



**Oversight and Governance**

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## **EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday 7 July 2021

1.30 pm

Warspite Room, Council House

**Members:**

Councillor Laing, Chair

Councillor James, Vice Chair

Councillors Allen, Bingley, Carlyle, Cresswell, Goslin, Loveridge, Partridge and Vincent.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

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**Tracey Lee**

Chief Executive

## **Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 1. To Note the Appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair:**
- 2. Apologies**  
To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Councillors.
- 3. Declarations of Interest**  
Councillors will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect to items on the agenda.
- 4. Minutes** **(Pages 1 - 8)**  
To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 03 March 2021.
- 5. Chair's Urgent Business**  
To receive reports on business which in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.
- 6. Terms of Reference:** **(Pages 9 - 10)**
- 7. Policy Announcements:** **(Pages 11 - 18)**
- 8. COVID Update:** **(Verbal Report)**
- 9. Children's Service and Education Overview:** **(Pages 19 - 34)**
- 10. OFSTED Inspection Local Authority Children's Services:** **(Pages 35 - 38)**
- 11. Youth Justice Update:** **(To Follow)**
- 12. Everyone's Invited School and Safeguarding:** **(To Follow)**
- 13. Work Programme:** **(Pages 39 - 42)**

## **Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Wednesday 3 March 2021**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Mrs Beer, in the Chair.

Councillor Murphy, Vice Chair.

Councillors Allen, Corvid, Goslin, James, Loveridge, McDonald and Morris.

Also in attendance: Caroline Marr (Senior Policy Advisor), Councillor Laing (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), Jean Kelly (Service Director for Children, Young People and Families), Alison Botham (Director for Children's Services), Tina Brinkworth (Head of Skills and Post 16 Education), Councillor Jon Taylor (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation), Ming Zhang (Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills) and Helen Rickman (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 1.30 pm and finished at 4.00 pm.

*Note: At a future meeting, the Panel will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.*

### 30. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members in accordance with the code of conduct.

### 31. **Minutes**

Agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2021.

### 32. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's Urgent Business, however the Chair wished Councillor Laing a happy 50<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### 33. **Policy Brief**

Caroline Marr (Senior Policy Advisor) presented the Policy Brief to Members and spoke to a presentation which provided further information since the publication of the report in the agenda. It was highlighted that:

- on 22 February 2021 the Government set out a roadmap for reducing Covid 19 restrictions and announced the return of face to face teaching on 8 March 2021;

- schools were able to hold outdoor sports activities;
- pupils in secondary schools were recommended to wear facemasks;
- examinations would not be taking place and scores would be based on teacher assessment grades;
- the requirement of children needing to be tested prior to returning to school was still being discussed however households with children of school age were eligible for free rapid covid tests;
- there was a £700m package to get children back to school and caught up on lost learning.

Key areas of questioning by Members included:

- how teachers were expected to enforce children wearing masks in schools;
- how the local authority could support head teachers and principals;
- were academies, university trust schools and grammar schools included?
- would parents be fined for not sending their child back to school if they were concerned for their safety due to Covid 19?
- would the council encourage schools to have a lenient approach to their uniform policies as a result of hardship caused to family finances during the pandemic?

Members noted the update.

34. **Covid Update - verbal update**

Councillor Laing (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), Jean Kelly (Service Director for Children, Young People and Families) and Alison Botham (Director for Children's Services) presented the Covid Update.

The following key points were highlighted to Members:

- the children's department had continued to support children, young people and families through the third lockdown; the majority of frontline practitioners had had their vaccine in line with Government protocols and safe systems of work remained in place;
- there had recently been the addition of lateral flow testing; this continued to improve our protection from covid;
- vulnerable children and young people and those with a social worker were encouraged to attend education in a school setting during lockdown;
- during the course of the whole pandemic, children in care numbers has

risen month on month; there were 488 children in the care of the local authority at the end of January – this was a net rise of 57 from the beginning of lockdown;

- less children were leaving the care of the local authority during the pandemic as some problems were encountered with care and adoption proceedings due to the pressure on courts;
- in terms of fostering, officers had recruited to 22 new placements, 11 households has been approved since April with two more to be approved shortly; 10 assessments were progressing and there were 16 active enquiries. Marketing was being focused towards adolescents.

Key areas of questioning from Members related to the following:

- was enough focus aimed towards prevention and intervention of children coming into the care of the local authority?
- in terms of fostering, was Plymouth City Council comparable to the private sector to attract carers?
- could Councillors be involved in promoting fostering in Plymouth; specifically Councillors that had been fostered themselves, were fosterers, or lived with foster brothers or sisters?

It was agreed that foster care numbers and recruitment would be added to the work programme for the next municipal year.

Members noted the update.

### 35. **NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)**

Tina Brinkworth (Head of Skills and Post 16 Education), Councillor Jon Taylor (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation) and Ming Zhang (Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills) presented the NEET report.

Key points highlighted to Members included:

- in December 2020 there were 233 young people age 16 to 17 NEET, this represented 4.3% (higher than the SW 3% and national average 2.7%) in comparison with 4.1% in the previous year. There were a further 147 (2.7%) young people with unknown status, against 2.4% at the same point in 2019;
- SkillsLaunchpad Plymouth was developed to provide a one-stop open door facility for all young people, parents and carers with a range of offers to support young people and minimise the risk of them becoming NEET. The Launchpad pulled together city wide service providers and stakeholders engaged in supporting young people and those at risk of NEET and included; CSW Group Ltd, DWP/Job Centre Plus, National Careers

Service, the Plymouth Careers Hub, the Devon and Cornwall Training Provider Network as well as links to employers across the city; the Skills Launchpad had so far supported over 9,000 users.

Key areas of questioning from Members related to the following:

- what support was there for children in the care of the local authority who were NEET?
- were remote working opportunities further afield from Plymouth explored for placements? There were large companies outside of the immediate region which could offer placements remotely;
- it was important for remote working opportunities to be explored as well as physical placements as this would increase possibilities;
- how successful was the Kickstart programme?

It was agreed that –

1. an update report on NEETS would be included on the panel's work programme for the next municipal year;
2. a report on the Barnardos Care Journeys project would be included on the panel's work programme for the next municipal year.

### 36. **Child Exploitation (To Follow)**

Siobhan Wallace (Head of Service for Children Young People & Families) and Nick Cook (Assistant Director for Childrens Services – Barnardos) presented the Child Exploitation update.

Key points highlighted to Members included:

- the oversight of work with child exploitation in Plymouth currently sat with the Plymouth Local Safeguarding Children. Safer Plymouth also maintained oversight of a number of strands of this work, in particular reporting online abuse, as part of their role to address cyber-crime and fraud. This was progressed by the Strategic Missing and Child Exploitation subgroup of the Plymouth Safeguarding Children partnership, chaired by Barnardo's. Under this was an Operational Missing and Child Exploitation Group, which met fortnightly and considered emerging patterns and concerns regarding individual or groups of children, offenders and locations, and plans disruption activity;
- Barnardos ran a BASE project, offering support and recovery work to young people affected by child exploitation. This included young people engaged with statutory safeguarding services as well as children in need. Other services such as CAMHS, NSPCC and Firstlight also offered therapeutic support and intervention as part of their sexual abuse services;

- the Child Exploitation Tool was reviewed by Plymouth Safeguarding Partnership and relaunched. For young people referred to Children Young People and Families Service following the Joint Targeted Area Inspection the initiative was taken that all children over 11 years should be screened for child exploitation using the screening tool. Since 1st December, 183 child exploitation screening tools had been completed. Of these 183, 96 young people remained actively open to Children Young People and Families Services. 11 had been identified as high risk, 25 as medium risk, 42 as low risk and 18 as no risk. A piece of work was underway to review the children at high risk to ensure their plans and assessments reflected the level of risk and included appropriate interventions to safeguard and support them from child exploitation;
- throughout COVID the Strategic Missing and Child Exploitation Group sought assurance across the system that children and young people at risk of or experiencing child exploitation were supported. This included the Operational Missing and Child Exploitation Group increasing from bi-weekly to weekly sessions for a period of time during the initial lockdown.

Key areas of questioning from Members related to the following:

- what wraparound services were available for children and young people affected by exploitation?
- of the children and young people currently considered exploitation, how many were in the care of the local authority – were any of these children considered missing?
- how were children and young people kept safe online?
- had the action plan from the Strategic Missing and Child Exploitation Group been progressed?

It was agreed that The Strategic Missing and Child Exploitation Group action plan on child exploitation would be provided to Members.

Members noted the update.

### 37. **Corporate Plan Performance Report**

Hannah Daw (Performance Advisor) presented the Corporate Plan Performance Report. The following key points were highlighted to Members:

- improvements were seen across the areas relating to education and children's social care in the first half of 2020/21; all five of the key performance indicators that could be trend rated had shown improvements when compared to the previous comparable reporting period;

- the percentage of young people in education, employment or training increased to 90.0% in quarter one 2020/21, compared with 89.0% in quarter one 2019/20;
- there was a decrease in the percentage of children subject to multiple child protection plans; at 21.1% at the end of quarter two, this was better than target (23%) for the first time in more than a year and lower than the average percentage of our statistical neighbours (21.3%);
- repeat referrals to Children's Social Care (CSC) saw a decrease for the eighth quarter in a row, down to 23.3%, which was a significant improvement on both the end of 2018/19 and 2019/20 positions.

Key areas of questioning from Members related to the following:

- childrens mental and health and obesity was labelled red – this was a concern;
- confusion regarding the trend of children with multiple protection plans and repeat referrals;
- how did Plymouth rate in comparison to other local authorities of a similar cohort?

Members noted the update.

### 38. **Work Programme**

Members noted the work programme and discussed the inclusion of the following items for the next municipal year:

- CSE update;
- Foster Care numbers;
- Kickstart Programme – update;
- Schools Catch-up (due to Covid);
- School Transport;
- School Attainment;
- Youth Hub Update/ Skills for Plymouth Update;
- Covid specific update

Under this item it was requested that the agenda and reports would be easily accessible within the Microsoft Teams meeting to aid Members in accessing information.



39. **Tracking Decisions**

Members noted the tracking decisions document.

Under this item the Committee congratulated Councillor Mrs Beer on her chairing of the Panel this year and wished her luck for her office as Lord Mayor for 2021/22.

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## I. Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### I.1. Responsibility for-

- Relevant policies in the Plymouth Plan
- Early Years Services
- Schools, colleges and other educational settings
- Child Poverty
- Special Education Needs, behaviour and attendance, narrowing the gap in outcomes
- Safeguarding Children
- Cared for children
- Youth offending
- Adoption and Fostering
- Corporate Parenting
- Hear call-ins relevant to the role of the committee

### I.2. Partnership Links

- Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board
- Plymouth Education Board
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Regional Adoption Agency
- Children's Partnership

I.3. **Membership** - All members of the Committee will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny. There are nine members of the Committee including the Chair and Vice Chair.

I.4. **Chair** – The Chair will be from the opposition group and will be a member of the Scrutiny Management Board.

I.5. **Vice Chair** – The Vice Chair will be from the group in administration and will act as substitute for the Chair on the Scrutiny Management Board.

I.6. **Urgent Decisions** – Urgent decisions will be reviewed by the Chair with relevant responsibilities

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# Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	07 July 2021
Title of Report:	<b>ECSC Policy Brief</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor David Downie (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Children and Young People)
Lead Strategic Director:	Alison Botham (Director for Children's Services)
Author:	Caroline Marr (Senior Policy Advisor)
Contact Email:	Caroline.Marr@Plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	ECSC PB 07072021
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## Purpose of Report

To provide Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the latest national picture in respect of policy announcements and legislation affecting children and young people.

## Recommendations and Reasons

For Scrutiny to consider the information provided in regard to their role and future agenda items.

## Alternative options considered and rejected

N/A

## Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Delivery of the Corporate Plan and Plymouth Plan needs to take account of emerging policy and the legislative picture.

## Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

N/A

## Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

N/A

## Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

*\* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

N/A

**Appendices**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	ECSC Policy Brief – 07 July 2021							

**Background papers:**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Sign off:**

Fin	N/A	Leg	N/A	Mon Off	N/A	HR	N/A	Asset s	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
Approved by: Giles Perritt, Assistant Chief Executive											
Date approved: 25 July 2021											

**POLICY BRIEF**

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny

07 July 2021



***The information within this Brief is correct at the time of approval for publication and contains relevant announcements made by Government and its departments and regulators.***

**Consultations and Calls for Evidence****[Exam Procedures Review Service in Summer 2021 – consultation on the Terms of Reference](#)**

Ofqual has published a consultation on proposed changes to the Terms of Reference for EPRS which will affect relevant qualifications awarded in summer 2021 only. EPRS is an Ofqual process to consider whether an awarding organisation followed an appropriate process when it determined the learner's result and when it considered any review or appeal in respect of that result. The proposed changes in the consultation will only affect the relevant qualifications awarded in summer 2021. The changes concern how EPRS will operate this year and who may make an application.

**The consultation closes at 11:45pm on Monday 28 June.**

<b>Date of publication</b>	<b>Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>
	All relevant guidance relating to schools, early years and childcare providers, further education and colleges and Children's Social Care providers continues to be updated in line with the government's roadmap for easing of restrictions.
Press release 18 June 2021	<b><u><a href="#">More support for FE teachers to develop</a></u></b> The new £9.5 million Further Education Professional Development Grants pilot will support the commitment made in the government's Skills for Jobs White Paper to strengthen the professional development offer to the workforce, and boost teaching practices.
Report published 17 June 2021	<b><u><a href="#">Independent Review of Children's Social Care "The Case for Change"</a></u></b> The first report from the Independent Review of Children's Social Care "The Case for Change" has been published. This interim report sets out the initial findings of the review.
Press release 17 June 2021	<b><u><a href="#">Pupils to benefit from better quality PE and sport next year</a></u></b> The Education Secretary has announced Primary school children in England will benefit from higher quality PE lessons and better sport opportunities. Backed by a £320 million investment, the PE and Sport Premium will encourage children to play more sport, increase their social skills, and improve their physical activity after lockdown.
Press release 16 June 2021	<b><u><a href="#">£16 million to support young people with a social worker</a></u></b> Children with a social worker in England will benefit from further dedicated support in school and at college to help level up their outcomes in education and reach their full potential. The Government has announced more than £16 million for councils to extend the role of Virtual School Heads from September this year, meaning there will be a local champion for children with a social worker in every local authority in England.

Press release 16 June 2021	<a href="#">Education Secretary set improving pupil outcomes as top priority</a> Gavin Williamson spoke at the Festival of Education outlining how the Government will level up opportunities for young people, through strong multi-academy trusts, high-quality teacher training, good behaviour management and investment to help pupils catch-up.
Guidance updated 15 June 2021	<a href="#">Teaching about mental wellbeing</a> Practical materials for primary and secondary schools to use to train staff about teaching mental wellbeing. Added guidance to support relationships, sex and health education curriculum planning, as part of education recovery.
Press release 13 June 2021	<a href="#">£3.4 million to expand The Duke of Edinburgh's Award in schools</a> Department for Education investment will support pupils in deprived schools in England to take part in volunteering and extra-curricular learning. The investment is part of the Government's levelling up agenda to ensure all pupils have fair and equal access to high-quality enrichment activities, alongside a £14.4 billion increase in school funding over three years. The funding will cover the next three academic years to reach many thousands more young people aged 14 to 24, adding to the work in train to extend The Duke's legacy after his death in April.
Policy Paper Published 11 June 2021	<a href="#">Education recovery support</a> A list of resources to help early years settings, schools and 16 to 19 education providers support children and young people's wellbeing and education recovery. This includes the recovery package announced in <a href="#">June 2021</a> as well as existing programmes announced in <a href="#">June 2020</a> and <a href="#">February 2021</a> . There are programmes and activities for pupils and students of all ages, including with consideration to disadvantaged pupils and students and those with SEND.
Press release 10 June 2021	<a href="#">More support for schools and colleges to tackle sexual abuse</a> Teachers and school leaders will be better supported to recognise sexual harassment and abuse and teach confidently about issues of consent, online pornography and healthy relationships. School and college leaders will be encouraged to dedicate inset day time to help train staff on how to deal with sexual abuse and harassment among pupils and how to deliver the Government's new compulsory Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum (RSHE).  The measures come as <a href="#">Ofsted publishes the findings from its thematic review</a> into sexual abuse in education, commissioned by the Education Secretary in March following testimonies posted on the Everyone's Invited website which highlighted cases of sexual abuse and harassment of children and young people, including in education settings.
Press release 10 June 2021	<a href="#">COP26 launches environment education packs for UK schools and students</a> Schools across the UK are being encouraged to start a conversation on climate change with their students, ahead of the UK hosting global climate summit COP26 later this year, as the Together for Our Planet Schools Pack launches. The pack, which is hosted on the COP26 website and sent to UK schools, is designed to engage students on climate action, encourage conversations about tackling climate change, and help students learn more about the COP26 summit in Glasgow this year. This will include a guide for running a green assembly,



	<p>along with ideas like a ‘walk to school’ week and resources that have been created by the likes of WWF and TED Talks to support schools.</p>
<p>Press release 08 June 2021</p>	<p><a href="#">New education award empowers young people to tackle plastic pollution</a> The Environment Agency has joined forces with national school network Partners in Excellence to launch a plastic pollution-focused award for young people. Key Stage 3 and 4 students from Partners in Excellence (PiXL) member schools can sign up for the ‘Green Edge Award’ programme from September and undertake one of three award levels – Apprentice, Pioneer and Graduate.</p> <p>The award is centred around character development with each award level focussing on 5 attributes – leadership, organisation, resilience, initiative and communication. Students will be encouraged to demonstrate these skills through a series of activities, including plastic waste surveys, organising litter picks and setting up repair cafes.</p>
<p>Press release 21 May 2021</p>	<p><a href="#">Department for Education announced a further £8 million as part of the AP Transition Fund for 2021/22</a> Young people in Alternative Provision (AP) at risk of unemployment or dropping out of education at age 16 are set to receive further mentoring, pastoral support and careers guidance under Government plans to level up opportunity for all young people and build back better.</p> <p>The money – up to £750 per pupil – will help AP settings pay for one-to-one support such as mentors or specialist transition coaches to help young people make decisions about their options after they finish school, helping guide them into further education, post-16 training routes or directly into employment.</p>
<p>News story 21 May 2021</p>	<p><a href="#">Multimillion-pound investment to inspire children to walk to school</a> A green initiative aimed at encouraging hundreds of thousands of children to walk to school has received £2.1 million in government support. The funding will help walking charity Living Streets extend its <a href="#">Walk to School Outreach programme</a> to more than 1,000 primary schools across the country.</p> <p>The initiative, which has been running with Department for Transport (DfT) support since 2017, aims to promote the health and environmental benefits of walking to school for children aged 5 to 11 and their families. It plays an integral role in the government’s ambition to ensure more than half of children aged 5 to 10 are walking to school by 2025.</p>
<p>Press release 19 May 2021</p>	<p><a href="#">More support for local areas to drive up school standards</a> Plymouth is to be one of four areas to benefit from £10 million for intensive support to increase proportion of pupils in Good or Outstanding schools and where there is high potential for rapid improvement. The other areas are Ashfield &amp; Mansfield, South Sefton &amp; North Liverpool, and North Durham &amp; City.</p> <p>The investment will help local schools join strong trusts and drive up standards with the support of experienced school and trust leaders. Up to half of the £10 million funding for the four areas receiving intensive support will be channelled through the Trust Capacity Fund, which opens for applications today from trusts looking to support more schools in those areas and across the country.</p>

Press release 18 May 2021	<p><a href="#">New legislation to help transform opportunities for all</a></p> <p>The Skills and post-16 Education Bill has been introduced in Parliament, underpinning the government’s skills and training revolution. The key measures introduced in the Bill are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embedding employers in the heart of the skills system, by making it a legal requirement that employers and colleges collaborate to develop skills plans so that the training on offer meets the need of local areas, and so people no longer have to leave their home-towns to find great jobs.</li> <li>• Supporting the transformation of the current student loans system which will give every adult access to a flexible loan for higher-level education and training at university or college, useable at any point in their lives.</li> <li>• Introducing new powers to intervene when colleges are failing to deliver good outcomes for the communities they serve, and to direct structural change where needed to ensure colleges improve.</li> </ul> <p>A range of policies are already in place to deliver the Prime Minister’s Lifetime Skills Guarantee, as set out by the Prime Minister last year. A new fund has been launched to future proof post-16 provision with a £83 million Post-16 Capacity fund. Providers are invited to bid for a share of the fund, which will support projects to create more space for areas where there is due to be a demographic increase in 16-19 year olds in the 2022/23 academic year.</p>
Press release 14 May 2021	<p><a href="#">Safeguarding system needs to tackle “stubborn challenges”</a></p> <p>The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel has published its Annual Report for 2020. The independent expert panel reviews serious child safeguarding cases – when a child dies or suffers serious harm, and abuse or neglect is known or suspected. The report identifies 6 cross-cutting practice themes for safeguarding partners to make a difference in reducing serious harm and preventing child deaths in the context of abuse or neglect. These themes are supported by a bank of case studies that encapsulate key learning from case reviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding what the child’s daily life is like</li> <li>• Working with families where their engagement is reluctant and sporadic</li> <li>• Critical thinking and challenge</li> <li>• Responding to changing risk and need</li> <li>• Sharing information in a timely and appropriate way</li> <li>• Organisational leadership and culture for good outcomes.</li> </ul>
Press release 13 May 2021	<p><a href="#">Every school with Reception class offered early language training</a></p> <p>Every school in England with a Reception class is to be offered expert training in early language and communication. The £8 million expansion was <a href="#">announced</a> by the Prime Minister in February as part of the new £700 million package to tackle lost learning, following the original £9 million investment as part of the National Tutoring Programme in June 2020. The expansion for the 2021-22 schools year will be managed and delivered by the Nuffield Foundation on the Government’s behalf, supported again by the University of Oxford and Oxford University Press.</p>
Press release 29 April 2021	<p><a href="#">New law to make school uniform costs affordable for all</a></p> <p>A new law will require schools to follow Government statutory guidance on school uniform costs. The Act, which received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021,</p>

	will require schools to follow new statutory guidance on uniform costs, instructing them to keep prices down.
<b>Ofsted Announcements</b>	
Press release 16 June 2021	<a href="#"><u>Children and young people with SEND disproportionately affected by pandemic</u></a> Long-standing problems in the system of care for children and young people with SEND have been made even worse by the COVID-19 pandemic, a new report from Ofsted has found.
News story published 07 June 2021	<a href="#"><u>Ofsted publishes research review on languages education</u></a> Ofsted has published the fourth in a series of reviews into different subjects across the curriculum. The review explores the literature relating to foreign languages education to identify factors that can contribute to a high-quality languages curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and systems. The findings will be used to examine how languages are taught in England's schools.
Press release 25 May 2021	<a href="#"><u>Ofsted publishes research review on mathematics education</u></a> Ofsted has published the third in a series of reviews into different subjects across the curriculum. The latest review looks at mathematics education. The review draws on Ofsted's education inspection framework (EIF) and other literature to identify factors that can contribute to a high-quality maths curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and systems. They will use these findings to examine how maths is taught in England's schools, before publishing a report about what they have learned in the autumn.
Press release 13 May 2021	<a href="#"><u>Some pupils with SEND missing out on specialist support</u></a> Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in mainstream schools are not getting enough help to support their learning and development, even when external services are involved, according to a new research report by Ofsted.

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# Education, Participation & Skills (EPS)

Ming Zhang – Service Director



## Changed Education Landscape: The role of Plymouth City Council in respect of Education, Participation and Skills:

- Championing for the city's children
- Commissioning with others to secure the highest quality services
- Convening collaborative relationships on all aspects of education to secure outstanding provision, widen opportunities and promote inclusion and equalities

We deliver these through **partnership and collaboration** in establishing and maintaining a local education improvement system

# Functions of the EPS



- **Access to Education** – Admissions, Place Planning and School Organisation, School Transports, Ofsted Com
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability** – Education Health Care assessment and planning (EHCP), advisory teaching and support, educational psychology, children’s disability, short breaks
- **Skills and Post 16** – Further Education (FE), Higher Education HE), post 16 providers, skills gaps, STEM, NEET, Music Hub
- **Schools Improvement** –building partnership system moving toward a commissioning approach; School Causing Concerns interventions, Early Years, Exclusion, Attendance and Welfare
- **The Virtual School** – support Looked-after children (LAC) the education, progress and emotional welfare

# Plymouth Education Landscape



	Academy		Maintained	Total
	MAT	Single		
No. of secondaries	17	0	1	18
No. of primaries	50	4	15	69
No. of special	1	0	6	7
No. of all through	1	0	0	1
No. of AP	1	0	0	1
total number	70	4	22	96
%	77%		23%	100%

- **Higher and faster academisation rate than the national average:**
  - 77% of Plymouth schools have been converted to academy
- **Strength of maintained schools:**
  - 91% of LA maintained are Good or Outstanding (national average 88%)
- **Weakness among academy schools and secondary education:**
  - 45%, 9 of 20 Secondary Schools are Good or Outstanding (45%) – national average 76%
  - 69% of Academy are Good or Outstanding – national average 88%

# Managing Increased Demand & Complexity in Education & Skills



## A significant increase in demands

- SEND 46% increase in requests for EHC needs assessment (279 in 2019 and 409 in 2020)
- 2282 children with EHCPs, more social/emotional needs to be addressed (24.2% SEMH primary need)
- Requests for special school provision increasing. Tribunal applications increased from 18 (2018) to 41 (2020) primarily due to requests for special school places
- Increased in Virtual School case loads by 24%
- Number of EHE increase by 19%
- School improvement capacity is minimal while the demands for improvement interventions are among the highest in the country
- Transport –24% increase in transport routes while budget is being reduced
- Admissions new Code reduces application turnaround time from 20 days to 10
- Increase in demand in bridging skills gaps due to Covid



# Managing Increased Demand and Complexity in Education & Skills



## Managing demand - innovation & new ways of working

- **Maximise funding opportunities:**

Skills external funding from 36% to 41% and is expected to increase to 69% in 2021/22  
Investment of High Needs funding in inclusion projects with schools

- **Capacity re-alignment:**

Reducing number of Heads of Service while improving structure of EPS, making it more efficient and sustainable

- **Commissioning approach & trade opportunities:**

More commissioning and trading offer while strengthening partnership

- **Empowering schools and stakeholders**

Moving toward a more advisory and empowering role: reduce case working, more preventative project and group work

Working to embed SEND Graduated Approach in schools, innovation partnerships for inclusion, maximising special school estate.

# Opportunities



## **Plymouth Education Board**

– DfE/PCC Commitment & Collaboration

## **A Bright Future CS Plan**

– Aspire & Achieve

**Place-based Programme –**  
Secondary Self-Improv. System

**Plymouth Standards Partnership -**  
Primary/Special schools collaboration.

**Inclusion/SEND Strategy Board –**  
Refocusing on vulnerable children

**Skills Plan –** Bridge Skills Gap, EET

**Every Child Attends a Good School -**  
Accountability

# Success 2020-21



- High performance across the service areas
- Place-based initiative became a national trailblazer attracting funding
- Innovation and positive response to rising demand and complexity
- Strong support for schools and settings during the pandemic. Attendance and participation in learning is constantly better than the national average, in particular the vulnerable learners.
- Education partnership working has been productive further developed with PCC, schools, MATs, RSC and TSC gaining mutual trust in developing shared objectives for Plymouth education.
- The inclusion work across the city has become cohesive and better coordinated with the establishment of an Inclusion Strategic Board.
- The Skills and Post 16 strengthen their capacity for maximum impacts through a series of successful bidding for external funding. The Skill Launchpad has been held as an example of innovation.

# Priorities 2021-22



- **Strengthen partnership working:** playing a central role in the place-based programme while establishing Primary and Special schools partnership system
- Refocus on **vulnerable learner and inclusion** agenda
- Establish a system of robust interventions by identifying school causing concerns, developing **Every Child Attends a Good School Strategy**
- Explore opportunities for **cross-cutting work** to move to an early intervention model
- Explore and implement **new ways of working** to mitigate the rapid increase in service demands
- Bid effectively for **external funding** for delivering Skills and Post-16 innovation projects and a new Skills plan that will connect with all phases of education and refocus on vulnerable learners
- Improve the city's school **governance support**

# Education, Children Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Children, Young People and Families (CYPFS)

Analysis of strengths, areas for development, opportunities and risks.

**Jean Kelly, Service Director  
CYPFS**

# Introduction



- Summary of key strengths, areas for development as well as some current challenges for the CYPFS Service and is based on our Self Evaluation shared with Ofsted in March 2021.
- Our ambition continues to focus on providing social work services that are at least good in all areas. We are focusing on getting the basics right every time for children and improving the quality of our interventions through service development and effective supervision and management oversight.
- Plymouth has continued its progress to become a trauma informed city and in CYPFS we are working on integrating this into our practice model. This model is informed by a restorative and relationship based approach.
- A Permanent Leadership Team is in place to support continued service improvements.
- A Bright Future – Vision for Children in Plymouth – a strong strategic partnership approach (Priorities - Safe, Achieve and Aspire Healthy and Happy).

# Strengths I



- **Adolescent Support Team** – working with young people at the edge of care and working to reunify children in care with their parents.
- **PAUSE Programme** - reducing the number of recurrent care proceedings by supporting women to pause and benefit from a range of support to improve outcomes for them and any future children they may have.
- **Youth Offending Service** working to divert children and young people from offending.
- Timely **assessments** of need for children and families referred into CYPFS
- Continuous Service offered to families throughout the pandemic including regular visits and supporting children open to social work to attend school regularly.
- Improvements to increase the number of **in-house fostering** households in the city.
- **Care experienced young people** experience increased Personal Advisor support, regular contact and support beyond 21 years of age as they require it.

## Strengths 2



- Improved legal planning, **pre-proceedings** and decisions about commencing care proceedings with strong management oversight.
- Improving **placement sufficiency** in the city for children in care via a range of providers for all children, including 16+ placements. This includes the development of crisis provision to support emergency placements.
- Children in care **placement review** and the consistent **stable care arrangement** practice to support all children looked after by Plymouth.
- Effective Corporate Parenting Group overseeing work with children in care and care leavers.
- Improved **case audit** arrangements to support a regular review of the quality of interventions by practitioners and outcomes for children.



# Areas for Development



- Recruitment and retention of experienced social workers to support increased demand.
- Work to improve responses to contacts and referrals at the Gateway, MASH and Referral and Assessment service to ensure effective responses at first contact including universal and early help responses to families needing some support.
- Retention of existing foster carers and opening up existing family placement capacity.
- Reduce the number of children living outside the city in children's homes.
- Continue to increase long term stability of children's placements.
- Improve Education, Employment and Training inclusion for care experienced young people.
- Reduce the need for children to remain on child protection plans for long periods of time or having a plan on more than one occasion through improved interventions.

# Opportunities/Innovations I



- Children's Commissioner (Rachel De Souza) visit to Plymouth on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021.
- Practice Model development to embed a restorative and trauma informed approach.
- Realignment of CYPFS service to improve preventative work with children in need.
- Front Door Review to improve our first response to families.
- Out of Hours Review to ensure our emergency response to children and families.
- DfE Care Leaver Champion (Mark Riddell) visiting the service on 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to reflect on our progress with care experienced young people.
- Barnardos Care Journey's collaboration - positive destinations for care leavers.
- NSPCC Together for Childhood partnership to reduce sexual abuse in the city.
- Work to find a sustainable approach when the PAUSE programme funding ends.
- Implementation of a child exploitation framework in September 2021.

# Risks and issues likely to impact



- Continued increase in demand for Children's Services and impact on capacity to respond. We have secured funding for permanent additional capacity to address this as well as additional short term interim additional capacity agreed. We are appointing social workers and family support workers and will keep this under close review
- Continued increase in the number of children requiring care placements and the costs associated with this. A weekly panel meeting is held to review all children in residential placements to ensure their placement matches their care plan needs.
- Any limitation in both universal and early help service provision of services to intervene to prevent risk escalating for children. We are working with multi-agency partners to ensure post lockdown service provision is re-instated to support families.
- Unregistered placement arrangements for children under 16 years of age will become unlawful in Sept. 2021. We are working with placement providers to ensure sufficiency to mitigate against this.

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# Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	07 July 2021
Title of Report:	<b>Ofsted Inspection Local Authority Children's Services Briefing</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor David Downie
Lead Strategic Director:	Alison Botham (Director for Children's Services)
Author:	Jean Kelly
Contact Email:	Jean.kelly@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	280621ILACSJK
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## Purpose of Report

Information sharing for committee members

## Introduction:

This briefing sets out the Ofsted framework for inspecting Children's Services. Ofsted's published framework for inspection can be found on the DfE website. The framework allows for a three year cycle of inspection and focused visits. This cycle has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic as ordinary inspection activity was temporarily paused during the first lockdown in 2020. Ofsted activity has been reset in a gradual way, including virtual focused visits and inspections.

Ofsted has continued to undertake monitoring visits with those local authorities judged inadequate. All other local authorities are now being visited in rotation as previously was the case.

For all local authorities who are judged Requires Improvement, there are three key types of Ofsted activity in each three year inspection cycle:

- a. A full ILACS inspection where a judgement is applied about every three years.
- b. Up to two focused visits in between full inspections which usually have a key theme and explore a particular part of the service.
- c. A possible Joint Targeted Area Inspection (which replaces one of the focused visit which explores key themes across the partnership and involves key inspectorates for police, youth justice, health and children's services including education.

In Plymouth, we did not have our expected Focused Visit during 2020 and we continue to wait for this to take place any time this year. The link to the latest Ofsted guidance in respect of inspection can be found here.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services-from-2018/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services>

## **Framework Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS).**

The current ILACS framework has been in place since November 2017 and were updated in March 2021. Ofsted inspection teams review the following key areas of practice:

- These inspections focus on the effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements:
- to help and protect children
- the experiences and progress of children in care wherever they live, including those children who return home
- the arrangements for permanence for children who are looked after, including adoption
- the experiences and progress of care leavers

They also evaluate:

- the effectiveness of leaders and managers
- the impact they have on the lives of children and young people
- the quality of professional practice

Key principles of the inspection framework:

- whole system approach
- Intelligence based from a wide range of sources
- responsible – fair and proportionate

*Full Inspection arrangements:*

Five days' notice is usually given for this inspection. However, during the pandemic up to 10 days' notice can be given. Four social care inspectors visit to include one education inspector.

The inspectors undertake a great deal of off-site work with the local authority to review data and documentation. They are then on-site for 2 days. A judgement is given (Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement to be good and Inadequate). This might be indicated on the final day of the inspection but as this is due to Ofsted moderation, it is not confirmed until the report is shared approximately 4-6 weeks later.

*Focused Visit arrangements:*

Ofsted announce the visit up to 10 days before they visit for their fieldwork (virtually or in person). They do this by calling the DCS to alert the local authority on a Tuesday or Wednesday each week. This two week period allows time for the local authority to provide the lead inspector with all of the data and information required to be provided before the fieldwork is undertaken. Fieldwork is undertaken by 3 HMIs (Her Majesty's Inspectors) for two days.

The lead inspector will alert the DCS to any particular theme being explored so that evidence can be shared. Currently, we know that Ofsted have been particularly interested in issues, including:

- Edge of Care responses to children who are at risk of being looked after.
- Legal planning and the quality of pre-proceedings responses.
- Whether children in need of adoption are served well, this includes when the local authority is part of a Regional Adoption Agency, which Plymouth is. We are part of Adopt South West, with Devon County Council, Torbay Council and Somerset.

*Joint Targeted Area Inspection arrangements:*

These are multi-agency inspections undertaken with other key inspectorates to view the quality and effectiveness of partner agency responses to children and centred on a particular theme.

This process lasts for 4 weeks and includes two weeks of fieldwork in all key agencies (police, youth justice, health, children's social care and education)

Local Preparation has included:

- Regular preparation meetings and communication to the service
- Preparation of presentation of our self-assessment to inspectors on the first day they arrive.
- Share all required performance data related to children open to social work services (Annex A).
- Audit activity in preparation to evidence our practice in respect of key issues, for example, our responses to issues of child exploitation, the quality of child protection planning and decision making when children leave our care.

### **Recent Inspections and key learning:**

1. Inspection of LA Children's Services (ILACS) took place in October 2018
  - a. Plymouth was judged Requires Improvement to be good.
2. Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) too place in November 2019. No judgement is given in these inspections. However, we have an action plan to address key learning points which is reviewed regularly by all partner agencies as part of the Plymouth Children's Safeguarding Partnership
3. Focused Visits take place in between full ILACS visits and JTAI visits as part of the three year cycle of inspection. We have not had a focused visit since prior to the last ILACS inspection in 2018. We have been preparing for this visit as a service so that we are ready to provide accurate child and service level information when the visit if announced.

### **Recommendations and Reasons**

Not applicable

### **Alternative options considered and rejected**

Not applicable

### **Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan**

Ensuring we are responsible as a service and support families in the community.

### **Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:**

Not applicable

### **Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### **Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:**

*\* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

[Click here to enter text.](#)

**Appendices**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report title							
B	Equalities Impact Assessment (if applicable)							

**Background papers:**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Sign off:**

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 25/06/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: <i>[electronic signature (or typed name and statement of 'approved by email/verbally')]</i> Date approved: 28/06/2021											



# Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme 2021-2022



**Please note that the work programme is a 'live' document and subject to change at short notice. The information in this work programme is intended to be of strategic relevance.**

For general enquiries relating to the Council's Scrutiny function, including this Committee's work programme, please contact Jake Metcalfe, Democratic Advisor on 01752 398444.

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Prioritisation Score	Reason for consideration	Responsible Cabinet Member / Officer
<b>7 July 2021</b>	Children's Services Overview; CYPFS & Education			Jean Kelly and Ming Zhang
	OFSTED Overview			Jean Kelly
	Youth Justice Update			Jean Kelly
	Everyone's Invited Schools and safeguarding issues			Jean Kelly and Ming Zhang
<b>08 September 2021</b>				
<b>17 November 2021</b>				
<b>16 February 2022</b>				

<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Prioritisation Score</b>	<b>Reason for consideration</b>	<b>Responsible Cabinet Member / Officer</b>
<b>Items to be scheduled</b>				
Select Committee Reviews				
<b>To be scheduled</b>				
<b>Joint Select Committee Reviews</b>				

**Annex I – Scrutiny Prioritisation Tool**

		<b>Yes (=1)</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<b>Public Interest</b>	Is it an issue of concern to partners, stakeholders and/or the community?		
<b>Ability</b>	Could Scrutiny have an influence?		
<b>Performance</b>	Is this an area of underperformance?		
<b>Extent</b>	Does the topic affect people living, working or studying in more than one electoral ward of Plymouth?		
<b>Replication</b>	Will this be the only opportunity for public scrutiny?		
	Is the topic due planned to be the subject of an Executive Decision?		
	<b>Total:</b>		High/Medium/Low

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>High</b>	<b>5-6</b>
<b>Medium</b>	<b>3-4</b>
<b>Low</b>	<b>1-2</b>

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