email addresses as frequently as they change their mobile numbers.
- 3.9 The number of children missing education referrals from schools and enquiries from other local authorities during this academic year increased from 168 in the academic year 2022-23 to 193 in the academic year 2023-24
- 3.10 Once the Attendance Team has exhausted all available avenues to locate a child, their details are added to the Hartlepool Inclusion Panel (HIP) agenda, under the category of missing. Members of the multi-agency panel share any information they may hold which might assist with track the child.
- 3.11 Following discussion at HIP, if the child's whereabouts remain unknown they are placed on the agenda for discussion at a Multi-Agency Child Exploitation meeting (MACE). If no further information comes to light which assists with

tracking the child it is at this point a letter is sent to the family's last registered GP alerting them that the family are missing from education and a flag is then added to their medical notes. If the child or family member subsequently attends A & E or registers with another GP their previous practice will share the child's whereabouts with the Inclusion and Attendance Coordinator.

- 3.12 Schools and academies are required to add the child's details onto the School to School (S2S) website if they cannot be located after 4 weeks. The child is then be removed from the roll and the Attendance Team take responsibility for the continued tracking of the child and family.

Academic Year 2023-24

| Month of Referral | Total number of Referrals | Number Traced |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| September | 34 | 34 |
| October | 20 | 20 |
| November | 13 | 13 |
| December | 4 | 4 |
| January | 28 | 28 |
| February | 10 | 10 |
| March | 18 | 18 |
| April | 29 | 29 |
| May | 12 | 12 |
| June | 15 | 15 |
| July | 8 | 5 |
| Total | 193 | 190 |

In addition to the above CME referrals received from schools/services within Hartlepool, a further 112 referrals were received other local authorities. Of the 112 referrals received 89, became registered pupils at a Hartlepool school. The remaining untraced referrals were referred back to referring authority, as we had no evidence indicating that, the family were residing in Hartlepool.

- 3.13 Of the 193 CME referrals made in 2023/24 190 children have been successfully traced at the time of writing this report. A further 19 children remain open as CME. The referrals for these children are historic cases and are carried forward each academic year. Investigations in relation to the 19 children indicate that they have all left the country and moved abroad. These children will remain as CME until they reach the statutory school leaving age and are subject to ongoing enquires.

CME Referrals by National Curriculum Year 2023-2

| NCY | Number of Referrals | Number Traced |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Pre Admission | 22 | 22* |
| 1 | 12 | 12 |
| 2 | 18 | 18 |
| 3 | 10 | 10 |
| 4 | 18 | 17 |
| 5 | 11 | 11 |
| 6 | 14 | 14 |
| Primary Total | 105 | 104 |
| 7 | 15 | 15 |
| 8 | 12 | 11 |
| 9 | 18 | 18 |
| 10 | 30 | 29 |
| 11 | 13 | 13 |
| Secondary Total | 88 | 86 |
| Grand Total | 193 | 190 |

- 3.14 88, referrals were made in respect of secondary-aged children. 105, referrals were made in respect of primary-aged children or pre-admission-age children. The CME procedures are not statutory for non-compulsory school age (children become statutory school age the term following their fifth birthday). However, referrals are actioned when received for preschool children but not all can be tracked into education as attendance at nursery is non-compulsory. This cohort of preschool children will have their details checked on the Keys to Success Database the term following their fifth birthday.
- 3.15 With regard to those who remain missing, enquiries are ongoing. Reasonable enquiries will continue in an attempt to trace these children. The referral remains open to the Attendance Team and checks are made with Keys to Success and MACE annually until the child ceases to be of statutory school age.

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 The Local Authority guidance for Children Missing Education is currently under review and will be issued to schools early in November 2024, this is to ensure the guidance is compliant with the new Working Together to Improve School Attendance and the updated CME guidance which was issued in August 2024.

- 4.2 School Attendance Team continues to deliver the Local Authority statutory functions in relation to Children Missing Education.

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

| | |
|--|--|
| RISK IMPLICATIONS | There are no risk implications. |
| FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS | There are no financial considerations contained in this report. |
| LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS | There are no legal considerations contained in this report. |
| CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY | There are no child and family poverty considerations contained in this report. |
| EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS | There are no equality and diversity considerations contained in this report. |
| STAFF CONSIDERATIONS | There are no staffing considerations contained in this report. |
| ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS | There are no asset management consideration contained in this report. |
| ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS | There are no environment, sustainability and climate change considerations contained in this report. |
| CONSULTATION | No consultation was required in the production of this report. |

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Committee is asked to note this report and the work of the School Attendance Team to deliver the Local Authority statutory functions in relation to Children Missing Education.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The recommendation is to ensure the Local Authority is compliant with statutory duties in relation to Children Missing Education.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None.

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

Jackie Webb
Inclusion Coordinator
jackie.webb@hartlepool.gov.uk
(01429) 522352

Sign Off:-

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Managing Director | Date: 21/10/2024 |
| Director of Finance, IT and Digital | Date: 18/10/2024 |
| Director of Legal, Governance and HR | Date: 18/10/2024 |

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

19TH NOVEMBER 2024



Subject: ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION
Report of: Executive Director, Children's and Joint Commissioning Services
Decision Type: For information

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:

- where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide updated information in relation to Elective Home Education (EHE).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 There continues to be rising numbers of children being removed from school to receive elective home education. With a significant percentage increase in the last year.

The table below shows the number of children receiving EHE at the school census point on October each year.

| Number EHE | Oct 19 | Oct 20 | Oct 21 | Oct 22 | Oct 23 | Oct 24 |
|-------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Male | 21 | 32 | 41 | 52 | 61 | 120 |
| Female | 34 | 47 | 67 | 80 | 109 | 139 |
| Total | 55 | 79 | 108 | 132 | 170 | 259 |
| % increase | | 43.6 | 36.7 | 22.2 | 28.8 | 52.4 |

The table below shows the year groups of the children currently EHE

| Year Grp | Oct 23 | Oct 24 |
|----------|--------|--------|
| REC | 2 | 3 |
| Year 1 | 9 | 6 |
| Year 2 | 7 | 12 |
| Year 3 | 9 | 6 |
| Year 4 | 5 | 20 |
| Year 5 | 10 | 13 |
| Year 6 | 6 | 15 |
| Year 7 | 13 | 11 |
| Year 8 | 17 | 33 |
| Year 9 | 28 | 31 |
| Year 10 | 27 | 48 |
| Year 11 | 37 | 58 |
| Post 16 | 0 | 3 |

3.2 Special Educational Needs

At present **59** children receiving EHE have identified Special Educational Needs.

| SEN | Number children with SEN | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|----------|----------|
| | Oct 2022 | Oct 2023 | Oct 2024 |
| EHCP | 1 | 2 | 11 |
| SEN Support | 12 | 32 | 48 |

| Primary SEN Need | Number of children (EHCP) | Number of children (SEN Support) |
|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ASD | 6 | 5 |
| SEMH | 1 | 7 |
| SLCD | 0 | 0 |
| MLD | 3 | 8 |
| Physical | 0 | 1 |
| SpLD | 0 | 4 |
| C & I | 1 | 10 |
| C & L | 0 | 13 |

ASD Autism Spectrum
 SEMH Social, Emotional, Mental Health
 SLCD Speech, Language, Communication Difficulties
 MLD Moderate Learning Difficulties
 SpLD Specific Learning Difficulties
 C & I Communication and Interaction
 C & L Cognition & Learning

3.3 Social Care Involvement

There are currently **10** children open to social care receiving elective home education.

| Social Care Involvement | No of children |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Early Help | 0 |
| Child in Need | 9 |
| Child Protection | 1 |
| Open referral | 10 |

The Virtual School team has excellent relationships with social care and link with the children's allocated workers regularly. Social workers are invited to EHE meetings with parents.

3.4 Reasons for Removal

The table below outlines the primary reason as outlined by parents for children being electively home educated.

| Reason | Number of Children | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | Oct 23 | Oct 24 |
| Alternative to exclusion | 3 | 6 |
| Attendance | 3 | 11 |
| Awaiting school place | 1 | 4 |
| Bullying | 8 | 22 |
| Educated in home language | 0 | 0 |
| General dissatisfaction with school | 32 | 38 |
| Health/ Mental health | 28 | 51 |
| Lifestyle (including GRT) | 6 | 8 |
| Not transferring to Primary | 0 | 0 |
| Not transferring to secondary | 0 | 0 |
| Parental Choice | 57 | 68 |
| Parental Choice- Covid | 6 | 5 |
| Parental Choice- SEND | 2 | 20 |
| Permenant Exclusion | 0 | 1 |
| Pregnancy | 1 | 1 |
| Relationship breakdown with school | 0 | 1 |
| Unknown | 23 | 23 |

3.5 Schools Children ceased to attend due to EHE

| School | Number of Children | |
|--|--------------------|--------|
| | Oct 23 | Oct 24 |
| Brougham | 1 | 1 |
| Clavering | 2 | 2 |
| Eldon Grove | 5 | 6 |
| Eskdale | 1 | 0 |
| Fens | 3 | 5 |
| Golden Flatts | 1 | 1 |
| Grange | 1 | 1 |
| Greatham | 1 | 1 |
| Hart & Elwick | 3 | 3 |
| Jesmond Gardens | 3 | 6 |
| Kingsley | 3 | 4 |
| Lynnfield | 1 | 2 |
| Rossmere | 7 | 8 |
| Sacred Heart | 2 | 5 |
| St Aidan's | 0 | 1 |
| St Cuthbert's | 1 | 1 |
| St Helen's | 2 | 2 |
| St John Vianney | 3 | 2 |
| St Joseph's | 0 | 1 |
| Stranton | 4 | 11 |
| Throston | 1 | 1 |
| Ward Jackson | 1 | 0 |
| West Park | 4 | 5 |
| West View | 2 | 0 |
| Dyke House | 26 | 43 |
| The English Martyrs | 17 | 11 |
| High Tunstall | 11 | 14 |
| Manor | 22 | 37 |
| St Hild's | 15 | 35 |
| The Horizon School (PRU) | 0 | 2 |
| Out of Authority (either in school or previously EHE) | 22 | 37 |
| Never attended School | 4 | 9 |

3.6 Date EHE Commenced

The information below shows the date when the children who are currently EHE commenced their education at home.

| Date | No of children |
|------|----------------|
| 2014 | 1 |
| 2015 | 1 |
| 2016 | 1 |
| 2017 | 0 |
| 2018 | 1 |
| 2019 | 2 |
| 2020 | 15 |
| 2021 | 10 |
| 2022 | 28 |
| 2023 | 75 |
| 2024 | 116 |

3.7 Children not accessing Suitable Provision

There are currently **26** children who either we do not have information from parents or the information we have received is not sufficient to clarify whether the children are receiving a suitable, full time, appropriate education and therefore the local authority are following the School Attendance procedures which ultimately could lead to a School Attendance order being requested and the children returned to school.

3.8 Communication with Parents

The Virtual School seek to provide support, advice and guidance to parents who make the decision to educate their children at home. The team seek to forge positive relationships with parents to ensure that the children are receiving a suitable education. It is becoming more common for parents to refuse to engage with the team and seek to have all communication in writing. In October 2023 there were **34** children where parents will have no other communication with the team other than in writing. As of October 2024, there are **60** children whose parents will only communicate in writing and therefore the children are not seen by the team.

Hartlepool Home Education procedures seeks to engage with parents at a minimum of a bi-annual basis. There are increasing numbers of parents stating that they will not engage with this and have requested annual contact only. All home educating parents have been written to and the policy re-iterated to them that the team will continue to contact on a bi-annual basis. If parents do not engage with this the team are able to take non-engagement as the child not receiving a suitable education and the school attendance order process will commence.

4. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 Children's Services Committee are requested to note the contents of the report.

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

| | |
|--|----------------|
| RISK IMPLICATIONS | None |
| FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY | None |
| EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| STAFF CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| CONSULTATION | Not applicable |

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommendation that Children's Services Committee notes the contents of the report.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 There are rising numbers of children being removed from schools to receive Elective Home Education.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None.

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

Emma Rutherford
Executive Head Teacher- Vulnerable Pupils
Emma.rutherford@hartlepool.gov.uk
(01429) 284370

Sign Off:-

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Managing Director | Date: 16/10/2024 |
| Director of Finance, IT and Digital | Date: 15/10/2024 |
| Director of Legal, Governance and HR | Date: 15/10/2024 |

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

19TH NOVEMBER 2024



Subject: PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS
Report of: Executive Director, Children's and Joint
 Commissioning Services
Decision Type: For information

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

| |
|---|
| Hartlepool will be a place: |
| - where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives. |
| - where people will be safe and protected from harm. |

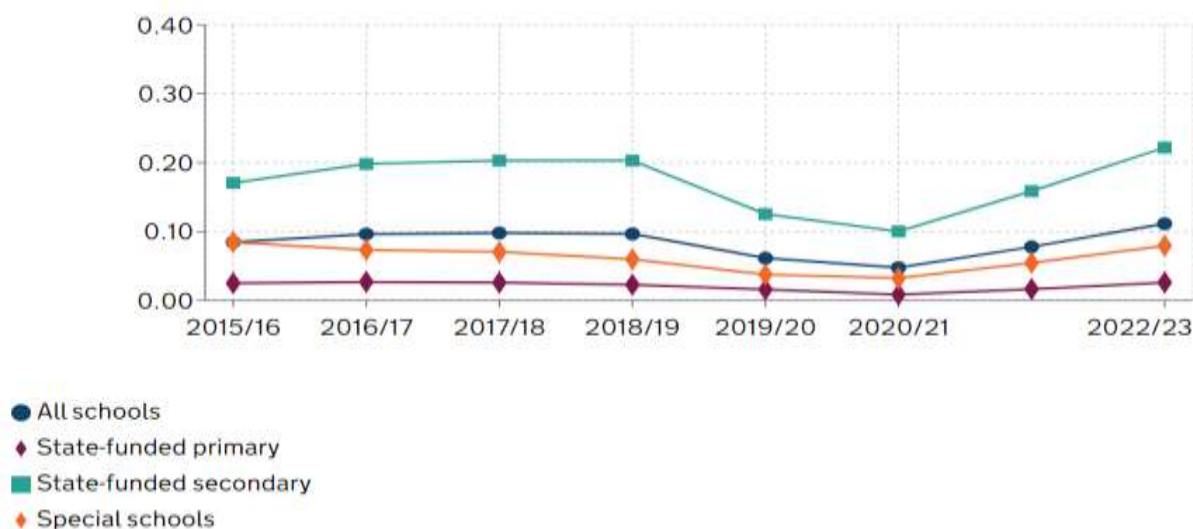
2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide information to committee in relation to permanent exclusions from Hartlepool Schools.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The National Picture

The number of permanent exclusions from a school setting continues to increase year on year. In the most recent Government data the number of permanent exclusions in England rose by 44%, from 6500 in 2021-22 to 9500 in 2022-23.

The rate of permanent exclusions in all school types has increased

- 3.2 The national picture is more starkly replicated within the North East which has both the highest increase in secondary school suspensions (267% over 16 years) and the highest rate of permanent exclusions across England (4.4 per 1000 pupils)

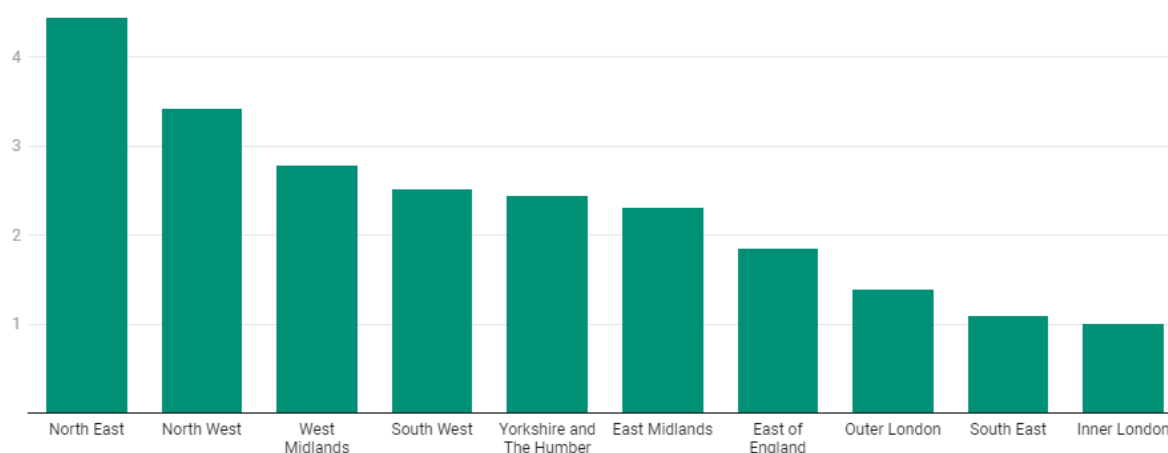
Permanent exclusions from secondary schools, by region, 2022-23

Figure in each bar chart is number of pupils permanently excluded for every 1,000 pupils

- 3.3 Children and Young People with additional barriers to learning and wellbeing are disproportionately more likely to be excluded:
- those living in poverty are four times more likely to be excluded;
 - those with special educational needs are seven times more likely to be excluded; and
 - those with mental health needs are ten times more likely to be excluded.

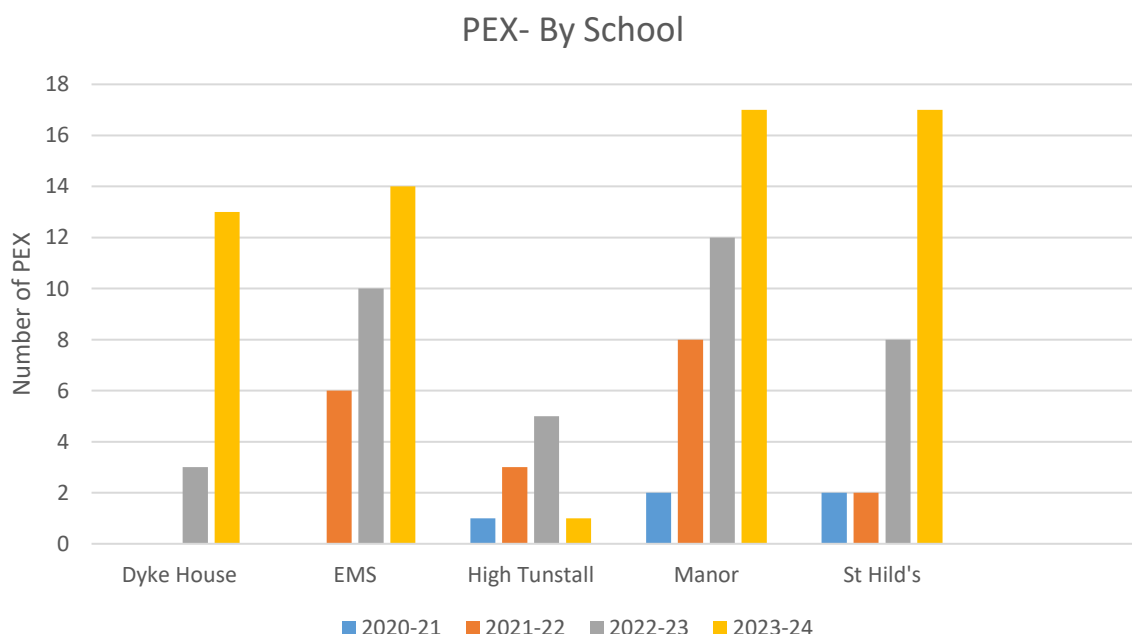
3.4 Research¹ indicates clearly that outcomes for children and young people who have been permanently excluded from school are significantly worse off than their peers:

- Only 7% pass English and Maths GCSE;
- Over a third are not in education, employment or training after leaving school;
- Links between exclusion, unemployment, youth and adult justice systems are well documented; and
- Child and criminal exploitation is also an increased risk for children permanently excluded

3.5 The Local Picture

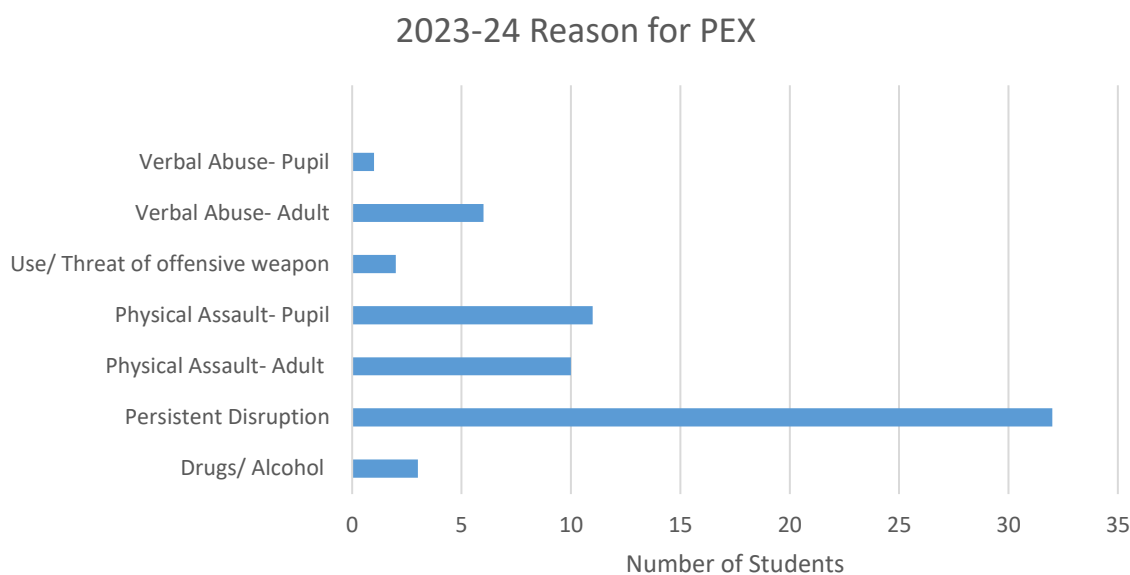
The number of permanent exclusions has risen year on year from 2020. In the last academic year (2023-24) there were 69 pupils who received a permanent exclusion. Of these 69, 66 were from Hartlepool schools with four rescinded when the exclusion was appealed by parents. The further three were children resident in Hartlepool who were permanently excluded from schools outside of Hartlepool.

| Academic Year | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Total no PEX | 35 | 13 | 5 | 19 | 38 | 65* |

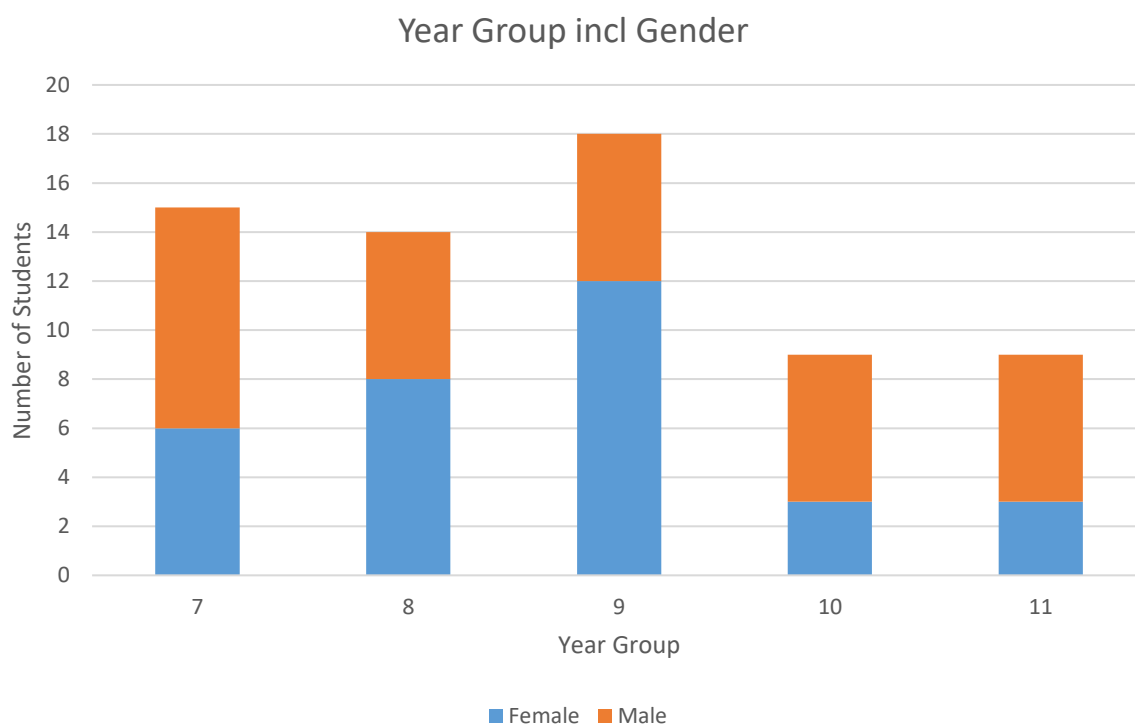


¹ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/suspensions-and-permanent-exclusions-in-england>
<https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/newsroom/school-exclusions-new-record-high>

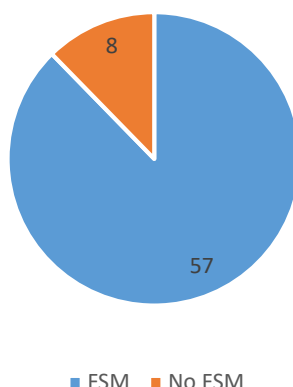
3.6 The main reason for permanent exclusion from Hartlepool school in 2023-24 was 'persistent disruption'



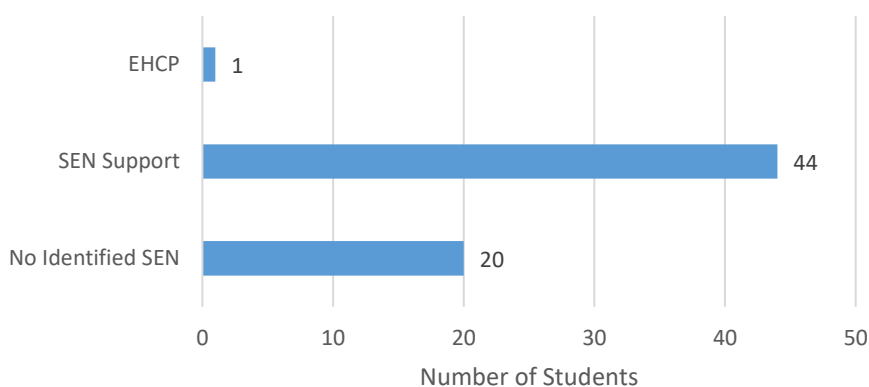
3.7 The below information shows the demographics of the children and young people who received a permanent exclusion within 2023-24:



Free School Meals

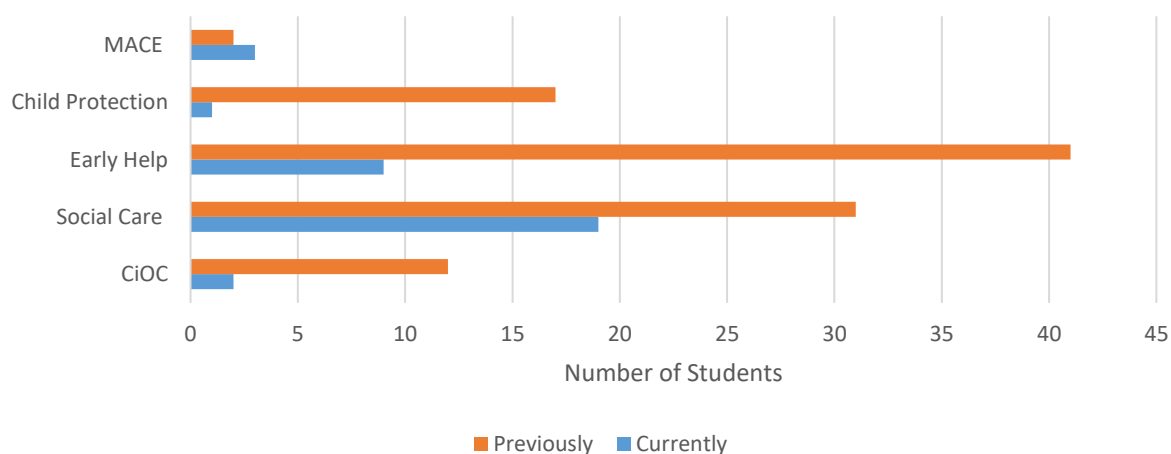


Special Educational Needs



- 3.8 The below graph shows social care involvement- either previous (at any point in the child's life) or current. 77% of children and young people who were permanently excluded in 2023-24 have had social care/Early help intervention at some point in their lives.

Social Care Involvement



*MACE- Multi Agency Criminal and Sexual Exploitation

*CiOC- Children in Our Care

- 3.9 To date (23.10.2024) there have been **6** permanent exclusions in the academic year 2024-25. This figure in the comparable timeframe in the last academic year was 17.

3.10 The Horizon School

Hartlepool Borough Council has a duty to ensure that any child who is permanently excluded from school receives a full time, appropriate education. In order to fulfil this duty, the local authority commissions the provision of The Horizon School – a funded 28 place provision for children and young people permanently excluded from mainstream schools. The purpose of this provision is to support the children's education and ensure, where appropriate, their transition back to mainstream provision.

- 3.11 The continued increase in permanent exclusions has led to significant pressure on the service delivery at The Horizon School. Alternative Provision is having to be utilised on a regular basis to ensure that all children who have been permanently excluded have a full time, appropriate education provision.

| | Jan 2024 | Mar 2024 | May 2024 | June 2024 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| PEX- Accessing horizon | 31* | 30 | 33 | 35 |
| PEX- Accessing AP and Horizon | | 20 | 24 | 25 |
| SEN Accessing horizon | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| PEX- Accessing Alternative Provision | 17 | 21 | 22 | 24 |
| Total on Roll | 49 | 72 | 79 | 85 |

- 3.12 Due to the complexity of need of the children and young people and their unidentified special educational needs it has been difficult over the last year to transition children back to mainstream school. Over the last four years there has been an average of four children per academic year transition back to mainstream schools in Hartlepool. In 2023-24 only two students made that transition.

3.13 The Future

There are significant concerns that should the numbers of permanent exclusions continue to rise at the rate that they have, coupled with such small numbers re-integrating back into mainstream that there will be extremely high number of students on roll at The Horizon School over the next 3-4 years.

| Academic Year | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| 2024-25 | Actual Number on roll Sep 2024 | 67 |
| | Return under fair access | 4 |
| | PEX | 69 |
| | Year 11 leavers | 13 |
| 2025-26 | Estimated No on roll | 119 |
| | Return under fair access | 4 |
| | PEX | 69 |
| | Year 11 leavers | 13 |
| 2026-27 | Estimated total on roll | 171 |
| | Return under fair access | 4 |
| | PEX | 69 |
| | Year 11 leavers | 13 |
| 2027-28 | Estimated total on roll | 223 |

- 3.14 With these concerns in mind a workshop was held, at the beginning of September, with all schools invited, along with multi agency partners, social care, health, police and youth justice. The workshop focused on the current picture and identifying changes all partners can make with the aim to support children and families and reduce the number of permanent exclusions.
- 3.15 The workshop looked to identify the reasons for permanent exclusions, and the lived experience of children who have been permanently excluded through the use of in-depth case studies.
- 3.16 The workshop was well received with participants stating that the case studies of the individual children were useful to look at the points up to the permanent exclusion where 'things could have been done differently' in an attempt to ensure that the children were not permanently excluded.
- 3.17 All participants were asked to create a 'pledge' outlining actions they were to take immediately to try to reduce the number of permanent exclusions and actions that they would complete within the next term.
- 3.18 The workshop will be repeated again in the Spring term to look at the changes partners have made and the impact of these.

4. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

| | |
|--|---|
| RISK IMPLICATIONS | None |
| FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS | The increase in numbers of permanent exclusions has a significant impact on the local authority High Needs block funding stream of the Dedicated Schools Grant. |
| SUBSIDY CONTROL | None |
| LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY | As shown in this report, 88% of children who are permanently excluded from school are eligible for free school meals and therefore are living or at risk of living in poverty |
| EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| STAFF CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS | None |
| CONSULTATION | Not applicable |

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Children's Services Committee is asked to note and discuss the contents of the report.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 There are rising numbers of children being permanently excluded from Hartlepool schools.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None

8. CONTACT OFFICERS

Emma Rutherford
Executive Head Teacher- Vulnerable Pupils
Emma.rutherford@hartlepool.gov.uk
(01429) 284370

Sign Off:-

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Managing Director | Date: 31/10/2024 |
| Director of Finance, IT and Digital | Date: 30/10/2024 |
| Director of Legal, Governance and HR | Date: 30/10/2024 |