

Blackpool Council

29 September 2021

To: Councillors Burdess, D Coleman, Critchley, B Mitchell, M Mitchell, Owen, R Scott and Stansfield.

The above Members are requested to attend the:

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 7 October 2021 at 6.00 pm
In the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Blackpool

A G E N D A

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

(1) the type of interest concerned either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

and

(2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any Member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 24 JUNE 2021 (Pages 1 - 8)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 24 June 2021 as a true and correct record.

3 PUBLIC SPEAKING

To consider any applications from members of the public to speak at the meeting.

4 APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBER (Pages 9 - 12)

To consider the appointment of Ms Jo Snape as diocesan co-opted member to the Committee for the Municipal Year 2021/2022 to replace Ms Helen Sage.

- 5 FORWARD PLAN** (Pages 13 - 18)
- To consider the contents of the Council's Forward Plan, October 2021 to January 2022 within the remit of the Committee.
- 6 EXECUTIVE AND CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS** (Pages 19 - 24)
- To consider the Executive and Cabinet Member Decisions within the remit of the Committee which have been taken since the last meeting.
- 7 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT - CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING PILOT UPDATE** (Pages 25 - 36)
- To receive further information and initial results from the contextual safeguarding pilot introduced in May 2021.
- 8 YOUTH JUSTICE TEAM INSPECTION** (Pages 37 - 90)
- To update the Committee on the progress of the Blackpool Youth Justice Service Improvement journey and the outcome of the recent Inspection.
- 9 CATCH-UP PREMIUM SPEND AND STRATEGIES** (Pages 91 - 128)
- To receive a report outlining how schools have used the government Catch-Up Premium funding.
- 10 REVIEW OF YOUTH PROVISION** (Pages 129 - 134)
- To provide an overview of the youth provision review currently being undertaken across Blackpool, including scope, purpose and timescales.
- 11 GL ASSESSMENT PUPIL ATTITUDE TO SELF AND SCHOOL (PASS) SURVEY OVERVIEW** (Pages 135 - 144)
- To provide an overview of the findings of the GL Assessment PASS surveys that were undertaken by a cohort of Blackpool children in autumn 2020.
- 12 INCLUSION IN EDUCATION SCRUTINY REVIEW RECOMMENDATION MONITORING** (Pages 145 - 206)
- To receive an annual progress update on the recommendations arising from the scrutiny review of Inclusion in Education.
- 13 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN** (Pages 207 - 216)
- To consider the contents of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for 2020/2021.

14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date and time of the next meeting as 9 December 2021, commencing at 6pm.

Venue information:

First floor meeting room (lift available), accessible toilets (ground floor), no-smoking building. Face masks must be worn when moving throughout the building. Please also maintain social distancing.

Other information:

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Elaine Ireland, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser, Tel: (01253) 477255, e-mail: Elaine.ireland@blackpool.gov.uk

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Agenda Item 2

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE INFORMAL MEETING - THURSDAY, 24 JUNE 2021

Councillor Burdess (in the Chair)

Councillors

D Coleman	B Mitchell	O'Hara	Stansfield
Critchley	M Mitchell	Owen	Wing

In Attendance:

Councillor Maxine Callow, Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board
Councillor Gillian Campbell, Cabinet Member for Inclusion, Youth and Transience
Councillor Jim Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Schools
Dr Elaine Allen, Former Roman Catholic Co-opted Member
Mr Robert Arrowsmith, Performance, Systems and Intelligence Manager
Mrs Kirsty Fisher, Engagement Officer (Items 1-7 only)
Charlotte and Tia, Young Inspectors (Items 1-7 only)
Ms Jeanette Richards, Assistant Director of Children's Services
Mr Philip Thompson, Head of SEND and Early years
Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (School Improvement and Special Educational Needs)
Mrs Elaine Ireland, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Chairman explained that it was an informal meeting as agreed at Annual Council on 24 May 2021.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Ms Helen Sage, Co-Opted Member.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Stansfield declared a personal interest in relation to Agenda item 7 'SEND Provision' due to his position of employment at the Lotus School.

3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 22 APRIL 2021

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the last meeting held on 22 April 2021 be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

4 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Committee noted that there were no applications to speak by members of the public on this occasion.

**MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE INFORMAL
MEETING - THURSDAY, 24 JUNE 2021**

5 RE-APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS

The Committee agreed to recommend the re-appointment of Ms Helen Sage as diocesan co-opted member to the Committee for the Municipal Year 2021/2022 under delegated powers to the Chief Executive.

The Committee noted Dr Elaine Allen's resignation from the post of Roman Catholic diocesan co-opted member with immediate effect and thanked her for her contributions to the Committee.

6 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

Ms Jeanette Richards, Assistant Director of Children's Services provided an update on Children's Social Care improvement including an overview of the Children and Families Partnership Board. The Committee was informed that the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive of the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Chief Superintendent had established the Children and Families Partnership Board to bring together the collective strategic aims of services in Blackpool and to ensure a unified vision for children and families. It aimed to bring together key members of public, private and third sector organisations with a focus on family life in Blackpool. Ms Richards explained that the primary responsibility of the Board was to develop meaningful and productive strategic oversight to the key challenges facing children and families in Blackpool and to drive their respective organisations to develop innovative and shared approaches to addressing these with a joint sense of responsibility and ownership.

Ms Richards provided an overview of the main priorities of the Board as well as the reporting mechanisms in place from the Getting to Good Board, Blackpool School Improvement Board and Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership. In response to a question from the Committee, Ms Richards clarified that the Children and Families Partnership Board had been re-established this year and had so far met twice in that period.

The Committee received an update in relation to third sector partnership working, with Ms Richards advising that at a strategic level the third sector was represented by Mr Mike Crowther, Chief Executive at Empowerment who was a Board member on the Children and Families Partnership Board. She further explained that at an operational level, the Blackpool Families Rock Implementation Group met monthly and as well as including agencies, parents and young people and carers, there was third sector representation from the Blackpool Carers Centre and Empowerment.

Ms Richards reported that an Early Help Strategy was planned for implementation across Blackpool, with engagement with the voluntary sector planned in order to offer support in the delivery of Early Help. The Committee requested examples of the planned engagement, with Ms Richards advising of the importance of involving parents, carers and young people in all decisions and of rolling out the Blackpool Families Rock working model within the community. With regards to the inclusion of volunteers, Ms Richards advised that the Council would be aiming to engage the third sector as part of the launch of the Early Help Strategy planned for September 2021 and would be making contact with third sector organisations as part of this process. She also reported that the Family Hub Board

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benefitted from wider representation of organisations that worked with children and families in Blackpool including the Football Club, Boys and Girls Club, Magic Club, local churches, Fulfilling Lives and New Routes. As services planned Covid-19 recovery, Ms Richards anticipated that there would be more organisations operating services from hubs. In response to a question from the Committee regarding the involvement of Scout and Brownie groups within the Family Hub, Ms Richards confirmed that whilst such groups would not be operating from the hub, packages of support would be provided to these community-based groups.

With regards to the Early Help Strategy, the Committee questioned whether such a strategy had been implemented previously across Blackpool and asked how the new strategy differed from previous work undertaken in this area. Ms Richards advised that the new strategy would provide a much broader approach and would include third sector organisations. She added that the strategy would be considerably more detailed than previous approaches and would build upon the Blackpool Families Rock working model.

The Committee received information on the Resilience Revolution and Committee members were informed that the Revolution was a collaboration between the HeadStart Team and two Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, 'boingboing' and the 'Centre of Resilience for Social Justice.' Ms Richards explained that the Resilience Revolution had been founded upon the original concept of 'Resilient Therapy' and its associated inequalities-related research. Organisations were supported to embed a resilience approach and there were a number of organisations which had successfully achieved this, with Ms Richards giving the examples of the Grand Theatre, Blackpool Football Club Community Trust, Aiming Higher and the Carers Centre. Further information was requested by the Committee on Resilient Therapy, with Committee Members seeking details of what the approach consisted of and the anticipated benefits. Ms Richards offered to provide further details of the Resilient Therapy approach to the Committee following the meeting.

In response to the examples of youth engagement events offered by HeadStart's Youth Engagement team as described by Ms Richards, the Committee asked whether the events had generally been well attended and if they had been impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions. Ms Richards confirmed that all such events had been negatively impacted by the pandemic and advised that HeadStart's Covid recovery plan would be aiming to re-establish the youth engagement offer once restrictions allowed.

The Committee sought further details of the Brain Story training and certification offered by Better Start and asked if the training would be suitable for Councillors to access. Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (School Improvement and Special Educational Needs) advised that the free online training course had been made available to all practitioners and had been well accessed, particularly by secondary schools. He offered to make the sessions available to any Councillors wishing to undertake the course, asking any interested Committee members to contact him directly and he would arrange access. The Committee requested specific details of the numbers of practitioners who had completed the training, which Mr Turner agreed to circulate to the Committee following the meeting.

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The Committee agreed:

1. To request that Ms Richards provide further details of the Resilient Therapy approach to Committee members following the meeting;
2. To request that Mr Turner provide details of the numbers of practitioners who had completed the Brain Story training to Committee members following the meeting;
3. That any Councillor interested in completing the online Brain Story training should contact Mr Turner directly to request access.

7 YOUNG INSPECTORS

The Committee welcomed two Young Inspectors who provided a presentation outlining their work, training and experiences. Charlotte and Tia informed the Committee that a Young Inspector was a volunteer aged 16 years and over who had experienced living in supported accommodation and had been or still was one of our children. They explained that Young Inspectors worked to support the quality monitoring of accommodation by visiting the homes where our children lived, spoke to the young people living there and assessed how safe and well cared for our children were.

Mrs Kirsty Fisher, Engagement Officer advised that at present recruitment was targeted but that as the programme became more established, young people would hopefully volunteer and be eager to become involved. With regards to training, Mrs Fisher reported that Young Inspectors received full training in consultation and questioning skills, confidentiality awareness and basic safeguarding. Quality Monitoring Officers in the Commissioning team also supported the Young Inspectors by providing an insight into the processes involved in their job.

Within their presentation Charlotte, Tia and Mrs Fisher provided a summary of the inspection work undertaken to date by the Young Inspectors as well as outlining future plans to extend the scheme and to formalise the training to make it more accessible to new recruits.

The Committee queried whether accommodation which failed to meet the required standards would no longer be used by the Council. Mrs Fisher advised that all residential homes went through a commissioning process to assess their suitability and that the Commissioning team continued to undertake inspections in conjunction with the Young Inspectors. If an accommodation was discovered to be failing to meet the agreed standards, the Council would work with the provider to help them implement the necessary improvements but if this did not happen then the Council might consider the option of no longer using the provider.

In respect of the training offered to the Young Inspectors, the Committee asked how this could be further developed and enhanced going forward. Mrs Fisher reported that the training currently offered to Council employees was being reviewed in order to identify any modules which could be adapted so as to be suitable to form part of the Young Inspectors' training programme and that attendance was planned at the National Children's Commissioning Conference with the hope that further ideas could be gathered there.

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The Committee extended its thanks and admiration to Mrs Fisher, Charlotte and Tia and requested that future updates on the work of the Young Inspectors be reported back on a regular basis to the Committee. Mrs Fisher advised that a further update would be beneficial towards the end of the calendar year.

The Committee agreed: To receive regular updates on the work of the Young Inspectors with an update to be considered by the Committee at its meeting on 9 December 2021.

[Mrs Fisher, Charlotte and Tia left the meeting on conclusion of this item.]

8 SEND PROVISION

Mr Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Children's Services (School Improvement and Special Educational Needs) provided an update on provisions in Blackpool for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Mr Turner reported that Park Community Academy, Woodlands School and Highfurlong Special School were all operating at capacity and that Lotus School was expected to be at capacity within the next two years. As a result, the provision of temporary capacity was being planned at the Oracle building. He explained that this would allow sixth form students from Park Community Academy to potentially be located at the Oracle from September 2021 thereby freeing up classroom space within the rest of the school, with the precise pupil numbers and details to be determined by the headteacher at Park. Building work at Highfurlong Special School would also result in the addition of further capacity.

The Committee was informed that work was underway to facilitate the continued use of the Oracle building by community groups in the evenings and at weekends as far as possible, with details of the groups that were currently utilising the building being reviewed as to their suitability to continue using the facilities. Mr Turner explained that whilst it was hoped that the majority of groups could continue to use the building, once the Oracle was being used by children, suitability would need to be carefully considered.

Mr Turner reported that the Oracle building was not entirely suitable for the housing of SEND provisions in its current condition and as such some improvements were planned, with a budget of £85,000 allocated for the work. Mr Philip Thompson, Head of SEND and Early Years briefly outlined the proposed modifications and the rationale behind them.

With regards to mainstream schools meeting SEND requirements, Mr Turner assured the Committee that consultation had been undertaken with all headteachers to ensure schools were adequately fulfilling their responsibilities as part of the SEND Strategy and he was confident that all schools were fully committed to ensuring pupils' needs were being met. The Committee questioned whether schools provided a pre-determined level of SEND provision or if schools responded proactively to the individual needs of their particular pupils. Mr Turner clarified that the expectation was that all children would be educated in the school of their parents' choosing and that the SEND team would work to support teachers to adequately meet their pupils' needs. As a result, schools found it necessary to adapt their SEND provision on a termly basis to react to their students' requirements. He added that it might not currently be possible to educate all Blackpool children in mainstream settings but where this was not possible the aim was to be able to provide a suitable place within a specialist setting.

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The Committee sought clarification around the number of SEND places that the Council was required to provide. Mr Turner reported that the Council had a statutory duty to provide a suitable place for all children who required one, whether that be within Blackpool or out of Borough as available.

The Committee agreed: To request that Mr Turner present the full detailed plans of the SEND provision proposals at the Oracle once available, with the Committee meeting on 9 December 2021 suggested by Mr Turner as being an appropriate timescale.

9 BLACKPOOL BETTER START SCRUTINY REVIEW

The Committee considered the final report arising from the scrutiny review of Blackpool Better Start. The Committee welcomed the recommendations and gave thanks to the working group of Councillors who had undertaken the review. The Committee particularly noted the reported lack of expectation from the Lottery Community Fund for evidence of significant impact until closer to the end of the ten year period in order to allow for interventions to become securely embedded, as well as the identified lack of engagement from residents within particular wards across the town.

Following approval by the Executive, the Committee agreed that the recommendations would be closely monitored by the Committee via regular updates.

The Committee agreed: To recommend approval of the final report of the scrutiny review of Blackpool Better Start for submission to the Executive under delegated powers to the Chief Executive.

10 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2021/2022

Members considered the Committee's Workplan for 2021/2022, noting that the document had been updated to reflect Members' input at the Scrutiny Workplanning Workshop which had been held on Monday 7 June 2021.

The Committee agreed: To note the Workplan for 2021/2022.

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Committee was noted as Thursday 7 October 2021, commencing at 6pm, with the venue and meeting arrangements to be confirmed in advance of the meeting.

Chairman

**MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE INFORMAL
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Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
Elaine Ireland, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser
Tel: 01253 477255, E-mail: Elaine.ireland@blackpool.gov.uk

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Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager
Date of Meeting:	7 October 2021

APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBER

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the appointment of Ms Jo Snape as diocesan co-opted member to the Committee for the Municipal Year 2021/2022 to replace Ms Helen Sage.

2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To approve the appointment of Ms Jo Snape as diocesan co-opted member to the Committee.

2.2 To note the remaining two Parent Governor and one Roman Catholic diocesan co-opted member vacancies.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure the scrutiny process continues to be fully accountable and an important part of the democratic process.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

5.0 Council Priority:

5.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background Information

6.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires the Council to have Parent Governor Representatives on the relevant Overview and Scrutiny body dealing wholly or partly with education functions. The representatives are entitled to participate in discussions on any issue but are only able to vote on any question which relates to the education functions of the Council.

6.2 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and the Education Act 1996 require the Council to have Church representatives on the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee which considers education matters. Like the Parent Governor representatives, they are entitled to participate in discussions on any issue, but only able to vote on any question which relates to the education functions of the Council.

6.3 The Council's Constitution allows for membership of the following representatives in order to comply with the statutory requirements:

- One Church of England diocese representative
- One Roman Catholic diocese representative
- Two Parent Governor representatives; and
- Such other representatives of other faiths or denominations as may be agreed

6.4 At the meeting of full Council on 22 May 2019 it was agreed that the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee should appoint two diocesan co-opted representatives and two governor co-opted representatives.

6.5 As agreed by the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee, Ms Helen Sage was re-appointed to the Committee as diocesan co-opted member on 24 June 2021. She has since taken the decision to step down from the position and it is proposed that she be replaced by Ms Jo Snape.

6.6 The Scrutiny Manager is continuing to seek appointments to the remaining statutory positions.

6.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 The posts are not salaried but the positions attract a payment of £500 each per year.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the Education Act 1996 require the Council to have Church representatives on the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee which considers education matters.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

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Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager
Date of Meeting:	7 October 2021

FORWARD PLAN

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the contents of the Council's Forward Plan, October 2021 to January 2022, within the remit of the Committee.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 Members will have the opportunity to question the relevant Cabinet Members in relation to items contained within the Forward Plan within the portfolios of Inclusion, Youth and Transience and Children's Social Care and Schools.

2.2 Members will have the opportunity to consider whether any of the items should be subjected to pre-decision scrutiny. In so doing, account should be taken of any requests or observations made by the relevant Cabinet Member.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To enable the opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny of the Forward Plan items.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council Priority:

5.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background Information

6.1 The Forward Plan is prepared by the Leader of the Council to cover a period of four months and has effect from the first working day of any month. It is updated on a monthly basis and subsequent plans cover a period beginning with the first working day of the second month covered in the preceding plan.

6.2 The Forward Plan contains matters which the Leader has reason to believe will be subject of a key decision to be taken either by the Executive, a Committee of the Executive, individual Cabinet Members or Officers.

6.3 Attached at Appendix 5(a) is a list of items contained in the current Forward Plan. Further details appertaining to each item is contained in the Forward Plan, which has been forwarded to all Members separately.

6.4 The following Cabinet Member is responsible for the Forward Plan item in this report and has been invited to attend the meeting:

- Councillor Jim Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care and Schools.

6.5 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 5(a) - Summary of items contained within Forward Plan October 2021 to January 2022.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk Management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

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EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - SUMMARY OF KEY DECISIONS**(OCTOBER 2021 TO JANUARY 2022)**

Anticipated Date of Decision	Matter for Decision	Decision Reference	Decision Taker	Relevant Cabinet Member
October 2021	To agree the Special Educational Needs strategy for the local area until 2026.	14/2021	Executive	Cllr Hobson

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Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager
Date of Meeting:	7 October 2021

EXECUTIVE AND CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the Executive and Cabinet Member decisions within the portfolios of the Cabinet Members taken since the last meeting of the Committee.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 Members will have the opportunity to question the relevant Cabinet Member in relation to the decisions taken.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure that the opportunity is given for all Executive and Cabinet Member decisions to be scrutinised and held to account.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council Priority:

5.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background Information

6.1 Attached at Appendix 6(a) is a summary of the decisions taken, which have been circulated to Members previously.

6.2 This report is presented to ensure Members are provided with a timely update on the decisions taken by the Executive and Cabinet Members. It provides a process where the Committee can raise questions and a response be provided.

6.3 Members are encouraged to seek updates on decisions and will have the opportunity to raise any issues.

6.4. The following Cabinet Member is responsible for the decisions taken in this report and has been invited to attend the meeting:

- Councillor Jim Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care and Schools.

6.5 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 6(a) Summary of Executive and Cabinet Member decisions taken.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/External Consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

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APPENDIX 6(a)

DECISION / OUTCOME	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER	DATE	CABINET MEMBER
<p>BETTER START SCRUTINY REVIEW FINAL REPORT</p> <p>The Executive resolved as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To approve the final report and five recommendations resulting from the scrutiny review of Blackpool Better Start. 	<p>To consider the final report and recommendations resulting from the scrutiny review of Blackpool Better Start.</p>	<p>EX30/2021</p>	<p>12/07/2021</p>	<p>Councillor Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Schools.</p>
<p>BLACKPOOL LITERACY STRATEGY</p> <p>The Executive resolved as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To approve the Blackpool Literacy Strategy, with effect until 30 August 2030. 	<p>To approve the Blackpool Literacy Strategy and agree to move onto the next stage of implementing the strategy.</p>	<p>EX31/2021</p>	<p>12/07/21</p>	<p>Councillor Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Schools.</p>
<p>CARE LEAVER COVENANT</p> <p>The Executive resolved as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To agree that the Council joins the Care Leaver Covenant to further enhance its current offer to Our Children and Young People. That the Executive recommends that all the Council's wholly owned companies should actively consider signing up to the Care Leavers Covenant. It therefore requests the Company Secretary to liaise with each company's Managing Director and Board Chairman with a view to submitting a report to the next Board meeting to join the Care Leaver covenant. 	<p>Joining the Care Leaver Covenant would enhance Blackpool's current Offer to our 251 care leavers which already includes support for our young people with care experience such as the Passport to our Leisure service, 'Jobs in the Family Firm' and Council Tax discounts. The recommendation to wholly owned companies will ensure that they also consider enhancing their offer to care leavers.</p>	<p>EX41/2021</p>	<p>13/09/21</p>	<p>Councillor Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Schools.</p>

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Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Jeanette Richards, Assistant Director – Children's Services
Date of Meeting:	7 October 2021

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT – CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING PILOT UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To receive further information and initial results from the contextual safeguarding pilot introduced in May 2021.

2.0 Recommendation:

2.1 To challenge the update provided and identify any areas for further scrutiny.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation:

3.1 To ensure robust scrutiny of Children's Social Care improvement.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 Awaken (contextual safeguarding) out of hours intervention pilot:

Contextual safeguarding and missing from home is a concern that requires a multi-agency response in order to safeguard children and young people from the risks of harm posed from

within the community and within varying contexts. Many services and agencies, including the Awaken team, operate during daytime hours when it is known that most activity involving young people occurs at weekends and evenings.

- 6.2 With this in mind and with the use of funding providing from Public Health, this new pilot initiative focused on out of hours contextual safeguarding, with three key component parts, identification, diversion and disruption. The pilot included a visible presence in areas and locations of concern, engaging with young people and raising awareness within communities and within the night time economy.
- 6.3 Blackpool's Public Protection Officers from the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Team along with the Housing Enforcement Team have an established and collaborative working relationship with Blackpool Neighbourhood Policing Teams and have been engaged in night time operations focusing on intervention, prevention and disruption to safeguard vulnerable children and adults within the community.
- 6.4 Disruption and targeting of addresses, takeaways and hot spot areas features heavily in the work they undertake often out of hours. This includes the serving of Closure Notices/Orders, Civil Injunctions, Community Protection Warnings and/or notices on individuals and addresses of concern including utilising creatively the powers of partner agencies such as licensing, trading standards and food hygiene.
- 6.5 As the CSP have the framework already in place to support out of hours work, alongside good working relationships with neighbouring policing (NHP) and other agencies, discussions have taken place to explore how this can be extended to identify and disrupt contextual safeguarding concerns and work in collaboration with the Awaken Service. It was agreed that work around the disruption of exploitation could be further developed to include a member of the Awaken team who has the experience, skills and knowledge of child exploitation to deploy out of hours with colleagues from CSP and NHP. Practitioners from Awaken have a working knowledge of those young people most at risk in terms of missing from home and child exploitation and the intel and information surrounding locations and associates of concern. This knowledge and awareness is essential in order to support and strengthen targeting and disruption whilst having a visible and direct presence within the community. This collaboration enabled the identification of hotspots (areas of particular concern in relation to exploitation) and individuals of concerns and thus the risk to this cohort of young people. The visible presence of the team also provided the opportunity for earlier identification of vulnerable children and young people who may be on the periphery of exploitation/anti-social behaviour to ensure support is provided at the earliest opportunity. Building up links in the community and raising awareness will also contribute to the identification, prevention and response to criminal exploitation.

6.6 **Proposal for out of hours intervention**

The focus of the out of hours work was predominantly driven from actions set at the daily

missing and exploitation meeting (DEM), considering daily intelligence and Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) information to include worries that are shared from across the workforce and partnership with the aim of safeguarding young people from the risks posed within the community.

6.7 The following will be key areas of focus:

- Disruption of problem people harbouring young people that are at risk of child exploitation (CE) or missing from home (MFH).
- Disruption of problem places interacting young people that are at risk of CE or MFH.
- To have a visible presence and interaction with others within the community in heightened locations of interest.
- Early identification and prevention of young people who may be on the periphery
- Working with wider partners including third sector providers to ensure earliest opportunity to share info and intelligence from outreach activity.
- To identify and interact with those young people known and open to Awaken to gather further information.
- To be proactive in identifying and locating those young people reported as missing.
- To gather intelligence from out of hours working to be fed back into the DEM to assist with targeting, disruption and mapping.
- To gather information to assist with problem profiling.
- To assist partner colleagues in undertaking actions set from the DEM to include the serving of Community Protection Warnings (CPW)/Community Protection Notices (CPN)/injunctions.
- Target hardening – supplying and installing dummy CCTV cameras and stickers, Ring door bells, door viewers, window locks, security chains, security lights and sash and hasp locks.
- Visible presence, getting to know local young people in the area, picking up any concerns that may begin to emerge, understanding cohorts of young people informing service delivery of activities, diversion strategies etc.
- Visible presence in town centre, arcades, parks, stations etc.

6.8 The continuation of the Awaken staff will contribute to the effectiveness of the evening operations as follows:

- Experienced, knowledgeable and skilled practitioners in respect of exploitation and safeguarding.
- Skilled in engaging young people and building trusted relationships. Understanding of the lived experience of this cohort of young people.
- Working knowledge of those young people exploited or at risk of exploitation and mispers (already known to services).
- Able to link up information/intelligence from day services with relevant info/intel available out of hours.

- Ability to Map.
- Knowledge and awareness of potential hotspots, persons of concern who may pose a risk to young people.
- Ability to identify and respond to indicators of potential CE – early identification and prevention.
- Knowledge and experience of disruption tactics including serving of CPW/CPNs and Civil Injunctions.
- Visible presence in the community, building community relationships, raising awareness.
- Linking in with Youth Offending Services and Early Help Service and the wider partnership including third sector providers.

6.9 **Awaken outreach pilot three month evaluation**

The outreach pilot has been operational since 19 May 2021, which was the County Lines intensification week. Over 25 outreach sessions have taken place with colleagues from the Community Safety Partnership Team and on occasion with officers from NHP, licensing and housing enforcement colleagues. Outreach currently takes place two evenings a week.

6.10 **Problem Analysis Triangle**

The problem analysis triangle (sometimes referred to as the crime triangle) provides a way of tackling recurring problems of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour (ASB). This idea assumes that crime or disorder results when (1) likely offenders and (2) suitable targets come together in (3) time and space, in the absence of capable guardians for that target. A simple version of a problem analysis triangle looks like this:



- 6.11 Offenders can sometimes be controlled by other people - those people are known as handlers. Targets and victims can sometimes be protected by other people as well - those people are known as guardians. Places are usually controlled by someone - those people are known as managers. Thus, effective problem-solving requires understanding how offenders and their victims come together in places and understanding how those offenders, victims and places are or are not effectively controlled. Understanding the weaknesses in the problem analysis triangle in the context of a particular problem will point the way to new

interventions.

6.12 A complete problem analysis triangle looks like this:



6.13 Problems can be understood and described in a variety of ways. No one way is definitive. They should be described in whichever way is most likely to lead to an improved understanding of the problem and effective interventions. Generally, incidents cluster in four ways:

- *Behaviour.* Certain behaviours are common to the incidents. For example, grooming, exploiting, dealing/running drugs and stealing cars. There are many different behaviours that might constitute problems.
- *Place.* Certain places can be common to incidents. Incidents involving one or more problem behaviours may occur at, for example, a house, a business, a park, a neighbourhood, or a school. Some incidents occur in abstract places such as cyberspace, on the telephone, or through other information networks.
- *Persons.* Certain individuals or groups of people can be common to incidents. These people could be either offenders or victims. Incidents involving one or more behaviours, occurring in one or more places may be attributed to, for example, a youth gang, a lone person, a group/collective, or a property owner. Or incidents may be causing harm to, for example, residents of a neighbourhood, a group of adults, young children, or a lone individual.
- *Time.* Certain times can be common to incidents. Incidents involving one or more behaviours, in one or more places, caused by or affecting one or more people may happen at, for example, traffic rush hour, bar closing time, the holiday shopping season, or during an annual festival.

6.14 There is growing evidence that, in fact, crime and disorder does cluster in these ways. It is not evenly distributed across time, place, or people. Increasingly, police and researchers are recognizing some of these clusters as:

- Repeat offenders attacking different targets at different places.
 - Repeat victims repeatedly attacked by different offenders at different places.
 - Repeat places (or hot spots) involving different offenders and different targets interacting at the same place.
- 6.15 The Problem Analysis Triangle was derived from the routine activity approach to explaining how and why crime occurs. This theory argues that when a crime occurs, three things happen at the same time and in the same space:
- A suitable target is available.
 - There is the lack of a suitable guardian to prevent the crime from happening.
 - A motivated offender is present.
- 6.16 Outreach activity is shaped by actions set in the DEM (daily missing and exploitation missing) but also provides an opportunity for a more proactive approach in raising awareness with communities, identifying those young people not already known to services, building trusted relationships and providing a preventative and early help response when there are indicators of low level concern in respect of contextual safeguarding. Using the methodology above, the team aims to protect vulnerable children and disrupt problem people and problem places.
- 6.17 In terms of problem places, outreach targeted the night time economy (NTE), hotels/Bed and Breakfasts, Airbnbs, 'party' houses, taxi firms, off licenses and take-away shops in which young people are vulnerable to exploitation. Creating a visible presence, raising awareness and forming relationships with staff, proprietors and young people. These businesses can be the eyes and ears in deprived neighbourhoods and are ideally located to potentially identify concerns regarding child exploitation. This work is ongoing and will continue to be a feature of outreach work.
- 6.18 **Strengths of the pilot:**
- Creating a visibility in the community and raising awareness of contextual safeguarding concerns.
 - Identifying cohorts of children and young people and mapping of friendships/associates - intelligence gathering.
 - Building trusted relationships to illicit the wishes and views of young people.
 - Targeting of problem areas ensuring timely response.
 - Early identification of vulnerable children and young people.
 - Disruption of hot spot areas and businesses/addresses of concern.
 - Multi agency collaboration – sharing of information at the earliest opportunity and working together to improve outcomes for children and the community in which they live.

6.19 Using legal tools and powers to disrupt

Commonly used tools within the Anti-social behaviour and Policing Act 2014 are employed amongst other Public Protection powers. Since the start of the pilot we have used the following:

Community Protection Warnings	x 19
Community Protection Notices	x 5
Closure Orders (2 x brothels/1 x crack house)	x 3
Civil Injunctions (exploiting vulnerable children)	x 3
Criminal Behaviour Orders	x 2
License Review	x 1
Disruption visits (Inc. Section 239's)	x 87
Welfare visits	x 27
Home safety checks/target hardening	x 22

6.20 Examples of Outreach work and impact:

The initial focus of the outreach activities focussed on meeting with children and young people in areas that had been highlighted as having relatively large numbers seemingly not engaging in the activities already provided in their area. The concern was that children and young people not engaging in positive activities particularly over the summer holidays could be more vulnerable to exploitation and become involved in criminal activity. Three areas were targeted for outreach activity – Grange, Brunswick and Claremont. Practitioners engaged with the children and young people in these wards to ascertain why they were not engaging in the existing provision and what type of activities they would like to see provided. With funding from The Violence Reduction Network (VRN) and support from a range of partners the team was able to consider supporting the provision of extra activities.

6.21 Outreach identified a harder to reach cohort of children and young people, some already known to Awaken, who were not engaging in the third sector activities within the community and citing the main issue as being boredom. Building trust was essential to eliciting their views which then informed delivery of some current activities but also development of new activities. The children and young people expressed that they would engage in activities they were interested in and quickly identified boxing as an interest. In partnership with our Leisure Services, boxing keep fit was offered on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Two sessions were arranged, one for the younger element 8-11 years and one for the older element. This activity was also supported with extra outreach from the Boys and Girls Club as well as

Awaken and Youth Justice Practitioners. The Boxing has proven popular with sessions well attended and with VRN funding this activity has been extended until the end of October 2021 when it will be subject to review.

- 6.22 Having visibility in the community has enabled the identification of children not previously known to Awaken but where there exist indicators of exploitation concerns. This has resulted in timely referrals to the Awaken service and with support one young person was able to make positive change to their behaviour which led the courts to dismissing applications for Criminal Behaviour Orders.
- 6.23 Communicating with individuals that work in hot spot areas such as Queen Street has assisted in intelligence gathering and led to the identification of a number of young people that were out in the early hours of the morning but not reported missing. There was a physical altercation of which was evidenced in video footage and retrieved by the outreach workers and the team was able to generate missing from home return interviews on those identified to gather further information and identify the other individuals.
- 6.24 One of the main benefits of outreach is how daily business and information shared via the DEM is responded to in a timely manner and offers structure to the evening. This allows for earlier identification of children and young people along with a swift response to the targeting and disruption of individuals/business premises and hot spot areas. Targeting and disruption features heavily within the outreach, which benefits from the information shared within the DEM. In addition, information obtained from the outreach is filtered back into the DEM allowing for further tasking/development and information sharing across partner agencies.
- 6.25 The outreach is beginning to gain momentum as partner agencies have increased awareness of the activities that take place. This is leading to an increase in information sharing along with an increase in identification and mapping of young people allowing for support and intervention at the earliest opportunity. Relationships have strengthened and developed between Awaken and partner agencies to include greater joined up working with the Youth Offending Team and third sector agencies to support and improve the outcomes for young people
- 6.26 Outreach activity has increased around a number of takeaways following intel of young girls potentially being groomed. CCTV footage has been retrieved from one of the takeaways in order to identify the females and discussions have been had with the owner/manager regarding our worries. The information obtained from outreach has led to target hardening by the Community Safety Team and Police and an action plan in place for further disruption in order to safeguard young people.
- 6.27 A number of food establishments have been served with Community Protection Warnings (CPW) due to worries around either their behaviour or behaviours taking place on the

premises. One food establishment was reportedly employing young girls who were sexually harassed by the manager and his friends. This led to joined up working with the employment officer as no work permits had been requested. Outreach led to identifying a number of young girls who were subsequently visited by Awaken police and the food establishment was served with a CPW and a warning letter will be issued by the employment officer.

- 6.28 We identified two parents who were involved in drug dealing and were able to share this information with the professionals involved to include photographic evidence that was shared by the community safety team.

Window locks have been fitted at a number of addresses to prevent young people from going missing and securing the premises.

- 6.29 Outreach activity has enabled practitioners to have a better understanding of the cohorts of young people in Blackpool and how they link. The intelligence generated is crucial in working with children and young people at risk of or who are being exploited. For example we have been able to identify a number of young people who have begun to associate with peers where serious concerns of exploitation exist. Having this knowledge has enabled a preventative and early help response before problems around exploitation escalate.

6.30 **Engagement**

Outreach has provided an excellent method of engaging with young people of concern, as well as build relationships with them. A good example is the work done with the Talbot and Brunswick (TAB) cohort and the diversionary activities put in place on the back of the consultation with them.

- 6.31 This also allowed early intervention to ensure that the young people's vulnerability is reduced, as well as ensuring that services are made available to them. The impact of this work can be demonstrated by over 30 young people engaging with the Friday night 'Kicks' programme. The DEM informs both disruption activity as well as where to focus positive activity.

6.32 **Emerging trends identified from outreach and focus**

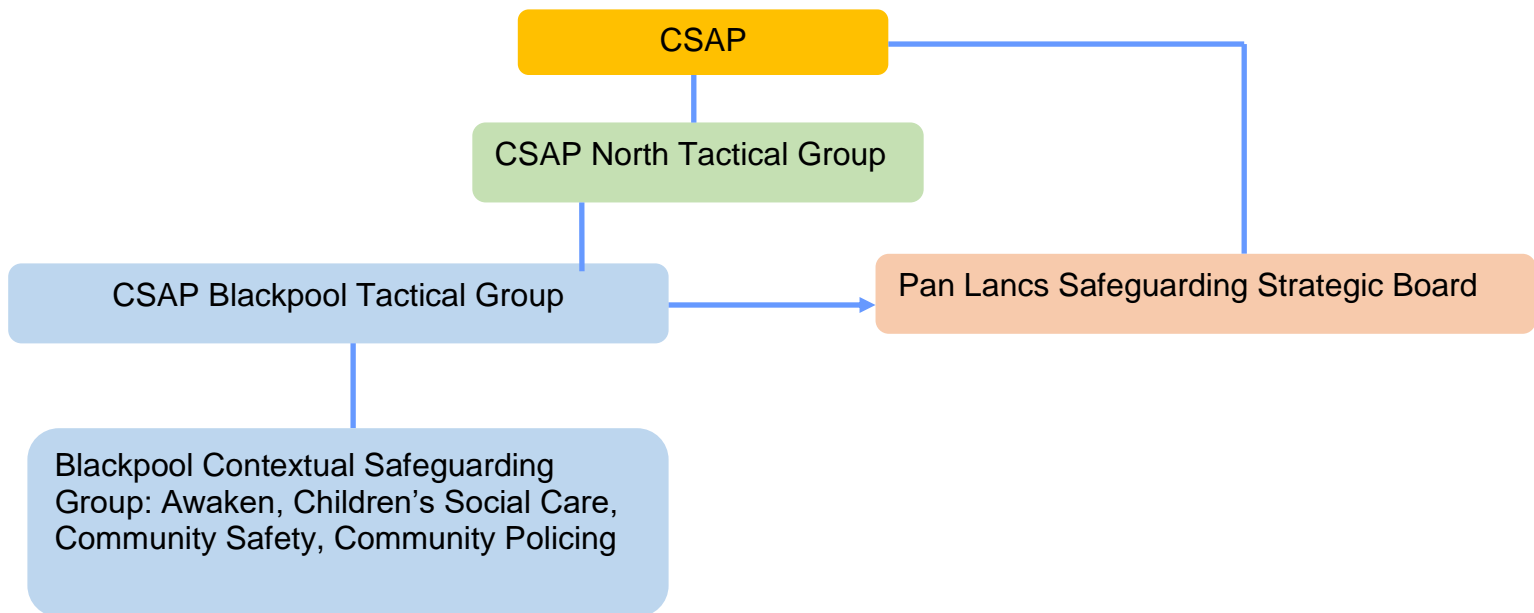
- Queen Street/night time economy. As the season in Blackpool continues and lockdown restrictions have lifted, Queen Street has seen an increase in young people frequenting the area, some of whom appear to relate to the TAB/ Claremont cohorts.
- Card-tricking. There are reports that card-tricking has resumed within the town centre.
- Identified drug dealing at some hotels; drug criminality and underage young people purchasing rooms. Discussions are ongoing around 'Challenge 25' and how this can be implemented.
- Takeaways giving free food, cannabis and cigarettes.

6.33 **Going forward**

- More outreach sessions over weekends to be explored.
- Awaken police staff to have extended hours enabling a contribution to outreach activity.
- Collaboration with missing from home prevention officers to explore out of hours response.
- Further alignment in the integration of third sector out of hours provision.

6.34 **Structure and Governance**

There are structures in place across the Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership footprint that are designed to ensure the partners’ safeguarding arrangements in this area of business are effective. These structures are laid out below:



6.35 The Safeguarding Partners have agreed this structure which includes the use of a Strategic Board and oversees the work across the whole of the partnership footprint. There are no current plans to change this structure.

There are Operational Groups in each of the Tactical Group areas that report into the Strategic Board, but also use the Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) reporting process to submit reports to the Tactical Groups. Blackpool’s Awaken Service reports directly to the Operational group to ensure oversight of practice and improvement and the progression of the action plan in place.

6.36 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 Additional funding was secured via Project Young ADDER (Addiction, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement and Recovery) a Home Office funded project aiming to move young people away from drug addiction and reduce the level of drug related offending via a trusted relationship approach and a multidisciplinary team. The funding of £40,000 is being utilised for Awaken sessional work (evenings and weekend) to disrupt and reduce young people who are frequently missing from home and at risk of exploitation.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

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Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Vicky Gent, Director of Children's Services
Date of Meeting:	7 October 2021

YOUTH JUSTICE TEAM INSPECTION

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update the Committee on the progress of the Blackpool Youth Justice Service Improvement journey and the outcome of the recent Inspection.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 For the Scrutiny Committee to have oversight of progress made in order to provide scrutiny, challenge and support.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure robust scrutiny of Youth Justice.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 No other alternative options to be considered.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 The Youth Justice Board (YJB) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Probation (HMIP) undertook an unannounced inspection of Blackpool Youth Justice Service in October 2018. The findings of the inspection resulted in Blackpool Youth Justice Service receiving an inadequate rating

(the Inspectorate uses a four-point scale: 'Outstanding', 'Good', 'Requires improvement' and 'Inadequate'). A comprehensive Improvement Plan was drawn up by the partnership, whole scale changes were undertaken to ensure improvements were made and progress monitored through the governance of the Youth Justice Executive Board.

6.2 The Youth Justice Service was re-inspected by HMIP during May and June 2021 and the remarkable improvements were acknowledged. The service is now rated 'Good' and in three aspects 'Outstanding'. The Inspectorate worked jointly with partner inspectors from policing, health, social care and education to undertake this inspection. Three broad areas were examined: the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts and the quality of out-of-court work (such as community sentences).

6.3 The Chief Inspector of Probation Justin Russell said: "Blackpool YJS has improved significantly since our 2018 inspection. The service has seen substantial reorganisation – it is now well organised, has effective scrutiny and clear direction. This has resulted in good quality work across all areas and is a significant achievement for the town and a credit to those involved."

Mr Russell continued: "We found that morale is high, and leaders and staff are motivated. When a youth justice service is so keen to develop, we see the quality improve. Some areas of their work were even rated 'Outstanding'. This is a considerable achievement: improving opportunities for children under supervision and reducing their chances of reoffending – this should not be underestimated."

Inspectors noted extensive improvements in key areas, such as the relationships between staff, children under supervision and their parents/carers. In addition, Blackpool YJS has reaffirmed partnerships with the police and secured better access for children to mental health services. There is clear planning for each child, proper analysis of their risk of harm, and a focus on getting children into education or vocational training.

Mr Russell concluded: "This a youth justice service heading in the right direction with the right priorities. The service has been overhauled, and they have a solid foundation to maintain this 'Good' standard. We have made a number of recommendations, and hope that our inspection will only provide the motivation to improve even further."

6.4 The improvements in the service have been driven from a stronger partnership of local services, better, more challenging oversight by the Executive Board and reinforced management of the service itself which has encouraged and supported improved practice; all of which has taken place in the wider context of greatly improved leadership of Children's Services in the Council and a profound shift in the approach to working with local children and families.

6.5 The Youth Justice Board (YJB) has commended the progress and in a letter to the Director of Children's Services stated: 'To be rated 'Good' with three areas of 'Outstanding' is an

incredible achievement and is a testament to the hard work, dedication and commitment by partners in Blackpool over the last couple of years to deliver better outcomes for children in Blackpool. We were particularly pleased to see the 'Outstanding' results in your Out of Courts Disposals work, knowing how hard you've worked as a partnership to improve outcomes in this area of practice. The inspection outcome also demonstrated how you and your team worked with the Executive Board to bring partners around the table to work collaboratively. This resulted in a significant improvement of governance with good evidence of both attendance and challenge by partners, which was crucial to the outcome of the inspection. Your dedication and hard work is having a significant impact, well done to all involved.'

6.6 Six recommendations were made by HMIP following the inspection to further improve the service:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions to ensure they are meeting children's needs and reducing re-offending.
- Provide thorough and effective initial assessment of children's health and educational needs, including communication skills and dyslexia.
- Reduce the unacceptably high NEET (not in education, training or employment) rates for the over-16 caseload by getting more children into further education provision and vocational training, including access to services where children can gain the personal, life, and social skills they need to work towards employment.
- Ensure that, in all children's records, there is a plan to keep other people safe and contingency planning if issues in the child's life increase the likelihood of harmful behaviour.
- Where risk to the child's safety or wellbeing is identified, put in place clear contingency planning for circumstances where the risk may increase.
- Where risk to other people is identified, put in place clear contingency planning for circumstances where the risk may increase.

The recommendations have been incorporated into the revised Youth Justice improvement plan, with leads supporting each action, which has been returned to HMIP and will continued to be monitored by the service and bi-monthly via the Executive Board.

Both the Youth Justice Executive and Shadow Board have a Development Day in January 2022. The aim of the day will be for the multiagency partnership to refresh the Improvement Plan and linked Themed Plans to co-produce a new Getting to Outstanding Plan.

6.7 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 8(a) - Inspection Report.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 The YOT partnership will fund the service in 2021/2022 through the budget outlined below:

Costs and Contributions 2021-2022 Budget

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Police	58,336		43,260	101,596
Probation	24,608		5,000	29,608
Health	39,974		15,444	55,418
Local Authority	369,681		156,806	526,487
YJB	392,663		54,251	446,914
Other				0
Total	885,262	-	274,761	1,160,023

There are no current budget pressures

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 There are no legal implications to consider.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 There are no issues of concern, appropriate governance arrangements are in place.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 The young people supported by the Blackpool Youth Justice Service in 2021/2022 were mainly white ethnic background (88 per cent), seven per cent of young people were mixed heritage and the remainder were a very small number of Eastern European and Vietnamese young people (data from Executive Board May 2021).

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 There are no sustainability, climate change or environmental factors to consider.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 The service continues to strengthen its consultation and co-production approach with our young people and victims to support improved service delivery.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.



An inspection of youth offending services in
Blackpool

HM Inspectorate of Probation, September 2021

Acknowledgements

This inspection was led by HM Inspector Mike Ryan, supported by a team of inspectors, supported by a team of inspectors and colleagues from across the Inspectorate. HM Inspectorate of Probation was joined by colleague inspectors from police, health, social care and education. We would like to thank all those who helped plan and took part in the inspection; without their help and cooperation, the inspection would not have been possible.

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Foreword

This inspection follows on from our inspection of the Blackpool Youth Justice Service (YJS) in 2018 as part of our four-year programme of YOS inspections. In 2018 we rated Blackpool as 'Inadequate' overall and identified several areas of poor practice. This current inspection was undertaken jointly with our partner inspectors from the police, health, social care and education.

We have inspected and rated Blackpool YJS across three broad areas: the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts, and the quality of out-of-court disposal work. Overall, Blackpool YJS was rated as 'Good'.

In many ways, the work in Blackpool has improved significantly since our 2018 inspection. Following substantial reorganisation, the YJS now has effective governance arrangements, which both set the direction for the YJS and provide rigorous scrutiny of the work being delivered. Leaders are keen to develop the service, and this is being translated into the greatly improved quality of work that our inspectors have identified. At the heart of this improvement is an engaged and highly motivated staff group. The YJS works well with other agencies within 'Blackpool Families Rock', a unified strategic approach to delivering children's services.

The supervision of court disposals is now, in the main, done to a good standard. There has been substantial improvement.





There has been a comprehensive overhaul of the arrangements for out-of-court disposal work, led by police colleagues. The quality of services has changed from 'Inadequate' across the board, to at least 'Good' and in some respects 'Outstanding'.

It is greatly encouraging that the service for children in Blackpool has shown such substantial improvement. We are confident that the foundations have been laid to maintain the quality of services, and we have provided a number of recommendations that should help to improve the service even further.



Justin Russell
Chief Inspector of Probation

Ratings

Blackpool Youth Justice Service		Score	25/36
Overall rating		Good	
1. Organisational delivery			
1.1	Governance and leadership	Good	
1.2	Staff	Good	
1.3	Partnerships and services	Requires improvement	
1.4	Information and facilities	Good	
2. Court disposals			
2.1	Assessment	Good	
2.2	Planning	Requires improvement	
2.3	Implementation and delivery	Good	
2.4	Reviewing	Outstanding	
3. Out-of-court disposals			
3.1	Assessment	Outstanding	
3.2	Planning	Good	
3.3	Implementation and delivery	Good	
3.4	Joint working	Outstanding	

Executive summary

Overall, Blackpool YJS is rated as: **'Good'**. This rating has been determined by inspecting the YJS in three areas of its work, referred to as 'domains'. We inspect against 12 'standards', shared between the domains. Our fieldwork was conducted between 17 May and 11 June 2021. The standards are based on established models and frameworks, which are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. They are designed to drive improvements in the quality of work with children who have offended.¹ Published scoring rules generate the overall YJS rating.² The findings and subsequent ratings in those domains are described below.

1. Organisational delivery



There has been extensive improvement in the delivery of services, and this is reflected in the ratings for domains two and three, which have changed from a score of 1 in 2018 to a score of 18 now. The board has been strengthened and has adopted a strong scrutiny role. There is a commitment to a 'child first' strategy and this aligns well with the broader intentions of the Blackpool Families Rock strategy.

The key features of the strategy are:

- creating trusting and honest relationships (relationship-based practice)
- improving and repairing relationships within families and communities (restorative practice)
- supporting families, providing a 'jigsaw of support' through partnership staff (systemic solution-focused practice)
- viewing adults and children as resourceful and resilient in the face of their worries (strengths-based practice).

The board acknowledges that, while the YJS has improved, more work is needed in order to fulfil its ambitions to achieve excellence in the delivery of services.

The current staff arrangements are a stark contrast to the picture we saw when we inspected the YJS in 2018. Staff feel valued and included, and work well with the children who come to the YJS. Relationships are the key to effective work with children and the organisation supports the continuity of key people in the children's lives.

In 2018³ we found that there was 'no up to date analysis of the needs of children subject to YJS supervision'. There is now detailed information, and this is supported

¹ HM Inspectorate of Probation's standards can be found here: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-our-work/our-standards-and-ratings/>

² Each of the 12 standards is scored on a 0–3 scale in which 'Inadequate' = 0; 'Requires improvement' = 1; 'Good' = 2; 'Outstanding' = 3. Adding these scores produces a total score ranging from 0–36, which is banded to produce the overall rating, as follows: 0–6 = 'Inadequate', 7–18 = 'Requires improvement', 19–30 = 'Good', 31–36 = 'Outstanding'.

³ HM Inspectorate of Probation (2018). *An inspection of youth offending services in Blackpool*.

by analysis, with all relevant aspects of the children's circumstances being identified and monitored.

In many respects, partnership working has substantially improved since the last inspection. Information exchange between the YJS and police has greatly improved. Police officers attending the multi-agency risk management meetings (MARMM) take an active role in the effective management of children who are either at risk of serious harm or have the potential to cause harm to the public. Previously reported delays in access to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) have been removed by the introduction of a 24/7 service. One inspector noted: "There were clear pathways into health services and case managers were aware of these and how to access services."

We were not able to visit the premises used by the YJS due to Covid-19 restrictions, so our commentary on facilities is limited. However, staff feedback suggests that there has been a substantial improvement since the previous inspection. Leaders have paid considerable attention to improving working arrangements at the YJS, and this has resulted in tangible progress.

We interviewed the YJS manager and the chair of the executive management board and held meetings with other board members and key stakeholders. Inspectors from the police and from health, social care and education and learning services were part of our inspection team. They followed up individual children's records and interviewed key members of staff.

Key findings about organisational delivery were as follows:

- the executive management board sets a clear vision for Blackpool YJS. It is well led by an experienced chair and members are of sufficient seniority to influence the provision of resources to support the YJS, in their host organisations
- the staff delivering services are skilled practitioners and they are supported by equally committed seconded and partnership staff. Morale is high, staff have been given improved access to training and view their managers as making a positive contribution to the quality of work. In the previous inspection, 42 per cent of staff rated their supervision as poor or very poor. When surveyed for this inspection, all staff reported supervision to be quite good or very good
- in 2018, only 41 per cent of staff felt they fully had the skills and knowledge to deliver high-quality services to children. In our most recent survey, all staff perceived themselves to at least mostly have the relevant skills and knowledge
- there is a good range of partnership services and developments are increasingly based on good information and analysis
- the new IT system (Core+) has markedly improved the availability and usefulness of data.

But:

- the YJS needs to develop an agreed protocol and shared understanding across the partnership on managing contextual safeguarding at the operational level

- the effectiveness of interventions should be evaluated to ensure they are meeting children's needs and reducing re-offending
- the YJS and partner agencies need to develop the way they manage information so that they communicate more effectively
- children should receive a thorough and effective initial assessment of their health and educational needs
- children need better access to services where they can gain the personal, life, and social skills they need to work towards employment.

2. Court disposals



We took a detailed look at 13 community sentences managed by the YJS. We conducted 13 interviews with the relevant case managers. We examined the quality of assessment; planning; and implementation and delivery of services. We inspected each of these elements in respect of work done to address desistance. For services to keep the child safe, we only assessed the quality of planning, implementation and reviewing in the 11 children's records where we expected meaningful work to take place. Similarly, for work to keep others safe, we assessed the quality of planning, implementation and reviewing in the 12 children's records where meaningful work was required. We did not look at any custodial sentences.

In our 2018 inspection, we rated assessment as 'Requires improvement'. For each of the other standards associated with court disposals, the rating was 'Inadequate'.

In the current inspection, we rated the standards as follows:

- for assessment, over three-quarters of the children's records inspected met all our standards, resulting in a rating of 'Good'
- for planning, just over half of the children's records met the standard for keeping other people safe, resulting in a rating of 'Requires improvement'
- for implementation and delivery of court disposals, over two-thirds of the children's records met all our standards, resulting in a rating of 'Good'
- where a review was necessary, the YJS met our standards in all children's records, resulting in a rating of 'Outstanding'.

Our key findings about court disposals are:

- assessment is based on sound analysis and used the contributions of partner agencies well
- plans are effective in supporting desistance and attending to the child's safety and wellbeing
- the court order was delivered well, with the balance between engagement, motivation and enforcement maintained to high professional standards
- the reviews of children's records were well done.

But:

- the needs of victims and access to restorative work were not considered in all appropriate children's records

- the language used in some documents was not always accessible to children
- in some children's records, there were no effective contingency arrangements to manage identified risks to the child's safety and wellbeing
- in some children's records, there was either no plan to keep other people safe or no contingency planning in the event that issues in the child's life increased the likelihood of harmful behaviour.

3. Out-of-court disposals



We inspected 10 children's records managed by the YOT that had received an out-of-court disposal. These consisted of three youth conditional cautions, five youth cautions, and two community resolutions. We interviewed the case managers in 10 children's records.

We examined the quality of assessment; planning; and implementation and delivery of services. We inspected each of these elements in respect of work done to address desistance. For services to keep the child safe, we only assessed the quality of planning and implementation in the seven children's records where we expected meaningful work to take place. Similarly, for work to keep others safe, we assessed the quality of planning and implementation in the six children's records where meaningful work was required. We inspected the quality of the YJS's recommendations and joint decision-making in all children's records, and the effectiveness of joint working with the police in the three youth conditional caution children's records only. The quality of the work undertaken needs to be above a specified threshold for each aspect of supervision to be rated as satisfactory.

When we inspected Blackpool YJS in 2018, the quality of out-of-court disposal work was rated as 'Inadequate' for each of the standards.

Since that inspection, Blackpool YJS has carried out an extensive review of its out-of-court disposal processes, so we would expect to see considerable improvement to the way the work is done.

In this inspection, we rated the work as follows:

- for assessment, at least eight out of 10 children's records met all our requirements, resulting in a rating of 'Outstanding'
- for planning work, four out of six children's records where risk of harm to other people was identified met our expectations, resulting in a rating of 'Good'
- for implementation and delivery, four out of six children's records met our requirements where risk of harm to other people had been identified, resulting in a rating of 'Good'
- joint working met our expectations in all children's records, resulting in a rating of 'Outstanding'.

Our key findings for out-of-court disposal work were:

- the use of AssetPlus ensures high-quality assessment work in almost all children's records; all assessments of risk to safety and wellbeing and risk of harm to others were accurate and appropriately recorded

- the work was appropriately planned
- an extensive range of interventions is available to children within the out-of-court disposals arrangement
- the joint working that underpins the delivery of out-of-court disposals was exemplary.

But:

- victim work was not delivered as required in a small number of children's records
- risk to safety and wellbeing and risk of harm to others were given insufficient attention in a small number of children's records.

Recommendations

As a result of our inspection findings, we have made seven recommendations that we believe, if implemented, will have a positive impact on the quality of youth offending services in Blackpool. This will improve the lives of the children in contact with youth offending services, and better protect the public.

The Blackpool Youth Justice Service should:

1. evaluate the effectiveness of interventions to ensure they are meeting children's needs and reducing re-offending
2. provide thorough and effective initial assessment of children's health and educational needs, including communication skills and dyslexia
3. reduce the unacceptably high NEET (not in education, training or employment) rates for the over-16 caseload by getting more children into further education provision and vocational training, including access to services where children can gain the personal, life, and social skills they need to work towards employment
4. ensure that, in all children's records, there is a plan to keep other people safe and contingency planning if issues in the child's life increase the likelihood of harmful behaviour
5. where risk to the child's safety or wellbeing is identified, put in place clear contingency planning for circumstances where the risk may increase
6. where risk to other people is identified, put in place clear contingency planning for circumstances where the risk may increase.

The Youth Justice Board should:

7. review the level of oversight of the Blackpool YJS.

Background

Youth offending teams (YOTs) work with children aged 10 to 18 who have been sentenced by a court, or who have come to the attention of the police because of their offending behaviour but have not been charged – instead, they were dealt with out of court. HM Inspectorate of Probation inspects both these aspects of youth offending services. We use the terms child or children to denote their special legal status and to highlight the obligations of relevant agencies such as social care, education and health to meet their safety and wellbeing needs.

YOTs are statutory partnerships, and they are multi-disciplinary, to deal with the needs of the whole child. They are required to have staff from local authority social care and education services, the police, the National Probation Service and local health services.⁴ Most YOTs are based within local authorities; however, this can vary.

YOT work is governed and shaped by a range of legislation and guidance specific to the youth justice sector (such as the National Standards for Youth Justice) or else applicable across the criminal justice sector (for example Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements guidance). The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) provides some funding to YOTs. It also monitors their performance and issues guidance to them about how things are to be done.

Blackpool is a town of 140,000 people, with slightly fewer than 12,500 children and young adults aged between 10 and 18 years old. The population split is 51:49 male to female, and they are overwhelmingly white British (87 per cent)⁵. Blackpool is the most deprived local authority in England. Eight of the 10 most deprived small areas in England are in the centre of Blackpool (up from three a decade ago) and a quarter of the whole of Blackpool is in the most deprived one per cent of areas in England. Nowhere else in the country has an equivalent concentration or extent of poverty and deprivation. Deprivation is chiefly driven by a low-skill, low-wage economy and poor employment opportunities. These in turn lead to particularly poor population-level health outcomes. Much of the work in the town is seasonal and tourism-based. Blackpool had the highest level of adult benefit claimants in the country before Covid-19. The rate has since doubled and remains the highest in the UK.

During the past year, Blackpool has been free from Covid-19 restrictions for just six weeks (mid-July to early September 2020). The council and its partner agencies have been trying to deliver services to vulnerable children, young people and adults, while ensuring the safety of workers.

There are currently 38 children open to Blackpool YJS. They are disproportionately male (87 per cent) and 88 per cent are white British (in line with the broader local population). A small number of children are of mixed ethnic heritage, of eastern European heritage or from Vietnam. Just over a third of the children have experienced public care or were in care at the time they were involved with the YJS. Two-thirds have had involvement with social care services, either currently or previously, although a third have never had any such involvement.

⁴ The *Crime and Disorder Act (1998)* set out the arrangements for local YOTs and partnership working.

⁵ Data provided by Blackpool YJS.

Key characteristics of the group include:

- mental health concerns (70 per cent of the cohort), with 10 per cent having a risk of suicide
- substance misuse issues are very common (70 per cent), with concern about two-fifths of all the children regarding addictive behaviours
- three-quarters of the children have special educational needs and disabilities or communication concerns, with a fifth having difficulty with reading and writing, half having difficulty with empathy and 40 per cent having difficulty relating to others. Yet only five per cent have a diagnosed speech, language and communication need.

A large majority of the children live at home (70 per cent), although a significant proportion live in residential units (18 per cent). The proportion of children where there are accommodation concerns mirrors this pattern (30 per cent where there are concerns); and over half of the children have education, training or employment needs. Nearly half have been assessed as vulnerable to criminal exploitation (22 per cent previously or currently involved in county lines), with a fifth vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

In terms of offending, depending on the aspect assessed, up to a quarter of the children present high-level concerns (16 per cent high or very high risk of significant harm; 22 per cent high or very high safety concerns; 23 per cent risk of self-harm). Between a third and half have been assessed as of low concern. Half of the children have a previous conviction. The average age at first conviction is 15.2, and the average age at first sanction 14.3. Half of those children have one previous conviction and a fifth have four or more.

Contextual facts

Youth justice information

227	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in Blackpool ⁶
201	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in North West
207	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in England and Wales
45%	Reoffending rate in Blackpool ⁷
39%	Reoffending rate in England and Wales

Population information⁸

139,446	Total population of Blackpool
12,494	Total youth population (10–17 years) in Blackpool

Caseload information⁹

Age	10–14	15–17
Blackpool YJS	22%	78%
National average	22%	78%

Race/ethnicity	White	Black and minority ethnic	Unknown
Blackpool YJS	91%	6%	3%
National average	69%	28%	0%

Gender	Male	Female
Blackpool YJS	86%	14%
National average	85%	15%

Additional caseload data¹⁰

35	Total current caseload, of which:
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⁶ First-time entrants, January to December 2019. Youth Justice Board.

⁷ Proven reoffending statistics, January to December 2018. Ministry of Justice.

⁸ UK population estimates, mid-2019. Office for National Statistics. June 2020.

⁹ Youth justice annual statistics, 2019-2020. Youth Justice Board. January 2021.

¹⁰ Data supplied by the YJS, reflecting the caseload at the time of the inspection announcement.

29 (83%)	court disposals
6 (17%)	out-of-court disposals

Of the 29 court disposals

27 (93%)	Total current caseload on community sentences
2 (7%)	Total current caseload in custody
0 (0%)	Total current caseload on licence

Of the six out-of-court disposals

3 (50%)	Total current caseload with youth caution
3 (50%)	Total current caseload with youth conditional caution
0 (0%)	Total current caseload: community resolution or other out-of-court disposal

Education and child protection status of caseload

13%	Current caseload 'Looked After Children' resident in the YOS area
34%	Current caseload 'Looked After Children' placed outside the YOS area
3%	Current caseload with Child Protection Plan
6%	Current caseload with Child in Need Plan
20%	Current caseload aged 16 and under not in school/pupil referral unit/alternative education
53%	Current caseload aged 16 and under in a pupil referral unit or alternative education
41%	Current caseload aged 17+ not in education, training or employment

For children subject to court disposals:

Offence types ¹¹	%
Violence against the person	38%
Sexual offence (contact)	15%
Burglary	8%
Robbery	23%
Arson	8%
Summary motoring offences	8%

¹¹ Data from the children's records assessed during this inspection.

1. Organisational delivery



The ratings in our last inspection (2018) were:

- Governance and leadership – ‘Inadequate’
- Staff – ‘Inadequate’
- Partnerships and services – ‘Requires improvement’
- Information and facilities – ‘Requires improvement’.

In this inspection, the ratings are as follows:

- Governance and leadership – ‘Good’
- Staff – ‘Good’
- Partnerships and services – ‘Requires improvement’
- Information and facilities – ‘Good’.

There has been substantial improvement in the standards of organisational delivery in and around the Blackpool YJS. In the last inspection, we encountered a deflated, dispirited staff group; in this inspection, we found staff to be well motivated, energetic and working within much clearer parameters.

Strengths:

- The executive management board sets a clear vision for the YJS.
- The board is well led by an experienced chair and members are of sufficient seniority to influence resources in their host organisations.
- The issues that influence the children towards offending – the risks and vulnerabilities – are well understood by the YJS.
- The board is supported by a committed and capable management team.
- Staff morale is high.
- There is active and skilled management support through staff supervision and oversight of work in multi-agency settings.
- The staff delivering services are skilled practitioners and they are supported by equally committed seconded and partnership staff.
- There are improved partnership arrangements in most areas of the service.
- The new IT system (Core+) has increased the effectiveness of information management.

Areas for improvement:

- The YJS needs to develop an agreed protocol and shared understanding across the partnership for managing contextual safeguarding at the operational level.

- The effectiveness of interventions needs to be evaluated to ensure they are meeting children’s needs and reducing re-offending.
- The YJS and partner agencies need to develop the way they manage information so that they communicate more effectively.
- Children need to receive a thorough and effective initial assessment of their personal, social, health and educational needs.
- Children need better access to services where they can gain the personal, life, and social skills they need to work towards employment.

Organisations that are well led and well managed are more likely to achieve their aims. We inspect against four standards.

1.1. Governance and leadership



The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children.

Good

In making a judgement about governance and leadership, we take into account the answers to the following three questions:

Is there a clear local vision and strategy for the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children?

The executive management board sets the YJS’s vision within the wider ‘Blackpool Families Rock’ strategic framework. This framework informs the approach to work with all children in the local authority. It was developed jointly with parents, children, carers and partner organisations. It involved a research review and careful attention to how families want partnerships to work with them.

The key features of the approach are:

- creating trusting and honest relationships (relationship-based practice)
- improving and repairing relationships within families and communities (restorative practice)
- supporting families, providing a ‘jigsaw of support’ through partnership staff (systemic solution-focused practice)
- viewing adults and children as resourceful and resilient in the face of their worries (strengths-based practice).

There is an up-to-date and relevant business plan for the work of the YJS. Key aspects of nationally set performance measures are monitored alongside local improvement plans.

All relevant statutory partners are represented consistently at the YJS executive management board, and members have an appropriate level of seniority. We found that the board uses performance management information to inform its scrutiny of

front-line practice across the partnership. The board's work is supported by appropriate workstreams, including neglect, domestic abuse and contextual safeguarding.

Our case inspections provided evidence of the YJS's vision being translated into practice.

The independent chair has a comprehensive understanding of the environment in which the YJS functions and is a strong advocate for the work of the team.

The role of the voluntary sector in contributing to the YJS's work is underdeveloped and the sector is not represented in the management at board level.

Do the partnership arrangements actively support effective service delivery?

We found clear examples of board members promoting the work of the YJS within their own organisations. Importantly, in the context of concerns that we expressed in our 2018 inspection, there has been a police-led review of out-of-court disposal processes and systems. The marked improvement in this area of work is directly attributable to the improvements that followed the review.

The work of the seconded probation officer has supported the development of an under-25s team in the adult probation service. This aims to improve the management of issues relating to transition and increase staff's understanding of maturity and development.

There are appropriate formal agreements between partners, including secondment agreements and escalation processes. Multi-agency working is at the heart of the broader strategy for children. Seconded staff have a clear understanding and sense of ownership of their responsibilities for the delivery of services.

There is a strong focus on accessing specialist interventions and securing appropriate ways into mainstream services.

Does the leadership of the YOT support effective service delivery?

The membership of the board provides strong alignment with other strategic boards and partnerships across children's social care. This includes the Local Authority Scrutiny Committee, the Children and Families Partnership Board and the Children Safeguarding and Assurance Partnership.

There was strong police representation on the YJS board, with a superintendent who has policing responsibility for Blackpool, and the Head of Criminal Justice Lancashire. The Head of Criminal Justice also sits on the other two YJS strategic boards that make up the YJS across the Lancashire Constabulary area. This ensures that police across the force area take a consistent approach and that good practice is shared.

Health services were represented at the YJS board and by people of the appropriate level of seniority to be able to make decisions. Board members we spoke with all felt that partnership working had significantly improved since the last inspection and that they were actively involved in decision-making.

In our 2018 report, we noted that, '...the Management Board was not sufficiently challenging during this time and accepted an overly optimistic assurance of the impact of the changes'. Our current inspection has shown marked improvement in the functioning of the board. A healthy level of scrutiny has led to better

understanding of the service and clearer appreciation of what needs to be made better.

The development of a 'shadow board' provides an active, formal link between staff and the board and is an example of promising practice. The shadow board aims to provide a forum for the executive board and YJS practitioners to share information. It also seeks to provide a practitioner's perspective on the YJS Improvement Plan, performance reports and other issues, as requested by executive board. A member of the shadow board also sits on the executive board to support two-way communication. As a consequence, staff engage directly in the board's workstreams (as practitioner theme leads), review the progress of work and actively contribute to decision-making.

There are clear business risk management processes documented, including developing a 'happy, engaged staff group'.

Sustainable change has been supported by an increase in management capacity.

1.2. Staff



Staff within the YOT are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children.

Good

Key staffing data¹²

Total staff headcount (full-time equivalent, FTE)	13.28
Total headcount qualified case managers (FTE)	6.51
Total headcount other case managers (FTE)	2
Vacancy rate: case managers only (total unfilled case manager posts as percentage of total case manager headcount)	0%
Average caseload per case manager (FTE)	5
Average annual sickness days (all staff)	12.36
Staff attrition (percentage of all staff leaving in 12-month period)	0%

In making a judgement about staffing, we take into account the answers to the following four questions:

Do staffing and workload levels support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children?

This is a stable group of staff who display active and sensitive ways of working. Delivery of the appropriate adult role in-house is one example of the way the service has been restructured to meet demand effectively.

¹² Information supplied by YJS and reflecting the caseload at the time of the inspection announcement.

The workload of caseworkers is at a level where it is reasonable to expect the delivery of high-quality services. Staff have opportunities to share work where necessary, and there is a strong commitment to continuity of relationships in managing work with children.

Morale was high, and case managers and social workers impressed as hard-working and committed to improving children's lives. Workers' passion and commitment to making a difference were prominent when they discussed their work, and they demonstrated that they knew the children well. The Blackpool Families Rock model was routinely reflected in practice across the partnership and supported the delivery of effective plans and interventions.

Police officers seconded to the YJS are experienced and well-valued members of the team. They work within the guidelines set out in the Youth Justice Board's *Role of the YOT Police Officer 2015*. The officers provide invaluable assistance to case managers in relation to intelligence-sharing. They also actively participate in high-risk panel meetings and play a key role in the out-of-court disposal panel.

The YJS police officers provide support to other police departments across Blackpool. There was evidence of good engagement with the neighbourhood teams, including attendance at weekly anti-social behaviour meetings. Support and advice provided to response officers have included a bespoke presentation on the work the YJS can provide in relation to dealing with criminal offences committed by children, and a significant investment in the Early Help hub. The YJS sergeant supervises the missing from home officer and has good links with the child sexual and criminal exploitation teams. This enriches the sharing of information.

The YJS police officers had a good knowledge of safeguarding. They understood when and how to make referrals to Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) for children who exhibit behaviour that presents a risk of harm to other people. Officers also attended the Multi-Agency Risk Management Meetings (MARMM), taking an active role in effectively managing children who are either at risk of serious harm or have the potential to cause harm to the public.

All the health staff working with the YJS were passionate and dedicated. They delivered a child-focused service. This included reviewing which health practitioner was the most suitable person to lead on the work with the child, which helped to build trusting relationships. Staff were flexible in their approach. For example, they carried out home visits, and were persistent in building relationships with the children to support them to access health services. They, alongside all other YJS colleagues, continued to work with children throughout most of the period of pandemic restrictions.

A specialist education, training and employment officer is seconded to the YJS. Consequently, work with alternative education providers has been effective, ensuring that most children aged 10 to 16 years are appropriately placed. Blackpool Council's advice and guidance team is highly responsive when a child is ready to access a programme such as 'Positive Steps'.

Some of the partnership staff do not have the benefit of effective cover arrangements.

Do the skills of YOT staff support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children?

This is a skilled group of staff who advocate strongly on behalf of the child in order to access appropriate services. There is a clear and professional commitment to the consistency and quality of the working relationship.

Most staff are appropriately qualified and there are active processes to support those with different qualification levels when working with issues relating to risk to safety or risk of harm to others.

Staff are strongly encouraged to develop their skills and portfolio of experience. For example, they can lead on strategic workstreams, pursue external qualifications, access in-house training and attend the executive board.

Does the oversight of work support high-quality delivery and professional development?

All staff in the YJS receive appropriate supervision and there is clear evidence of management oversight in almost all of the children's records. Overall, case managers and social workers report receiving effective supervision, including reflective supervision, in line with Blackpool's supervision policy. In some instances, in children's social care, the level of formal supervision for social workers was not in line with policy and there was an over-reliance on informal supervision. Caseworkers and social workers value the open-door policy and feel managers are visible and accessible.

There is a clear and effective induction programme for new members of staff, which has been sustained during the period of pandemic restrictions.

Almost half of staff had not had an appraisal and of those who had, almost half did not consider it to be valuable.

Are arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive?

A combination of line management identification of training needs and the delivery of improvement actions has meant that all staff have accessed training in AssetPlus, safeguarding, restorative justice and trauma-informed practice. Take-up of training is monitored, and the information used to identify future training needs across the partnership.

The small number of active volunteers working on referral panels report that they are well trained and supported by the YJS.

We found good evidence of staff development. One individual is undertaking formal social work training and others are supporting the board's work themes. One member of staff sits on the executive board as a staff representative. Caseworkers are supervising an intake of local apprentices into the YJS.

There is a clear focus on 'child first' ways of working. Through training, supervision and high levels of staff motivation, the approach is being translated into the delivery of services. In 2018 we formed the view that, '... morale among some staff was low. Practitioners did not feel enabled to effect changes. Staff struggled to identify anything about their work or their workplace that they were proud of. When pushed, one member of staff said 'surviving'.'

During the current inspection one of our inspectors observed that: *"Workers' passion and commitment to making a difference were prominent when discussing their work and demonstrated they knew young people well. The Blackpool Families Rock model of practice was routinely reflected in practice across the partnership and supported the delivery of effective plans and intervention."*

Staff and managers actively look outside their own organisation for models of best practice.

1.3. Partnerships and services



A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children.

Requires improvement

Caseload characteristics¹³

Percentage of current caseload with mental health issues	50%
Percentage of current caseload with substance misuse issues	72%
Percentage of current caseload with an education, health and care plan	19%

In making a judgement about partnerships and services, we take into account the answers to the following three questions:

Is there a sufficiently comprehensive and up-to-date analysis of the profile of children, to ensure that the YOT can deliver well-targeted services?

There is a comprehensive and up-to-date analysis of the profile of children. All relevant factors and issues are understood, including safety and wellbeing, risk of harm, disproportionality and sentencing patterns. The clearest issue that emerges from the data is the over-representation of white boys from identifiable districts of the town, characteristically those with the highest known levels of deprivation.

There is good evidence that services are developing in line with an understanding of the children's needs. As a result of the pandemic, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment had not been updated recently. However, due to the small cohort of children open to the YJS, the level of joint working that was in place, and practitioners' knowledge, the YJS had reliable information on what the children's current health needs were.

Police contribute to delivering interventions, including knife crime, consequences of crime and driving awareness. The range of interventions delivered by the YJS as a whole needs to be evaluated to ensure that the interventions are meeting the children's needs and contributing to reducing re-offending.

¹³ Data supplied by YJS.

Does the YOT partnership have access to the volume, range and quality of services and interventions to meet the needs of all children?

Our previous inspection described out-of-court disposal arrangements as 'Poor'. Since then, the YJS has carried out a comprehensive review, and in this inspection, we found a carefully mapped out set of processes that are well understood by all participants. The panel's decision-making is underpinned by an AssetPlus assessment in all children's records and the case inspection results show a remarkable improvement in performance.

In our 2018 inspection, we found that 'access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) can be particularly difficult for children, with a third of children's records having to wait three months for the start of treatment'. In this inspection we found that children were supported to attend mainstream health services and there is an excellent health offer in Blackpool. This includes the Child and Adolescent Support and Help Enhanced Response service, which allows 24/7 access for children with mental health needs, and Connect, a sexual health service. Both of these see children on the day of referral. There are clear pathways into health services, and caseworkers are aware of these and how to access services.

There is a good range of services available, including the Awaken Team (which provides a bespoke service to children at risk of exploitation), Early Help Hub and Edge of Care provision. Information is shared across services to determine the best approach and maximise impact.

Communication at strategic and operational level across the YJS and children's social care is normally effective. The ability of caseworkers to input information on to children's electronic case records provides for timely and effective information-sharing.

YJS managers regularly attend multi-agency meetings, including daily meetings. This provides support for the identification of children at risk and acts as an early alert in identifying changes in children's circumstances.

The effectiveness of joint working resulted in children's needs, including placement and support, being met effectively. Joint working across services where children were at risk of exploitation, including child criminal exploitation, was strong.

Individual assessment of need and risk, including immediate risk of serious harm, is embedded. Some YJS workers are trained in assessing harmful sexual behaviours by children and carry out joint assessments with children's social care.

Victim and restorative work is appropriately resourced, with an active partnership between the YJS and Lancashire Constabulary Police Restorative Justice Team.

Substance misuse interventions are delivered by the Blackpool Young People's Service as part of the Addiction, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement, Recovery scheme for complex children. Access to services is quick and is helpfully integrated with the delivery of YJS support.

Blackpool YJS has a full-time, seconded education and employment officer. Education provision for school-age children means that most children are appropriately placed in school. The proportion of children in the YJS caseload who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is too high (41 per cent) and well above that of other Blackpool children (five per cent). Reduction of the NEET figure is a priority within the Blackpool Education Improvement Board's 2020-2030 vision.

Children do not get thorough enough initial assessment of their personal, life and educational needs. Speech and language assessments have just begun, following staff training; however, there is no screening for dyslexia or assessment of children's communication, social and life skills, such as telling and using time.

Staff have not developed any programmes where these skills can be gained and improved in safe environments and where children are encouraged to identify and celebrate the personal, life, and social skills they gain.

There has been significant recent improvement in the use of electronic systems by and between partners, such as the police, social care, case workers and the education, training and employment officer. However, timely communication of 'events', such as an arrest, while well documented by a partner, do not create sufficient 'alerts' within the systems to ensure that all workers involved with that child can respond rapidly. For example, the development of an education, health and care plan, which would support a child entering custody, may be delayed if information is not received in a way that alerts the service receiving the child.

Leaders and managers have not yet sufficiently evaluated the impact of the learning and employment programmes they provide for children. Managers had not until very recently identified the gaps in provision to support children to gain the necessary skills for sustained employment.

Are arrangements with statutory partners, providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services?

All staff work within a service level agreement. They are clear about their responsibilities and speak with great enthusiasm about the 'child first' way of thinking about and delivering services.

There is a well-developed partnership with the NSPCC (as part of children's social care) and some evidence of a promising development in relation to the Blackpool Football Club Community Trust. Increased attention to the role of the voluntary sector in supporting the work of the YJS would be a valuable future development.

In our 2018 inspection, we observed that, 'Feedback from the court was not positive'. We expressed concerns about poor communication between the YJS and courts. In this inspection, we found Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service represented on the executive board and closely involved in the organisation's improvement programme.

Involvement of children and their parents and carers

The wider strategy, 'Blackpool Families Rock', was constructed using a carefully developed approach to co-production, involving children, their parents or carers and partner organisations. The YJS has planned for a participation group to restart after the pandemic to obtain feedback from the children about health services. Further development of this work is necessary.

1.4. Information and facilities



Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all children.

Good

In making a judgement about staffing, we take into account the answers to the following four questions:

Are the necessary policies and guidance in place to enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all children?

We found that staff had good awareness of policies and guidelines and were able to access these as necessary. There was good evidence of policies and guidance being reviewed and refined at appropriate intervals.

The local authority has appropriate policies and procedures in place. This includes the Targeted Intervention Service (TiS) Safeguarding Guidance, which explains how to apply policies in relation to safeguarding children. The TiS guidance is aligned to the policies set out by Blackpool Council, including the Children Safeguarding and Assurance Partnership.

Does the YOT's delivery environment(s) meet the needs of all children and enable staff to deliver a quality service?

The YJS seeks to maintain contact arrangements close to where the child is living. The main office is at a children's hub but there are more local facilities available for the use of YJS staff.

The police officers are located at the YJS, with the flexibility to attend the satellite offices to deliver interventions and youth cautions when required. They have full access to the YOT and police IT systems, including Core+ and the Police National Computer (PNC), and have a good working knowledge of them. Intelligence held on local police systems and the PNC is researched and provided to case managers when they ask for it.

Learning from the pandemic has resulted in the YJS becoming more flexible in managing face-to-face contact.

Health and safety concerns for staff are carefully managed. This has particularly been the case during the operating conditions caused by the pandemic.

Do the information and communication technology (ICT) systems enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all children?

IT equipment is sufficient to support the delivery of the service, with all members of staff supported to work at home when necessary. The move to Core+ has increased the YJS's ability to generate useful management information.

All partners have access to and can directly input into the Core+ system. The YJS introduced a new IT system in mid-2020, which has enabled it to produce better information on performance. The new system also provides for the YJS to input into the children's social care electronic case records. This supports timely information-sharing and communication, but could be further strengthened by social workers

having access to the YJS electronic case record. Most recording seen was up to date, succinct and relevant.

Although information is shared between partners, the system does not alert the receiver that new information has been provided (there is no alert or flag system to make the receiver aware of new information coming in).

Is analysis, evidence and learning used effectively to drive improvement?

There are clear arrangements for the YJS to provide and analyse information on its performance and the quality of its work for use at board and operational levels.

The YJS undertakes routine quality assurance work and has supplemented this with peer reviews. Service development has been guided by close attention to the observation of the most effective developments in working with children.

Since our last inspection the YJS has delivered an extensive response to the recommendations we made.

More focus on evaluating the work delivered would support continuous improvement.



2. Court disposals

We took a detailed look at 13 community sentences managed by the YJS. We also conducted 13 interviews with the relevant case managers. We examined the quality of assessment; planning; and implementation and delivery of services. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance. For services to keep the child safe, we only assessed the quality of planning, implementation and reviewing in the 11 children's records where we expected meaningful work to take place. Similarly, for work to keep others safe, we assessed the quality of planning, implementation and reviewing in the 12 children's records where meaningful work was required.

In our last inspection (2018) we rated assessment work as 'Requires improvement'. For each of the other standards associated with court disposals the rating was 'Inadequate'.

In the current inspection we rated the standards as follows:

- for assessment, over three-quarters of the children's records inspected met all our standards, resulting in a rating of 'Good'
- for planning, just over half of the children's records met the standard for keeping other people safe, resulting in a rating of 'Requires improvement'
- for implementation and delivery of the court disposal, over two-thirds of the children's records met all our standards, resulting in a rating of 'Good'
- where a review was necessary, the YJS met our standards in all children's records, resulting in a rating of 'Outstanding'.

There has been a clear and substantial improvement in the quality of work being delivered by the Blackpool YJS. The balance between engagement, analysis and a focus on issues of desistance, risk to safety and wellbeing and risk of causing harm to others is well maintained in most children's records.

Strengths:

- Assessment work was based on sound analysis and used the contributions of partner agencies well.
- Good working relationships were established with the children and their families.
- Plans were effective in supporting desistance and attending to the child's safety and wellbeing.
- The court order was delivered well, with the balance between engagement, motivation and enforcement maintained to high professional standards.
- Multi-agency work was strong in both the delivery of services and the oversight of individual children's records.
- Reviews were good enough in all children's records inspected.

Areas for improvement:

- The needs of victims and access to restorative work were not considered in all appropriate children's records.
- The language used in some documents was not always accessible to children.
- In some children's records, there were no effective contingency arrangements to manage identified risks to the child's safety and wellbeing.
- In some children's records, there was either no plan to keep other people safe or no contingency planning in the event that issues in the child's life increased the likelihood of harmful behaviour.

Work with children sentenced by the courts will be more effective if it is well targeted, planned and implemented. In our inspections, we look at a sample of cases. In each of those cases, we inspect against four standards.

2.1. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents/carers.

Good

Our rating¹⁴ for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	% yes	2018 results
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	85%	58%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	92%	58%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	58%	58%

Since our last inspection, assessment work has improved as a consequence of staff training, improved management oversight of children's records and a 'child first' approach, meaning that there is a strong focus on issues which have an impact on desistance and the safety of the child. With most of the children, the focus on risk of harm is appropriate and carefully considered.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?

In almost all children's records (11 out of 13) the focus on factors that would help the child to avoid further offending was good. The work was characteristically thorough, and caseworkers were sufficiently analytical, with relevant contributions to assessments from other agencies or seconded partnership staff.

¹⁴ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

In 10 out of the 13 children’s records, the views of parents or carers were deemed to be meaningfully considered in formulating an assessment. The child’s motivation to engage and change was carefully gauged in 12 of the 13 children’s records.

Opportunities to attend to the needs and wishes of victims were not always pursued. This was the case in a third (four) of the children’s records where there was an identifiable victim.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?

The work sufficiently considered the safety of the child in 12 out of the 13 children’s records we inspected. There was a strong sense of partnership in the caseworker’s consideration of the child’s safety. Other agencies were consulted and the information they shared was incorporated into the resultant work.

There was good evidence of the involvement of other agencies, when this was appropriate, in 12 of the 13 children’s records. We found that caseworkers had a good understanding of the child’s personal circumstances. Factors relevant to vulnerability were well documented, analysed and accurately classified in terms of the degree of risk to the child.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?

In over three-quarters of the children’s records inspected (10 out of 13), the caseworker had sufficiently analysed how to keep other people safe. We found good levels of inter-agency working in the formulation of assessment of risk of harm to others, and that classification was accurate in most (10 out of 13) children’s records.

With some of the children (three), the risk of harm to others was underestimated. This was either because the caseworker relied too much on the child’s self-reporting or because they did not consider the child’s potential to cause harm by repeating some reckless behaviours.

2.2. Planning



Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents/carers.

Requires improvement

Our rating¹⁵ for planning is based on the following key questions:

	% yes	2018 results
Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child’s desistance?	75%	54%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	82%	30%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	55%	39%

¹⁵ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

Planning of work has improved since the last inspection. Improvements in assessment should lead to improved plans, but this was not always the case.

We found that in too many of the children's records, where risk of causing harm had been identified, there were insufficient plans for circumstances in which the risk of repeating harmful behaviour could increase. There is a need for increased rigour, both by the practitioner and manager, to make sure that appropriate planning takes place in all children's records where anticipatable behaviour will require additional work, for example to protect known victims or to change the nature and frequency of supervision.

Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?

In nine out of 12 children's records, the plans focused well on desistance. Plans contained activities most likely to support the child in ceasing to offend in 10 out of 12 children's records.

We were concerned about the technical language used in some of the planning documents. For some programmes of activity, such as intensive supervision or referral orders, we considered that more work needed to be done to create a plan that was written in a style that matched the child's learning needs. This would then support the caseworker in making a plan that the child could work with and understand.

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

Generally, plans focused on keeping the child safe (nine out of 11 children's records).

We noted, however, that in too many children's records (six out of 11) there were no effective contingency arrangements to manage identified risks to the child's safety and wellbeing. This meant that, should anticipated events occur, such as the child becoming homeless, the plan did not set out what action should be taken.

When the issues in the child's life had reached the threshold where they could be classified as at least a medium risk to the child's safety and wellbeing, the planning developed by a multi-agency risk management meeting (MARMM) was found to be sufficient to address identified needs.

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

Too frequently (five out of 11 children's records), planning for the risk that the child presented in terms of potential to harm others was insufficient. In particular, there was either no plan to keep other people safe or no contingency planning in the event that issues in the child's life increased the likelihood of harmful behaviour.

2.3. Implementation and delivery



High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child.

Good

Our rating¹⁶ for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

	% yes	2018 results
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?	83%	33%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child safe?	91%	30%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	70%	22%

There has been a marked improvement in the quality of work delivered since our last inspection. Staff developed strong working relationships with the children and their families and used a range of contact methods to maintain the quality of engagement, despite the limiting circumstances of the pandemic.

In most respects, the work being delivered was to a good standard. Where work was being delivered with partner agencies, it was effective.

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?

The work of the YJS strongly supported the child's desistance in 10 out of 12 children's records, and built on strengths and positive factors in all children's records. In the main, the YJS caseworkers demonstrated a calm, patient approach. They knew the children well and fostered good working relationships with them and with partnership staff. Despite the restrictions in place because of the pandemic, we found strong evidence of effective and supporting working.

The balance between effective engagement and maintaining compliance was well maintained. Where necessary, appropriate enforcement action was taken in all circumstances.

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child?

In 10 out of 11 children's records, the identified risks to the child's safety and wellbeing were appropriately managed. We found that concerns were being well monitored, families were engaged in providing support to the child, and multi-agency approaches worked well in securing additional resources. Caseworkers played a clear role in coordinating the work.

¹⁶ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?

In over two-thirds of the children’s records (seven out of 10) the YJS effectively supported the safety of other people.

Even where the child refused to engage with the YJS we found that MARRM arrangements monitored the case and identified the appropriate actions to take in anticipation of deteriorating circumstances. Caseworkers often acted as advocates for the child with other agencies and this led to successful additional help being secured to address issues of risk of harm to others.

In a small number of children’s records (three), issues of risk of harm to others had been overlooked or insufficiently considered.

2.4. Reviewing



Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents/carers.

Outstanding

Our rating¹⁷ for reviewing is based on the following key questions:

	% yes	2018 results
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child’s desistance?	100%	38%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	100%	40%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	100%	38%

In 2018 we found the quality of reviews to be ‘Inadequate’ across the requirements of the standard. Due to a mixture of increased practitioner attention, management oversight and supportive multi-agency working, we found a substantial improvement in reviewing practice.

Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child’s desistance?

Caseworkers paid good attention to the child’s desistance in the context of changed personal circumstances or escalating concerns. In all children’s records, we found that the review of work was done well enough.

Caseworkers demonstrated a good understanding of risk factors and need, particularly when working with children with volatile lives. They translated this into meaningful case reviewing.

¹⁷ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

As a consequence of robust reviewing, particularly in the MARMM process where there is extensive monitoring and coordination, we found that the work focused sufficiently on keeping the child safe in all children's records.

Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

In a smaller number of children's records (three) where there were clear factors associated with risk of harm to others, we saw good evidence of multi-agency working. Plans and actions were appropriately revised on the basis of well-managed information-sharing, particularly with police colleagues. In each case the reviews focused sufficiently on keeping other people safe.

3. Out of court disposals



We inspected 10 children's records managed by the YJS that had received an out-of-court disposal. These consisted of three youth conditional cautions, five youth cautions, and two community resolutions. We interviewed the case managers in 10 children's records.

We examined the quality of assessment; planning; and implementation and delivery of services. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance. For services to keep the child safe, we only assessed the quality of planning and implementation in the seven children's records where we expected meaningful work to take place. Similarly, for work to keep others safe, we assessed the quality of planning and implementation in the six children's records where meaningful work was required. We inspected the quality of YOT recommendations and joint decision-making in all children's records, and the effectiveness of joint working with the police in the three youth conditional caution children's records only. The quality of the work undertaken for each factor needs to be above a specified threshold for each aspect of supervision to be rated as satisfactory to achieve a particular score.

When we inspected Blackpool YJS in 2018, the quality of work was rated as 'Inadequate' for each of the standards.

Since that inspection, Blackpool YJS has carried out an extensive review of its out-of-court disposal processes, so we would expect to see considerable improvement to the way the work is done.

In this inspection, we rated the work as follows:

- for assessment, at least eight out of 10 children's records met all our requirements, resulting in a rating of 'Outstanding'
- for planning, four out of six children's records where risk of harm to other people was identified met our expectations, resulting in a rating of 'Good'
- for implementation and delivery, four out of six children's records met our requirements where risk of harm to other people had been identified, resulting in a rating of 'Good'
- joint working met our expectations in all children's records, resulting in a rating of 'Outstanding'.

The YJS's work has substantially improved since the last inspection and is being delivered within a well-documented and clear process. Panel arrangements now function well, and participants are clear about their role and the purpose of the work.

Partner agencies participate well in the panel process, the quality of which is underpinned by the consistent provision of comprehensive assessments. This leads to well-informed, appropriate and proportionate use of out-of-court disposals, which are delivered well.

Strengths:

- There is a comprehensive and well-documented set of processes to support the delivery of out-of-court disposal work.
- People understand their roles well and there is strong multi-agency working to deliver the services.
- The use of AssetPlus ensures high-quality assessment work in almost all children's records.
- All assessments of risk to safety and wellbeing and risk of harm to others were accurate and appropriately recorded.
- An extensive range of interventions is available to children within the out-of-court disposals arrangement.
- Caseworkers demonstrate commitment to the children and form appropriately supportive and challenging relationships in an honest and open way.
- The joint working that underpins the delivery of out-of-court disposals was exemplary.

Areas for improvement:

- Victim work was not delivered as required in a small number of children's records.
- Risk to safety and wellbeing and risk of harm to others was given insufficient attention in a small number of children's records.

Work with children receiving out-of-court disposals will be more effective if it is well targeted, planned and implemented. In our inspections, we look at a sample of cases. In each of those cases, we inspect against four standards.

3.1. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents/carers.

Outstanding

Our rating¹⁸ for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	% yes	2018 results
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	80%	36%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	80%	21%

¹⁸ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	90%	21%
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In 2018 we found that assessment practice for out-of-court disposals was inconsistent. Assessment work was not undertaken for some children’s records and, for others, was done by staff not trained to do this work. The resultant rating was that assessment work was ‘Inadequate’.

Within the revised process, all assessment work was done by suitably trained and experienced staff. This investment of time has yielded a dramatic improvement in the quality of work.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child’s desistance?

The YJS uses AssetPlus to assess all children referred for consideration of an out-of-court disposal. This means that a comprehensive assessment should be undertaken before the out-of-court disposal decision-making panel considers the case.

The work was done well enough to support the child in keeping away from further offending in eight out of the 10 children’s records we inspected. We found that assessments were detailed, analytical and drew on an appropriate range of sources of information. Where caseworkers identified concerns about victims, they considered their needs and wishes appropriately at all times.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?

In almost all of the children’s records (eight out of 10), the caseworker assessed well enough how to keep the child safe. We found that the classification of safety and wellbeing was reasonable in nine of the 10 children’s records, and that the assessment was clear and in written form in all.

The involvement of other agencies and services was a strong characteristic of the work. Many of the children had complex needs. Caseworkers had a good appreciation of the role of children’s services, and this led to effective liaison work when appropriate.

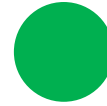
Staff providing protective services, including Family in Need provision and the Awaken team, contributed to the assessment of the child where criminal or sexual exploitation were identified as risks to the child.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?

In nine out of 10 children’s records there was enough analysis of how to keep other people safe.

The caseworkers demonstrated a good understanding of factors that had a bearing on the assessment of risk. They took into account the child’s current and previous behaviour and the context in which the child was living. In all children’s records we considered the classification of risk of causing harm to others to be reasonable.

3.2. Planning



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents/carers.

Good

Our rating¹⁹ for planning is based on the following key questions:

	% yes	2018 results
Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?	80%	29%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	71%	0%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	67%	29%

The adoption of a coherent and consistent approach to out-of-court disposal work means that plans were mostly of a good quality.

Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?

We found that in eight out of 10 children's records the plans for work with the child were done well enough. There was a good appreciation of the child's learning needs and plans were adapted according to the individual child. The child and their parent or carer were meaningfully involved in planning in eight out of the nine children's records where this was possible.

In all children's records, the caseworker had considered the needs and wishes of the victim.

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

There were concerns about the safety and wellbeing of the child in seven children's records. In most, the plans were sufficient to promote safety. Other agencies were involved if this was appropriate to the child's needs.

In two children's records, some risks to the child had been missed. In three children's records, necessary plans to manage changes in factors that caused the child to be at risk were not developed.

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

Planning was good enough to keep other people safe in four of the six children's records in which concerns had been identified. We found active steps to address the needs of victims, through either delivering victim awareness work or engaging the child in restorative work. This included providing direct reparation to the victim of the offence.

Plans included the work of other agencies in four out of five children's records where this was appropriate to concerns about the child's behaviour.

¹⁹ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

3.3. Implementation and delivery



High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child.

Good

Our rating²⁰ for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

	% yes	2018 results
Does service delivery effectively support the child's desistance?	90%	7%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child?	71%	0%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?	67%	29%

Does service delivery effectively support the child's desistance?

In nine of the 10 children's records, we found that the delivery of work supported the child's desistance.

There was a good standard of work across all our requirements and a clear sense that caseworkers were holding together the work being done by other services. Staff were tenacious in maintaining contact with the children and their families and, where necessary, used compliance meetings to secure the engagement of the child in the relevant activities.

Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child?

In most children's records, the safety of the child was effectively supported (five out of seven). Where this was done well, the caseworker acted as an assertive advocate for the child and made sure the YJS was represented at key events, such as children in need meetings.

In two children's records, not enough attention was paid to the safety and wellbeing of the child. In these children's records, there was either familial hostility towards services or lack of engagement of the child.

Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?

The services effectively supported the safety of other people in four out of six children's records. This mostly reflected the good liaison arrangements between the YJS staff and police colleagues.

In two children's records, planned work to address the victim's concerns was not delivered. In one case, this was due to lack of engagement by the child.

²⁰ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

3.4. Joint working



Joint working with the police supports the delivery of high-quality, personalised and coordinated services.

Outstanding

Our rating²¹ for joint working is based on the following key questions:

	% yes	2018 results
Are the YOT's recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child, supporting joint decision making?	100%	50%
Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out-of-court disposal? ²²	100%	21%

The joint-working arrangements adopted to support out-of-court disposals are reliable, support good decision-making and are based on good working relationships between the key agencies.

Are the YOT's recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child, supporting joint decision-making?

In all of the children's records, we found that the YJS caseworker had made proportionate and timely contributions to the out-of-court process. These contributed positively to the decision-making of the out-of-court disposal panel.

There was enough evidence to be clear that all of the children and their parents or carers understood the process well enough to make informed decisions about their involvement.

The panel's decisions were clearly and accurately recorded in all children's records.

Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out-of-court disposal?

For youth conditional cautions, we require the YJS to inform the police of progress and outcomes in a sufficient and timely manner and to give proper attention to compliance with, and enforcement of, the conditions. These requirements were met in all children's records.

²¹ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

²² This question is only relevant in youth conditional caution cases.

Annexe 1: Methodology

HM Inspectorate of Probation standards

The standards against which we inspect youth offending services are based on established models and frameworks, which are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. These standards are designed to drive improvements in the quality of work with children who have offended.²³

The inspection methodology is summarised below, linked to the three domains in our standards framework. We focused on obtaining evidence against the standards, key questions and prompts in our inspection framework.

Domain one: organisational delivery

The YJS submitted evidence in advance and the Chief Executive delivered a presentation covering the following areas:

- How do organisational delivery arrangements in this area make sure that the work of your YJS is as effective as it can be, and that the life chances of children who have offended are improved?
- What are your priorities for further improving these arrangements?

During the main fieldwork phase, we conducted 23 interviews with case managers, asking them about their experiences of training, development, management supervision and leadership. The second fieldwork week is the joint element of the inspection. HM Inspectorate of Probation was joined by colleague inspectors from the police, and health, social care and education services. We followed up issues which had emerged from the case inspections. We held various meetings, which allowed us to triangulate evidence and information. In total, we conducted 13 meetings, which included meetings with managers, partner organisations, and staff. The evidence collected under this domain was judged against our published ratings characteristics.²⁴

Domain two: court disposals

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining case files and interviewing case managers. 60 per cent of the cases selected were those of children who had received court disposals six to nine months earlier, enabling us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place. In some individual children's records, further enquiries were made during the second fieldwork week by colleague inspectors from the police, and health, social care or education services.

We examined 13 court disposals. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of five), and we ensured that the ratios in relation to gender, sentence or disposal type, risk of serious harm, and risk to safety and wellbeing classifications matched those in the eligible population.

²³ HM Inspectorate's standards are available here:

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-our-work/our-standards-and-ratings/>

Domain three: out-of-court disposals

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining case files and interviewing case managers. 40 per cent of children's records selected were those of children who had received out-of-court disposals two to five months earlier. This enabled us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, implementing and joint working. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place. In some individual children's records, further enquiries were made during the second fieldwork week by colleague inspectors from the police, and health, social care or education services.

We examined 10 out-of-court disposals. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of five), and we ensured that the ratios in relation to gender, sentence or disposal type, risk of serious harm, and risk to safety and wellbeing classifications matched those in the eligible population.

In some areas of this report, data may have been split into smaller sub-samples – for example, male/female cases. Where this is the case, the margin of error for the sub-sample findings may be higher than five.

Ratings explained

Domain one ratings are proposed by the lead inspector for each standard. They will be a single judgement, using all the relevant sources of evidence. More detailed information can be found in the probation inspection domain one rules and guidance on the website.

In this inspection, we conducted a detailed examination of a sample of 13 court disposals and 10 out-of-court disposals. In each of those cases, we inspect against four standards: assessment, planning, and implementation/delivery. For court disposals, we look at reviewing; and in out-of-court disposals, we look at joint working with the police. For each standard, inspectors answer a number of key questions about different aspects of quality, including whether there was sufficient analysis of the factors related to offending; the extent to which children were involved in assessment and planning; and whether enough was done to assess and manage the safety and well-being of the child, and any risk of harm posed to others.

For each standard, the rating is aligned to the lowest banding at the key question level, recognising that each key question is an integral part of the standard.

Lowest banding (key question level)	Rating (standard)
Minority: <50%	Inadequate
Too few: 50-64%	Requires improvement
Reasonable majority: 65-79%	Good
Large majority: 80%+	Outstanding ☆

We use case sub-samples for some of the key questions in domains two and three. For example, when judging whether planning focused sufficiently on keeping other people safe, we exclude those cases where the inspector deemed the risk of serious harm to be low. This approach is justified on the basis that we focus on those cases where we expect meaningful work to take place.

An element of professional discretion may be applied to the standards ratings in domains two and three. Exceptionally, the ratings panel considers whether

professional discretion should be exercised where the lowest percentage at the key question level is close to the rating boundary, for example between 'Requires improvement' and 'Good' (specifically, within five percentage points of the boundary; or where a differing judgement in one case would result in a change in rating; or where the rating is based upon a sample or sub-sample of five cases or fewer). The panel considers the sizes of any sub-samples used and the percentages for the other key questions within that standard, such as whether they fall within different bandings and the level of divergence, to make this decision.

Overall provider rating

Straightforward scoring rules are used to generate the overall provider rating. Each of the ten standards will be scored on a 0-3 scale as listed in the following table.

Score	Rating (standard)
0	Inadequate
1	Requires improvement
2	Good
3	Outstanding ☆

Adding the scores for each standard together produces the overall rating on a 0-30 scale as listed in the following table.

Score	Rating (overall)
0-6	Inadequate
7-18	Requires improvement
19-30	Good
31-36	Outstanding ☆

We do not include any weightings in the scoring rules. The rationale for this is that all parts of the standards framework are strongly linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes, and we have restricted ourselves to those that are most essential. Our view is that providers need to focus across all the standards, and we do not want to distort behaviours in any undesirable ways. Furthermore, the underpinning evidence supports including all standards/key questions in the rating, rather than weighting individual elements.

Annexe 2: Inspection data

The answers to the key questions that determine the ratings for each standard are underpinned by answers to more detailed 'prompts'. These tables illustrate the proportions of the case sample with a satisfactory 'yes' response to the prompt questions. It should be noted that there is no mechanistic connection between the proportion of prompt questions answered positively, and the overall score at the key question level. The 'total' does not necessarily equal the 'sum of the parts'. The summary judgement is the overall finding made by the inspector, having taken consideration of the answers to all the prompts, weighing up the relative impact of the strengths and weaknesses.

Domain 2 – Court disposals

2.1. Assessment	
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	% Yes
Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?	85%
Does assessment consider the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child, utilising information held by other agencies?	85%
Does assessment focus on the child's strengths and protective factors?	85%
Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child?	83%
Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and their likelihood of engaging with the court disposal?	92%
Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s, and opportunities for restorative justice?	67%
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?	77%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	
Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child?	77%
Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	92%

Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	92%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	
Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?	73%
Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	91%
Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child?	82%

2.2. Planning	
Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	% Yes
Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing?	83%
Does planning take sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child?	75%
Does planning take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?	82%
Does planning take sufficient account of the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary?	75%
Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s?	67%
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?	92%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	
Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child, sufficiently addressing risks?	82%
Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child?	90%

Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	91%
Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?	45%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	
Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors?	73%
Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate?	100%
Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?	70%
Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety of other people?	64%
Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?	36%

2.3. Implementation and delivery	
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?	% Yes
Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?	83%
Does service delivery reflect the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents/carers or significant others?	92%
Does service delivery build upon the child's strengths and enhance protective factors?	100%
Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents/carers?	83%
Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration including access to services post-supervision?	92%
Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child's compliance with the work of the YOT?	92%
Are enforcement actions taken when appropriate?	100%

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child?	
Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	91%
Is the involvement of other organisations in keeping the child safe sufficiently well coordinated?	100%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	
Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	73%
Is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims?	63%
Is the involvement of other agencies in managing the risk of harm sufficiently well coordinated?	100%

2.4. Reviewing	
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	% Yes
Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors linked to desistance?	100%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building upon the child's strengths and enhancing protective factors?	100%
Does reviewing consider motivation and engagement levels and any relevant barriers?	100%
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in reviewing their progress and engagement, and are their views taken into account?	100%
Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to support desistance?	100%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	
Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to safety and wellbeing?	100%
Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child?	100%

Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	100%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	
Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to risk of harm?	100%
Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in managing the risk of harm?	100%
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in reviewing their risk of harm, and are their views taken into account?	67%
Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	100%

Domain 3 – Out-of-court disposals

3.1. Assessment	
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	% Yes
Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's acknowledgement of responsibility, attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?	100%
Does assessment consider the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child, utilising information held by other agencies?	80%
Does assessment focus on the child's strengths and protective factors?	80%
Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child?	78%
Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change?	80%
Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s, and opportunities for restorative justice?	100%
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?	100%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	

Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child?	80%
Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	80%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	
Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?	71%
Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including any other assessments that have been completed, and other evidence of behaviour by the child?	100%

3.2. Planning	
Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?	% Yes
Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing?	90%
Does planning take sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child?	80%
Does planning take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?	90%
Does planning take sufficient account of the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary?	80%
Does planning take sufficient account of opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services following completion of out of court disposal work?	90%
Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s?	100%
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?	89%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	

Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child, sufficiently addressing risks?	71%
Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child?	71%
Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?	57%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	
Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors?	100%
Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate?	80%
Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?	80%
Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?	83%

3.3. Implementation and delivery	
Does service delivery support the child's desistance?	% Yes
Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?	90%
Does service delivery reflect the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents/carers or significant others?	80%
Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents/carers?	90%
Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child's compliance with the work of the YOT?	90%
Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services?	90%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child?	
Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	71%

Is the involvement of other agencies in keeping the child safe sufficiently well utilised and coordinated?	67%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?	
Is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims?	67%
Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	67%

3.4. Joint working	
Are the YOT's recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child, supporting joint decision making?	% Yes
Are the recommendations by the YOT for out of court disposal outcomes, conditions and interventions appropriate and proportionate?	100%
Do the recommendations consider the degree of the child's understanding of the offence and their acknowledgement of responsibility?	90%
Is a positive contribution made by the YOT to determining the disposal?	100%
Is sufficient attention given to the child's understanding, and their parents/carers' understanding, of the implications of receiving an out of court disposal?	100%
Is the information provided to inform decision making timely to meet the needs of the case, legislation and guidance?	80%
Is the rationale for joint disposal decisions appropriate and clearly recorded?	100%
3.2.1 Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out of court disposal?²⁵	
Does the YOT inform the police of progress and outcomes in a sufficient and timely manner?	100%
Is sufficient attention given to compliance with and enforcement of the conditions?	100%

²⁵ This question is only asked in youth conditional caution cases.

Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Paul Turner, Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Early Years
Date of Meeting:	7 October 2021

CATCH-UP PREMIUM SPEND AND STRATEGIES

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To provide an overview and outline of how Blackpool schools are spending their catch-up/recovery premium.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To encourage and remind all local schools to publish the required information on their websites.

2.2 For Councillors, who are school governors, to scrutinise the spend and to hold school leaders to account for the quality of the provision and resources that are being put in place.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is widespread and hugely challenging. This money provides extra resources and capacity for schools to ensure that children are able to catch-up any lost learning.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 There is no alternative to scrutinising the Covid-19 catch-up funding. However, additional funding could be provided to schools and/or obtained from other sources, to ensure that this catch-up journey is rapid, sustainable and successful.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

- 6.1 Catch-up premium is provided by the Department For Education (DFE). The total allocation amounted to £1 billion, divided into a pot of £650 million for the 2020/2021 academic year, to be allocated to schools for spending and £350 million for the National Tutoring Programme.
- 6.2 All schools in Blackpool were eligible for this funding.
- 6.3 Most school received £80 per pupil, although the rate for special schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRU) was £240. Schools are expected to publish the information about spend of this premium on their website.
- 6.4 There is an additional recovery premium allocated for the school year 2021-2022. The rates are £145 (mainstream) per pupil and £290 (PRU and special).
- 6.5 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

- 7.1 Appendix 9(a) – Recovery Premium Funding Information
Appendix 9(b) – Catch-Up Premium Information
Appendix 9(c) – Academy Website Requirements
Appendix 9(d) – Schools Catch-Up Premium Spending

8.0 Financial considerations:

- 8.1 None.

9.0 Legal considerations:

- 9.1 It is a legal requirement for schools to publish this information on their website.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

- 10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

- 11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

- 12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 DFE website – see attached appendices.

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Guidance

Recovery premium funding

Published 6 September 2021

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Purpose

In February 2021, the government announced a one-off recovery premium as part of its package of funding to support education recovery.

The recovery premium provides additional funding for state-funded schools in the 2021 to 2022 academic year. Building on the pupil premium (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-effective-use-and-accountability>), this funding will help schools to deliver evidence-based approaches for supporting disadvantaged pupils.

Eligibility

All schools that are eligible for pupil premium are eligible for recovery premium. This includes the following types of schools:

- mainstream primary, secondary and all through local authority-maintained schools, academies and free schools serving children aged 4 to 15
- local authority-maintained special schools
- special academies and free schools
- non-maintained special schools
- pupil referral units
- alternative provision (AP) academies and free schools
- local authority-maintained hospital schools and academies

We will provide funding to local authorities for eligible pupils they have placed in independent special schools, where the local authority pays full tuition fees, as recorded on their January 2021 alternative provision census.

Pupil eligibility

The recovery premium will be allocated using the same data as the pupil premium. This means the following pupils will attract recovery premium funding to schools:

- pupils who are eligible for free schools meals (FSM)
- pupils who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years
- children looked after by local authorities and referred to as looked-after children (LAC)
- post-looked after children (post-LAC)

Funding

Funding allocations

School allocations will be calculated on a per pupil basis.

Mainstream schools will get:

- £145 for each eligible pupil in mainstream education
- £290 for each eligible pupil in a special unit

Other types of eligible schools will get £290 for each eligible pupil.

We have applied additional weighting to specialist provision recognising the significantly higher per pupil costs they face.

We have included a minimum payment that we refer to as a 'floor' to ensure that:

- an eligible primary school will not receive less than £2,000
- an eligible secondary school will not receive less than £6,000

As with pupil premium, the funding for looked-after children will be paid to the local authority and should be managed by the virtual school head (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities>).

School allocations and the conditions of grant will be published ahead of the first payment in September.

Payment schedule

The recovery premium will be paid in 4 payments to schools during the 2021 to 2022 academic year on the following schedule.

Maintained schools payment schedule

Payments will be sent to local authorities on the last working day of each month in:

- September 2021
- December 2021
- April 2022
- June 2022

Academies payment schedule

Payments will be made on the first working day of each month in:

- October 2021
- January 2022
- May 2022
- July 2022

Using recovery premium funding

Schools should spend this premium on evidence-based approaches to supporting pupils. In line with the Education Endowment Foundation's pupil premium guide (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/pupil-premium-guide/>), activities should include those that:

- support the quality of teaching, such as staff professional development
- provide targeted academic support, such as tutoring
- deal with non-academic barriers to success in school, such as attendance, behaviour and social and emotional support

Like the pupil premium, schools can:

- spend the recovery premium on a wider cohort of pupils than those who attract the funding
- direct recovery premium spending where they think the need is greatest

For further guidance on effective use of pupil premium, and recovery premium funding, read our guidance on using pupil premium (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-effective-use-and-accountability>).

As with pupil premium, funding for looked-after children should be managed by the local authority virtual school head. They should work with schools, including the designated teacher, to decide how to use the funding effectively to support looked after children.

Reporting and accountability

Schools must show how they are using their recovery premium effectively:

- by reporting on their use of recovery premium as part of their pupil premium strategy statement (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-effective-use-and-accountability#strategy-statements>)
- through inspections by Ofsted (<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>) - as part of these inspections, inspectors may discuss plans schools have to spend their recovery premium funding

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Guidance

Catch-up premium

Updated 27 April 2021

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What catch-up funding is for

In June 2020 the government announced £1 billion of funding to support children and young people to catch up on missed learning caused by coronavirus (COVID19). This is especially important for the most vulnerable pupils and pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds who we know have been most affected. This funding includes:

- a one-off universal £650 million catch-up premium for the 2020 to 2021 academic year to ensure that schools have the support they need to help all pupils make up for missed learning
- a £350 million National Tutoring Programme (<https://nationaltutoring.org.uk/>) to provide additional, targeted support for those children and young people who need the most help, which includes:
 - a schools programme for 5 to 16-year-olds – for more information, see the National Tutoring Programme FAQs (<https://nationaltutoring.org.uk/faqs>)
 - a 16 to 19 tuition fund (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-funding-16-to-19-tuition-fund>)
 - an oral language intervention programme for reception-aged children (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/catch-up-premium-coronavirus-covid-19/the-reception-year-early-language-programme-neli>)

This guidance applies to the catch-up premium only.

Eligibility

The followings settings are eligible:

- primary, secondary and all through local authority-maintained schools, academies and free schools
- local authority-maintained special schools
- special academies and free schools
- special schools not maintained by a local authority
- pupil referral units
- alternative provision (AP) academies and free schools
- local authority-maintained hospital schools and academies
- independent special schools

We will provide funding to local authorities for pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans who are educated in independent special schools based on the number of such pupils in their area.

Funding allocations

School allocations will be calculated on a per pupil basis.

Mainstream schools will get £80 for each pupil from reception to year 11 inclusive.

The following settings will get £240 for each place for the 2020 to 2021 academic year:

- special schools, including special units within mainstream schools
- AP schools
- hospital schools

We have applied additional weighting to specialist settings, recognising the significantly higher per pupil costs they face. A typical primary school of 200 pupils will receive £16,000 while a typical secondary school of 1,000 pupils will receive £80,000.

See the Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium: allocations guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-catch-up-premium-provisional-allocations>) for further information.

Payment schedule

Schools will get funding in 3 tranches.

1. Autumn 2020 – this is based on the latest available data on pupils in mainstream schools and high needs place numbers in special, AP, hospital schools and special schools not maintained by a local authority.
2. Early 2021 – based on updated pupil and place data. This payment will also take account of the initial part payment made in autumn 2020 so that schools will receive a total of £46.67 per pupil or £140 per place across the first 2 payment rounds.
3. Summer 2021 term - a further £33.33 per pupil or £100 per place.

See the Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium: allocations guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-catch-up-premium-provisional-allocations>) for the latest payment information.

How funding allocations are calculated

For mainstream schools, we will use the 4 to 15 pupil headcount from the October 2020 census. For special, AP, and hospital schools, we will use:

- 2019 to 2020 academic year place numbers from the published local authority 2019 to 2020 financial year budget returns for local authority-maintained schools
- the published high needs place numbers for the 2020 to 2021 academic year for academies and special schools not maintained by a local authority

Similar to the pupil premium (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium#use-of-the-pupil-premium>), schools should use the sum available to them as a single total even though funding is calculated on a per pupil or per place basis. Funding will only be available for the 2020 to 2021 academic year and will not be added to schools' baselines in calculating future years' funding allocations.

Using catch-up funding

Schools should use this funding for specific activities to support their pupils' education recovery in line with the curriculum expectations in the actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#section-3-curriculum-behaviour-and-pastoral-support>).

While schools can use their funding in a way that suits their cohort and circumstances, they are expected to use this funding for specific activities which will help pupils catch up on missed learning. Schools should particularly focus on disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils as we know they have been most affected.

To support schools to make the best use of this funding, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has published a coronavirus (COVID-19) support guide for schools (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/covid-19-support-guide-for-schools/#nav-covid-19-support-guide-for-schools1>) with evidence-based approaches to catch up for all students.

To support schools to implement their catch-up plans effectively, EEF has published the school planning guide: 2020 to 2021 (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/guide-to-supporting-schools-planning/>). This will provide further guidance on how schools should implement catch-up strategies and supporting case studies to highlight effective practice.

Schools can use catch-up premium funding to support any summer catch-up provision that they are offering and can carry funding forward to future academic years.

Accountability: school leaders and governors

School leaders must be able to show they are using the funding to support their pupils' educational recovery in line with the curriculum expectations in the actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#section-3-curriculum-behaviour-and-pastoral-support>).

Governors and trustees should scrutinise schools' approaches to catch-up, including their plans for and use of catch-up funding. This should include consideration of whether schools are spending this funding in line with their catch-up priorities, and ensuring appropriate transparency for parents.

Information is available on:

- what academies should publish online about their use of catch-up premium funding (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-academies-free-schools-and-colleges-should-publish-online>)
- what maintained schools should publish online about their catch-up premium funding (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online>)

Monitoring by Ofsted

It is intended that Ofsted will resume its full programme of routine, graded school inspections in September 2021.

During the summer term, Ofsted intends to restart some onsite inspections under its education inspection framework. The inspections are due to start from 4 May. Details of the inspection plans are available at Ofsted: coronavirus (COVID-19) rolling update (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofsted-coronavirus-covid-19-rolling-update>). As part of these inspections, inspectors may discuss plans schools have to spend their catch-up premium funding.

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1. Home (<https://www.gov.uk/>)
2. Running a school or college (<https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/running-school-college>)

Guidance

What academies, free schools and colleges should publish online

The information that academies, including 16 to 19 colleges and any educational institution that has academy arrangements, should publish on their websites.

From:

Department for Education (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>)

Published

30 June 2016

Last updated

12 February 2021 — See all updates

Applies to England

Contents

- School or college contact details
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There's separate guidance on what schools maintained by a local authority must publish online (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online>).

If your school or college is one of the following types, you need to check your funding agreement to find out exactly what information you must publish on your website:

- academies (<https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/academies>), including free schools (<https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/free-schools>), studio schools and university technical colleges
- sixth-form colleges
- general further education (F.E.) colleges

There are also publishing requirements set out within the Equality Act 2010 and Children and Families Act 2014, with which you must comply.

This guidance gives an overview of those requirements and the further information that the Department for Education (DfE) recommends that you publish on your website if you are one of these schools or colleges. Many academy trusts are under a duty to publish much of this further information, due to clauses in their funding agreements.

School or college contact details

Your website should include the:

- name of your school or college
- postal address of your school or college
- telephone number of your school or college
- name of the member of staff who deals with queries from parents and other members of the public
- name of the headteacher or principal
- name and address of the chair of the governing body (if you have one)
- name and contact details of your special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) unless you're a special academy or sixth form or F.E. college

If you're an academy, you should publish details about your academy's sponsor:

- if the school's owner is an individual, you should publish their full name and contact details (address and a telephone number)
- if the school's owner is a group or organisation, you should publish the address and telephone number of its office

Admission arrangements

Academies

Admissions arrangements for all mainstream academy schools, other than 16 to 19 institutions must comply with the School admissions code (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2>) and the School admission appeals code (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code>).

Academy trusts must publish the admissions arrangements for their schools on their website and keep them there for the whole of the offer year (the school year in which offers for places are made).

16 to 19 academies and colleges

If you're a 16 to 19 academy, FE college or sixth-form college, we recommend that you publish details of your admission arrangements.

You should publish this information a year before the beginning of the academic year to which arrangements apply, to help parents and students make an informed choice, and we recommend that the arrangements do not change during the year. You should include details of:

- open days your college or academy is planning
- the process for applying for a place at your college or academy
- whether your college or academy gives priority to applications from pupils enrolled at particular schools

The School admissions code (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2>) and the School admissions appeal code (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code>) do not apply to 16 to 19 academies, FE colleges and sixth-form colleges.

Ofsted reports

You must publish either a copy of your school's most recent Ofsted report (<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>) or a link to the report on the Ofsted website.

Exam and assessment results

Schools are not required to publish their exam and assessment results from the 2019 to 2020 academic year as these have not been published as performance measures by the Secretary of State. You must, however, continue to display your 2018 to 2019 performance measures until new performance measures are published. You should clearly mark that these performance measures are not current. There's further information on school and FE accountability expectations for the 2019 to 2020 academic year (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-school-and-college-performance-measures/coronavirus-covid-19-school-and-college-accountability>).

Key stage 2 (end of primary school) results

If you're an academy, you should publish the following details on your school's most recent key stage 2 performance measures as published by the Secretary of State (for most schools, the performance measures published for the 2018 to 2019 academic year):

- progress scores in reading, writing and maths
- percentage of pupils who achieved at least the expected standard in reading, writing and maths
- percentage of pupils who achieved at a higher standard in reading, writing and maths

- average 'scaled scores' in reading and maths

Key stage 4 (end of secondary school) results

If you are an academy, you should publish the following details from your school's most recent key stage 4 performance measures as published by the Secretary of State (for most schools, the performance measures published for the 2018 to 2019 academic year):

- Progress 8 score (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure>)
- Percentage of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-baccalaureate-ebacc>) (EBacc)
- Pupil destinations - percentage of students staying in education or employment after key stage 4
- Attainment in English and maths - percentage of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in GCSE English and maths
- Attainment 8 score (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure>)

Key stage 5 (16 to 18)

If you have a sixth form, you should publish the following details from your 16 to 18 performance tables page (<https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables>) school or college's most recent key stage 5 (16 to 18) performance measures as published by the Secretary of State (for most schools, the performance measures published for the 16 to 18 accountability headline measures (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-accountability-headline-measures-technical-guide>) 2018 to 2019 academic year):

- progress
- attainment
- English and mathematics progress
- retention
- destinations

Performance tables

If you're an academy or college, you should publish a link to the school and college performance tables (<https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/>) and your school or college's performance tables page.

Curriculum

Academies should publish:

- the content of the curriculum your school follows in each academic year for every subject, including for mandatory subjects such as Religious Education, even if it's taught as part of another subject or subjects or is called something else
- your approach to the curriculum should also include how you are complying with your duties in the Equality Act 2010 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/schedule/10>) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/1530/made>) about making the curriculum accessible for those with disabilities or special educational needs

- how parents or other members of the public can find out more about the curriculum your school is following
- how you meet the 16 to 19 study programme requirements (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-study-programmes-advice-on-planning-and-delivery>) (if you have a sixth form or offer education at 16 to 19)

Depending on what phase of education your school offers, we recommend you also publish any of the following that apply to your school:

- the names of any phonics or reading schemes you are using in key stage 1
- a list of the courses available to pupils at key stage 4, including GCSEs
- the 16 to 19 qualifications you offer

Remote education

You must publish information about your school's remote education provision on your website. An optional template (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providing-remote-education-information-to-parents-template>) is available to support schools with this requirement.

Find out more about remote education expectations in the actions for schools during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>).

Behaviour policy

Academies should publish details of the school's behaviour policy, including their anti-bullying strategy. Read guidance on developing and publishing your school's behaviour policy (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools>).

It's good practice for FE colleges to also publish this information.

Pupil premium

If your school receives pupil premium funding (<https://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings>), your funding agreement will state what information you need to publish about it. DfE has published templates to support schools in presenting their pupil premium strategy statements (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pupil-premium-strategy-statements>).

You may wish to plan your pupil premium use over 3 years. You should aim to update the online strategy statement by the end of the autumn term each year to reflect your plans for the academic year after assessing the needs of your pupils, both new and existing.

For the current academic year, you must include:

- your school's pupil premium grant allocation amount
- a summary of the main barriers to educational achievement faced by eligible pupils at the school
- how you'll spend the pupil premium to overcome those barriers and the reasons for that approach
- how you'll measure the effect of the pupil premium

- the date of the next review of the school's pupil premium strategy

For the previous academic year, you must include:

- how you spent the pupil premium allocation
- the effect of the expenditure on pupils

We understand that evaluating the pupil premium's impact in the 2019 to 2020 academic year will present difficulties as a result of reduced numbers of pupils having attended between March and July 2020.

Instead, schools may wish to monitor and report on the grant's impact at the end of the current financial year, bearing in mind their duty to update this information at least annually, covering the whole period since September 2019.

Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium

If your school has received year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium funding (<https://www.gov.uk/year-7-literacy-and-numeracy-catch-up-premium-guide-for-schools>) for the 2019 to 2020 academic year, you must publish:

- details of how you spent your allocation for that year
- how your use of that allocation made a difference to the attainment of the pupils who benefit from the funding

As final payments of the Year 7 catch-up premium were made in relation to the 2019 to 2020 academic year, the 2020 to 2021 academic year will be the last year on which schools must report how this funding was used.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium

If your school gets the coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium grant in academic year 2020 to 2021, you should publish details of:

- how it is intended that the grant will be spent
- how the effect of this expenditure on the educational attainment of those pupils at the school will be assessed

There's further information on the coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-catch-up-premium>).

PE and sport premium for primary schools

If your school receives PE and sport premium funding (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pe-and-sport-premium-for-primary-schools>), your grant funding agreement will explain what information you must publish. It's likely that you'll have to include:

- the amount of premium received
- a full breakdown of how it has been spent
- the impact the school has seen on pupils' PE and sport participation and attainment
- how the improvements will be sustainable in the future

- the percentage of pupils within their year 6 cohort that can do each of the following:
 - swim competently, confidently, and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres
 - use a range of strokes effectively
 - perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situation

Equality objectives

As public bodies, academies and FE institutions must comply with the public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. This means you must publish:

- details of how your school complies with the public sector equality duty (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>) - you must update this every year
- your school's equality objectives - you must update this at least once every 4 years

The Equality Act 2010 and Advice for Schools (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>) provides information as to how your school can demonstrate compliance. For example, including details of how your school is:

- eliminating discrimination (see the Equality Act 2010)
- advancing equality of opportunity – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- consulting and involving those affected by inequality, in the decisions your school or college takes to promote equality and eliminate discrimination (affected people could include parents, pupils, staff and members of the local community)

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEN)

You must publish an Information Report on your website about the implementation of your school's policy for pupils with SEN and should update it annually.

You should update any changes occurring during the year as soon as possible. The report must comply with section 69 of the Children and Families Act 2014, meaning that it must contain:

- the 'SEN Information' specified in Schedule 1 to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1530/contents/made>). (Statutory guidance on this is contained in section 6.79 to 6.82 of the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>));
- information as to:
 - the arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils
 - the steps you have taken to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favourably than other pupils
 - the facilities you provide to help disabled pupils to access the school
 - the plan prepared under paragraph 3 of Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/schedule/10>) (accessibility plan) for:
 - increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum

- improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled

Careers programme information

Academies and colleges should publish information about their careers programme. This information should relate to the delivery of careers guidance to year 8 to 13 pupils (12 to 18-year olds) and any requirement set out in your funding agreement to deliver careers guidance. For the current academic year, you should include:

- the school or college's Careers Leader's name, email address and telephone number
- a summary of the careers programme, including details of how pupils, parents, teachers and employers may access information about the careers programme
- how the school or college measures and assesses the impact of the careers programme on pupils
- the date of the school or college's next review of the information published

Read the statutory guidance for schools on careers guidance and access for education and training providers (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-provision-for-young-people-in-schools>), or guidance for further education colleges and sixth-form colleges on careers guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-for-colleges--2>), for more information.

The statutory guidance for schools also contains further information about a policy statement that academies must publish to comply with section 42B of the Education Act 1997, commonly known as the 'Baker Clause'. The policy statement must set out the circumstances in which providers of technical education and apprenticeships will be given access to year 8 to 13 pupils.

Complaints policy

We recommend that all academies and colleges publish their complaints policy online.

If you're an academy, FE or sixth-form college, we recommend that you publish your whistleblowing (<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>) policy online.

Academies must publish any arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with special educational needs about the support provided by the school.

Annual reports and accounts

Academies

You should publish the following financial information about your school:

- annual report
- annual audited accounts
- memorandum of association
- articles of association

- names of charity trustees and members
- funding agreement

You can find more guidance about these in the Academies financial handbook (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-financial-handbook>).

FE and sixth-form colleges

Colleges should publish their instruments and articles of government on their website.

They should also publish their annual members' report and audited financial statement every year.

Executive pay

You must publish how many employees have a gross annual salary and benefits of £100,000 or more. You should publish these figures in £10,000 increments. More details are included in paragraph 2.32 of the Academies financial handbook (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-financial-handbook>).

Trustees' information and duties

Academies

Academy trusts must publish accessible and up to date details of governance arrangements. Find more on what you need to publish about your academy and its board of trustees in the Academies financial handbook (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-financial-handbook>) (paragraphs 2.49 to 2.50).

FE and sixth-form colleges

You should publish the following details about your college's governing body:

- the governing body's structure and responsibilities
- details of any committees
- the names of all governors, including the Chair

You may wish to simply publish your governors' handbook, which should include all this information.

Charging and remissions policies

Academies should publish their charging and remissions policies (this means when you cancel fees). The policies must include details of:

- the activities or cases where your school will charge pupils' parents
- the circumstances where your school will make an exception on a payment you would normally expect to receive under your charging policy

Values and ethos

Academies and colleges should publish a statement of their ethos and values.

Requests for copies

You should provide a paper copy of the information on your website if a parent requests one.

Published 30 June 2016

Last updated 12 February 2021 + show all updates

1. 12 February 2021

Added a section on remote education - linked to the guidance on remote education provision expectations and the optional template to help schools publish information.

2. 12 November 2020

Added new sections on 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium' and 'Executive pay'. Updated sections on 'Admission arrangements', 'Ofsted reports', 'Exam and assessment results', 'Curriculum', 'Pupil premium', 'Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium', 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium', 'PE and sport premium for primary schools', 'Equality objectives' and 'Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)'.

3. 25 October 2018

Added additional clarification in line with regulations to the SEN section.

4. 24 May 2018

Updated policy for content on academy websites.

5. 16 June 2017

Updated guidance for the current academic year.

6. 30 June 2016

First published.

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Related content

- What maintained schools must publish online (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online>)
- Charging for school activities (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>)
- Statutory policies for schools and academy trusts (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-policies-for-schools-and-academy-trusts>)
- School complaints procedures: guidance for maintained schools (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-complaints-procedures>)
- Constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/constitution-of-governing-bodies-of-maintained-schools>)

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Catch-Up Premium Spending

Information from website (taken directly from school websites) on 22 Sept 2021

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>Website text</u>
ANCHORSHOLME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of recovery curriculum lead -£2,790 • Purchase Star Maths - £2,074 • Appointment of foundation NELI lead - £7,637 • Appointment of part time teacher to support development of phonics in Years 1,2 and 3 - £8,539 • Appointment of part time teacher to support delivery of Recovery Curriculum in upper KS 2 - £11,385 • Extra-curricular interventions for Literacy, Numeracy and Wellbeing - £15,094 <p>Total Spend - £47,519</p>
ARMFIELD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:1 intervention sessions • Small group catch up sessions • Nurture provision • Accelerated Reader scheme in year 7 and 8 • Lexonic and Lexonic Leap sessions • PRIDE Centre (Maths, English & Science) • Therapeutic Intervention • Educational Psychologist advisory provision
BISPHAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum resources and materials that support “catch up” and mental health of pupils. • Additional hours of teaching/support/pastoral staff to develop the outcomes of children who have been identified as needing “catch up” in their learning. • Provide opportunities to develop well being in school in a variety of ways: bought in programmes to enhance delivery eg online/virtual support, whole class virtual ballet, fitness, yoga, meditation and resilience training. Enhance the skill set of teachers in terms of identification and support of mental health needs
BOUNDARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of Seesaw for R-Y4 - £1,122, Reading Plus (3 years) - £7,950, Spelling Shed - £180, My Maths (2 years) - £508 and White Rose - £99. • Staff to use Rising Stars Assessments, White Rose Assessments and Salford Reading Tests to accurately assess the children - £200 • An interactive video of Boundary Primary School is to be made and shared with all new-starters - £600 • Employ a Higher Level Teaching Assistant to plan and deliver high quality intervention work across school - £27,768

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-day home-learning paper packs are printed and ready to distribute for all children. Stationery packs are to be purchased and set aside for children to take home when home-learning occurs - £500 • Purchase Chromebooks/tablets - £6000 <p>Total paid for by Catch-up premium - £29,760</p> <p>Total Paid by charitable donations - £7,950</p> <p>Total paid by school budget - £7,217</p>
DEVONSHIRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide additional hours to all teaching assistants who do not work a full week - £6000 • Employment of TA4 from 23.11.20 to 31.08.21 in Year 6 - £15,500 • Purchase of Nessy learning programme following successful trial period for Year2 with a view to extended to Year 3 and Year 4 - £600 • Engagement in National Tutoring Program after successful trial with 3rd Space Learning - £3,850 • Purchase of Showbie Pro Learning Platform. Y1-6 - £1,040 • Training for Senior Leaders – Curriculum 18 month training program - £3,500 <p>Total Spend - £30,490</p>
GATEWAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver planned interventions which underpin key skills and knowledge required to access full curriculum and support individual children in making rapid gains in all subjects – HLTA - £24,500 • To deliver the NELI programme to improve the children’s oral language and early literacy skills – Training & staff resources - £7,500 • To ensure that children have access to the remote learning strategies they need and in preparation for hybrid learning – cost for devices – proportion of £6,000 • To ensure that all identified children receive support through intervention or counselling to enable them to settle into class and the new school routine – counsellor costs £4,000 • To ensure attendance is in line with national expectations for all groupings (SEND/PP) – cost for PWO £10,000 (in budget) £4,200 extra costs to increase provision due to Covid. • To continue the work with Nurture UK and the development of the chimp corner/class checklists to enable all children to self-regulate and enable positive learning – cost of nurture UK/chimp corner resources - £3,000 • To embed the recovery PSHE Dimensions curriculum and ensure the new RSE curriculum is in place across the school from Nursery to Year 6 – class resources £1,000 • Maintain social distancing – purchase sufficient PPE - £1,000 • Maintain high levels of cleanliness – Additional cleaning hours for current staff & contract cleaning where required - £17,100, Spotless cleaning contractor - £23,000, Additional cleaning supplies - £2,500 • Specific supply requirements – teaching and supply agency costs - £11,500 • Additional admin support needed to allow for increased reporting, distance learning preparation and Parent App - £7,350

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Staff Supply (TA for 1:1, SERF closed due to Covid so pupils have returned to school) needed until other places are available or until EHCP funding comes through (estimate for 1 term) - £10,000 • Cover Covid related staff absence (estimate) - £15,000
HAWESSIDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional in class support to allow teachers to work with identified children to close the gaps in learning. Teachers to identify gaps and use pre-teaching and gap closing. HQT to enable accelerated progress Pupils plans used to target and track learning - £7,500 • Inclusion Team supporting with successful transition of pupils with SEND into school - £34,500 • Assessments – phonics, NFER/White Rose Maths Hub summative assessments, Spelling Tests, Writing non-negotiables/age related expectations, Summative tests, Times table assessment • Interventions - Bounce back Phonics, Precision Teaching, Writing, SALT strategies, Read Theory, AR Reader, IDL, TT Rockstars, Lightening Squad (TWA/TWL), Spelling Shed, TEACCH, Y6 reading preparation materials - £2,100 • Access to technology at home/in school: Microsoft Teams, Sway, IDL, Web based learning platforms, SFA resources (online books) • SEMH – Nurture, Bounce Back, PSHE, CAMHS materials, Pupil targets, Zumos
HOLY FAMILY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELKAN training for three staff and to embed this into school practice - £500 • Numicon Maths resources sent home to pupils in EYFS, Y1 and Y2 to support home learning - £2,000 • Experienced part time staff member to support KS2 classes – Summer Term 2021 Y3 Intervention – targeted small group Numeracy and Literacy Support - £7,732 • Purchase 4 I pads for KS2 Staff for remote learning assessment - £1,000 • ‘Welcome to Holy Family School’ Learning Packs for new EYFS pupils 2021 - £1,200 • Extra TA to support additional reading. Autumn Term 2021 - £4,100 • Additional part time teacher to support reading and Maths in Year 5 Autumn Term 2021 - £3,866 • Oxford Owl On line learning- increased selection of books accessible to all pupils at home and in school -£500 • Develop school garden area for emotional well-being and nurture of good mental health - £200
LANGDALE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional time for teachers to research and plan noncore subjects. Release time and additional cover will be required to facilitate the additional PPA - £1,000 • Purchase additional manipulatives for EYFS/KS1 initially - £300 • Timetable is adjusted to allow for and extra lesson on Writing. Staff training and resources - £300 • Purchase and implement the Rising Stars PIRA and PUMA termly tests and record assessments on MARK to identify gaps an on Insight to track performance - £854

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A virtual tour of Langdale Free School EYFS is arranged and shared with all new-starters. Additional time is made so teachers can have a virtual meeting with their new starters so that the child is confident in joining - £200 • An intervention is identified and purchased. 1 teacher is recruited x3 days a week to deliver the intervention sessions - £4,240 • The Nuffield Early Language Intervention is a 20- week programme proven to help young children overcome language difficulties. TA to deliver and Teachers to receive training. Cover costs - £760 • Additional online learning resources will be purchased, such as Times Tables Rockstars to support children practising timestables at home. Likewise, Spelling Shed will be purchased so that children can practise spellings at home as well as Phonics Play to help children catch up on Phonics - £450 • 2-day home-learning paper packs are printed and ready to distribute for all children. Stationery packs are to be purchased and set aside for children to take home when home-learning occurs - £500
LAYTON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are spending our money on two extra teaching staff and one extra day for a speech and language therapist. In addition we have appointed a full time speech and language worker to work full time with children. We have not, as yet signed up to any tutoring programmes as we feel in the current circumstances they are of limited value.
MERESIDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have a strategic overview of the interventions planned and track the progress made to ensure impact and rapid gains - HLTA - £14,549
MOORPARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver planned interventions which underpin key skills and knowledge required to access the full curriculum and support individual children in making rapid gains in English and Maths - TA3 - £16,335 • To develop our outdoor learning space with an additional classroom linked to our Forest School Provision - £7,000 • Home learning packages and resources created for both individual children self-isolating and in case of bubble/school closure - £150 • Work alongside Nurture UK to review practices and develop long term provision - £500 (already budgeted for) • Introduction, CPD and implementation of the new PSHE/RSE curriculum - £100 (already budgeted for)
REVOE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boxall profiling all pupils, using the diagnostics to apply suitable curriculum modifications. Track through appraisal as part of sampling -£1,400 for test (Reach project) • Purchase 65 chrome books for Year 6 children to be used fluidly including remote learning Allocate existing stock to identified IT - disadvantaged KS2 pupils during bubble closures Reallocate remaining stock to IT- disadvantaged TAs for pre and post teaching On the event of closure, teachers to take visualisers home to support digital teaching - £14,300 • Replenish all remote learning 'pencil cases' (last purchased June 2020) - £1,209

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit additional, experienced Year 6 teacher, full time until February 2021 in the first instance. Teacher deployed to teach large mixed / streamed group and release class teachers for regular focussed pupil conferencing. Replaced by returning maternity leave - £14,788 Following significant research, TLR implementing Bedrock trial. Findings to be compared against Serial Mask (part of Purple Mash platform) - £1,600
ST BERNADETTE'S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purple Mash (3 years) - £900 Spelling Shed (2 years) - £180 My Maths (2 years) - £508 White Rose Premium (1 year) - £99 Remote Education – learning packs purchased - £400 Staff to use NFER tests which includes GL Reading - £3,404.10 An interactive video of St Bernadette's school has been made and shared with all new starts - £600 1-1 and small group tuition. 2 x 1 hour sessions timetabled per week across the school - £8,950 Purchase laptops/tablets - £1,238.90
ST JOHN'S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline assessments in reading; SPAG/Phonics; Maths - £1,027 One to one approach using Lancs Reading Partnership all TA 3 and class teachers to be trained from Y2 to Y6 - £400 Additional staff training (EAL Reading, KS1 Intervention, KS2 Spelling, Active reading strategies) - £215 Additional teaching & learning resources to support 1-1 and group intervention strategies - £3,731 TA 3 and class Teacher in Y3 and Y5 to be trained to carry out interventions with small groups - £1,149 Use of PWS to ensure regular attendance; Support parents - £561 Provide children with devices as required - £1,724
ST NICHOLAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two Teaching Assistants to be employed for September 2020 – one in Year 3 and one in Year 4 to ensure all classes have a Teaching Assistant at least every morning to assist in closing the gaps in core subjects - £24,233.02 Purchase and implement GL Assessment Standardised Assessments for Reading and PASS (Pupil Attitudes Survey). Complete tests and record assessments - identify gaps to track performance. The cost will purchase for Y3 and Y4 - £1,036.80 Staff are trained and they are able to deliver the content and interventions confidently (inclusive of entry and exit data). I pads / laptops used to support learning - £1,750 5 afternoons of TA2 in Y6 from 16.11.20 until 18.12.20 - £483.45 5 afternoons of TA2 in Y5 from 8.3.21 for Summer Term - £1,256 'Steps to Read' purchased June 2021. Training over last 4 weeks of term to implement in September 21 - £2,350 Steps to read books purchased to be used alongside the Read to Write Core Spine for English lessons - £1,170.73

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Connect to Curriculum' units purchased June 2021. Training over last 4 weeks of term to implement in September 21 - £360 <p>Total - £32,640</p>
STANLEY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Reception and Year 1 there is a need for significant speech and language input and increased phonics teaching. Therefore, we will employ additional teaching assistants to enable our in-house teaching assistants to deliver additional phonics sessions and speech and language support. The additional staff will also allow further intervention sessions to take place involving mathematics. • In Year 2 the current information technology provision will be increased to allow classes consistent access to appropriate online resources to close identified gaps. • In Year 3 an additional teacher will be employed for the afternoon sessions working across the year group to allow the class teacher to work with small intervention groups from their own class. • Year 4 will be provided with additional IT devices to enable them to utilise a new software programme to support our children, particularly in mathematics. The software allow staff to provide instant feedback to the pupils and identify any further gaps in knowledge. We will also employ a teaching assistant to support across the year group to allow in-house teaching assistants to focus specifically on intervention to close gaps in knowledge. • Historically setting in Year 6 through the provision of an additional teacher would be transferred to year 5 at May half term. We will use funding to employ an additional teacher so that both year groups can utilise this benefit throughout the whole summer term 2021.
THAMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning by Questions (LBQ) subscription for Years 3-6 - £1,400 • Lexia licences for pupils in year 2-6 who are reading below their chronological age - £6,768.75 • Specialist teaching assistant to provide targeted phonics and reading support for pupils in Y1,2 and 3 - £11,199 • WellComm Speech and language screen and assessment tool for EYFS and Year 1 - £940 • KS1 Talk Boost and CPD and resources to support delivery of intervention - £1,320
UNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x Academic mentors through Teach First 2 x £8,000 - £16,000 • 1:1 tuition or teachers additional time during holiday periods £15,000 • Additional capacity to allow teachers to deliver speech and language interventions and ABC sessions £23,000 • Resources to support fine and gross motor skills 3 x £1,000 - £3,000 • Costs attributed to developing excellent CPD on students' individual needs £5,000 • Additional ICT to support students with limited access to ICT £25,000

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional TA2 to support Y7 and ensure coverage across all year groups £20,000 • Specific TA2 support to close the gap on French speaking over lockdown £5,000 • Staffing to support additional reading interventions through Spring and Summer term £15,000 • Reflection rooms (and cover) additional capacity £50,000 • Life coach or specialist practitioner input £5000 Humanutopia sessions £3,000 • Student senior leadership team, training and development 2 x £1,000 £2,000 <p>Catch up Funding - £79,000 Monies from savings and budget - £108,000</p>
WESTCLIFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ a supply teacher 3 days a week to deliver high quality interventions (precision teaching, phonics catch up and SATs preparation) - £16,830 • To ensure that all identified children receive support through intervention or counselling to enable them to settle into class and the new school routine - £1,120
WESTMINSTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra capacity to deliver interventions bought in for the short term. Will need to pull from reserves after Easter – 1 Teacher - £15,000 & 2 TAs - £13,000
PARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019-20 Summer Scheme Support mental health and wellbeing of targeted pupils and families over the summer - Support transition back to school for targeted pupils - Target most vulnerable pupils, LAC, CP and CIN. - £5,640 • Year 12 Prom (previous Year 11) Opportunity to rearrange a celebration for them this term - £500 • Additional EP time - £530 per day • Additional SALT time - £100 per day • CPD to support setting up of Google classroom - £500 • Additional support for early career teachers – HLTA cover - £15.36 per hour • Enhanced family support, Learning mentor - £15.36 per hour • SRE - £1,000 • College Courses (Photography, Horticulture, Sport and Leisure) - £5,000 • Enhanced targeted English and Maths intervention 1:1 and support Daily teacher rate - £175 per day • Intervention for academic/pastoral reasons (any equipment purchased) - £400 • Enhanced pastoral 1:1 targeted intervention / Mental Health and Well Being targeted support, LM/HLTA - £15.36 per hour • Sensory equipment - £400
LOTUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-Design the School Library, making it an inviting space for Students, ensure all reading books are colour coded so students know what Band they should be on. Include new reading books - £500

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:1 DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) 4 days a week with targeted students with the biggest gaps (Targeted students will do this for 8weeks) - £1,420.80 • Purchase the Rapid book reading Scheme to support the DEAR intervention programme - £540 • Purchase more tablets to ensure every student has access to Spelling Shed each day - £1,800 • School to purchase BSquared Software, that will support teachers (particularly if they are teaching a subject that is not their specialism) to have a more detailed understanding of where their students are academically and where the gaps are. - £3,300
HIGHFIELD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and vocabulary initiatives - £600 • Additional 30 laptops - £9,000 • Learning Packs - £6,000 • Casual Tutors - £5,465 • Additional English Teacher – Intervention - £5,335 • Additional Maths Teacher – Intervention - £8,900 • Additional Science Teacher – Intervention - £8,900 • Online Learning Software - £5,000 • Online parents evening - £429 • Mental Health programmes - £1,300
MONTGOMERY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partial funding for a school counsellor on top of funding from CoP - £10,000 • SLT secondment to lead on Mental Health across the academy - £10,000 • Boxall profiling license - £1,000 • External providers for delivering sessions to students on revision techniques, motivation and managing exam anxieties - £8,000 • Appointment of part-time subject specialists to support 1 to 1 or small group interventions across 3 year groups (Maths 20k, English 20k, Science 10k) - £50,000 • Expand provision for Lexonik training so as many student as possible can benefit starting with the most in need - £17,000 • Teaching and Learning handbook - £400 • Purchase of key revision materials for all Year 11 & 10 students to support the identification of gaps and working remotely - £8,000 • Subscriptions purchased for diagnostic software to help students make faster progress - £5,000 • Super learning days are planned and run for Maths, English and Science. Some in school and others in half-terms or Easter school - £2,000 • Year 7 Catch-Up continued despite funding now not available - £20,000 <p>Catch up funding - £92,400 Reserve funds - £39,000</p>
ST GEORGE'S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Closing the Gap' Intervention team • Transition week • Nurture Group/Primary Base

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Skills Workshop • LST Reading small group support • Barrier Identification • English Phonics intervention – Lexonik • Parental Engagement • SHINE • Accelerated Reader • Smaller groups • Precision teaching • Small group reading support • Bedrock • Knowledge organisers • Curriculum booklets • Saturday School • Transition intervention • Direct instruction programme • Additional Counselling support • Focused pastoral support
ST MARY'S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Quality teaching for all: • CPD for staff to ensure remote learning and curriculum design is in place to enable students to recover. • Provide staff with technology to enable effective modelling and metacognitive strategies. • Enhancing the Academy's remote learning capability by upgrading to Google Enterprise. • Targeted academic support: • Small group and one to one catch up tutoring for Year 10 and Year 7 students. • Appointment of two teach first learning mentors to support disadvantaged students in English. • Lexonic support extended for 12 months to support lower stanine readers. • All SEND students reviewed and updated one page pupil profiles shared and discussed with parents. • Other approaches: • Improved communication through a parents evening portal • Additional careers advice and support for students to enable recovery for lost time.

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Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Lisa Arnold, Head of Parks, Leisure and Catering Services Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Services
Date of Meeting:	7 October 2021

REVIEW OF YOUTH PROVISION

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To provide an overview of the youth provision review currently being undertaken across Blackpool, including scope, purpose and timescales.

2.0 Recommendation:

2.1 To support the youth provision review currently being undertaken.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation:

3.1 To ensure the youth provision review is thorough and rounded, ultimately providing clear recommendations and ambitions for developing youth provision across the town.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

5.0 Council Priority:

5.1 The youth review will predominantly contribute to priority two, however it is likely that there will also be some indirect contribution to priority one:

- Priority One - The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool.
- Priority Two - Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background Information

6.1 Scope of the Report:

The report provides an overview of the scope of the youth review and how this was developed.

6.2 Following a number of meetings with third sector youth providers, it was agreed that a review of youth provision across the town was required to understand the current position. A sub-group has been established and includes representatives from the following organisations:

- The Boathouse Youth
- The Boys and Girls Club
- The Magic Club
- Street Life
- Blackpool Football Club Community Trust

6.3 In addition, the sub-group has two Councillor representatives – Cllr Hugo and Cllr Galley.

6.4 An in-depth specification was developed collaboratively by the sub-group and submissions collectively scored. Following the scoring, the National Youth Agency (NYA) have been appointed to undertake the review.

6.5 An overview of the specification is outlined below:

Analysis of existing youth provision in Blackpool including:

- Geographical mapping of youth provision across Blackpool;
- Quality of physical assets used by identified youth providers for youth provision;
- Level of engagement and provision;
- Comparison of engagement figures with comparable authorities/areas;
- Skills analysis of youth provision sector;

- Impact of current youth provision on the lives of young people in Blackpool through a social return on investment calculation.
- 6.6 Review of youth club operation including:
- Management
 - Governance
 - Workforce
 - Delivery
- 6.7 Engagement with young people, including:
- Findings from 1000 surveys with young people to understand what services they want and need, covering both those engaged and not engaged in youth provision;
 - In-depth interviews through a minimum of ten focus groups with young people, both those who are already engaged in youth activities provision and those that are not engaged in youth provision. Focus groups will include targeted cohorts such as Our Children and Care Experienced Young People, Children not accessing mainstream education and targeted areas with a prevalence of Anti-Social Behaviour.
- 6.8 Engagement with key stakeholders:
- Findings from surveys, in-depth interviews and focus groups, and any other engagement with key stakeholders including youth providers;
 - Findings from minimum 100 surveys completed by parents/ carers of Blackpool children and young people.
- 6.9 Summary of data gathering and consultation, including:
- Identify gaps, taking into account the analysis carried out;
 - Identify key themes emerging.
- 6.10 Development Plan that:
- Demonstrates consideration of the demographics of Blackpool;
 - Outlines future opportunities for youth provision in Blackpool;
 - Outlines opportunities for links/partnerships with wider services and partners;
 - Makes recommendations using evidence from data analysis and consultation undertaken;
 - Includes consideration of best practice examples;
 - Outlines key objectives linked to identified themes.
- 6.11 NYA will provide the following reports:
- Report 1 - A stand-alone executive summary setting out the key messages for the Council arising from the assessment;

- Report 2 - A stand-alone report detailing the engagement with young people, including the analysis on a question by question basis;
- Report 3 - A detailed report to include the literature review, good practice, data analysis, qualitative analysis, a summary of the key themes emerging from the qualitative comments in emails/letters and a high level summary of the detailed submissions;
- Report 4 - An aspirational development plan that outlines the future potential of youth provision in Blackpool.

6.12 **Next Steps**

The review commenced in early September 2021, with questionnaires being developed collaboratively with the youth review sub-group. Over the next two months consultation will be carried out with children and young people and wider stakeholders. Alongside this will be the review of youth club operations and a desktop exercise to map out current provision across the town.

6.13 It is anticipated the review will be complete in early 2022, with the required reports and development plans produced in February 2022.

6.14 **Budget Information**

The cost of this review is £68,385 in total. Blackpool Council will contribute £38,385 whilst the NYA anticipate securing Department for Education funding for the remaining £30,000, which will be funded at risk by the NYA in the interim.

6.15 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 The review will seek to consult with young people from a variety of backgrounds, with the consultation processes being accessible through a number of different methods. The review may identify gaps in existing provision for specific population groups, which will be addressed through the development plan and help shape future priorities.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

None.

13.0 Internal/External Consultation undertaken:

Stakeholder consultation will be undertaken as part of the review.

14.0 Background papers:

None.

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Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Paul Turner, Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Early Years
Date of Meeting:	7 October 2021

GL ASSESSMENT PUPIL ATTITUDE TO SCHOOL AND SELF (PASS) SURVEY OVERVIEW

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To provide an overview of the findings of the GL Assessment PASS surveys that were undertaken by a cohort of Blackpool children in autumn 2020.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 For Scrutiny Members to consider a follow-up presentation in 2022 on the results from the autumn 2021 GL PASS surveys, when available.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 Blackpool Secondary schools are undertaking a round of testing in November 2021, which may include PASS surveys. This is an individual school-level decision.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 To conduct a town-wide survey of children's feelings about school and other associated elements of their childhood, in spring 2022.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 Blackpool Opportunity Area funded the GL Assessments in the 2020/2021 school year.

6.2 GL Assessments provide a range of assessment options for children.

[Home - GL Assessment \(gl-assessment.co.uk\)](http://gl-assessment.co.uk)

6.3 The PASS survey is designed to identify any barriers to learning by understanding attitudes to learning.

6.4 The PASS survey when it was conducted in the autumn term of the 2020/2021 school year showed a high satisfaction rate amongst Blackpool pupils in Y7, Y8 and Y9.

6.5 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 11(a) - GL PASS PowerPoint Presentation.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

Pupil Attitudes overview

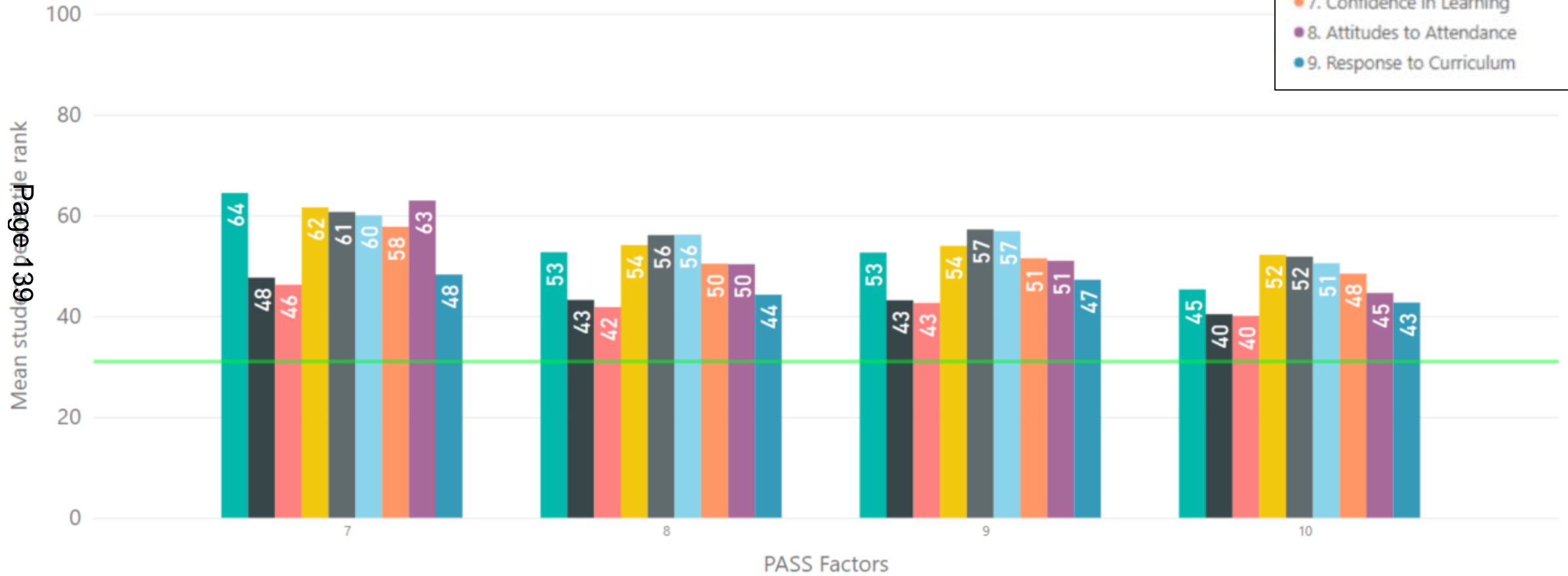
*PASS helps identify fragile learners
and uncovers hidden barriers to learning.*

The PASS factors

Factor 1 – Feelings about school	Measuring students' sense of well-being, safety and comfort in school.
Factor 2 – Perceived learning capability	Measures students' views of how positive and successful they feel in their specific capabilities as learners.
Factor 3 – Self-regard as a learner	Measures the impact of their learning on their concept of self more generally.
Factor 4 – Preparedness for learning	Measures students' perceptions of their behaviour and attitude in learning situations (including metacognitive skills).
Factor 5 – Attitudes to teachers	Measures students' perceptions of their relationships with teachers.
Factor 6 – General work ethic	Measures students' attitudes and responses to work in general.
Factor 7 – Confidence in learning	Measures students' confidence in approaching and dealing with learning and perseverance when presented with challenging tasks, and includes associated feelings such as a 'high' anxiety element.
Factor 8 – Attitudes to attendance	Measures students' attitudes to attendance at school.
Factor 9 – Response to curriculum demands	Measures students' perceptions of the appropriateness of the level of difficulty of work they are asked to complete.

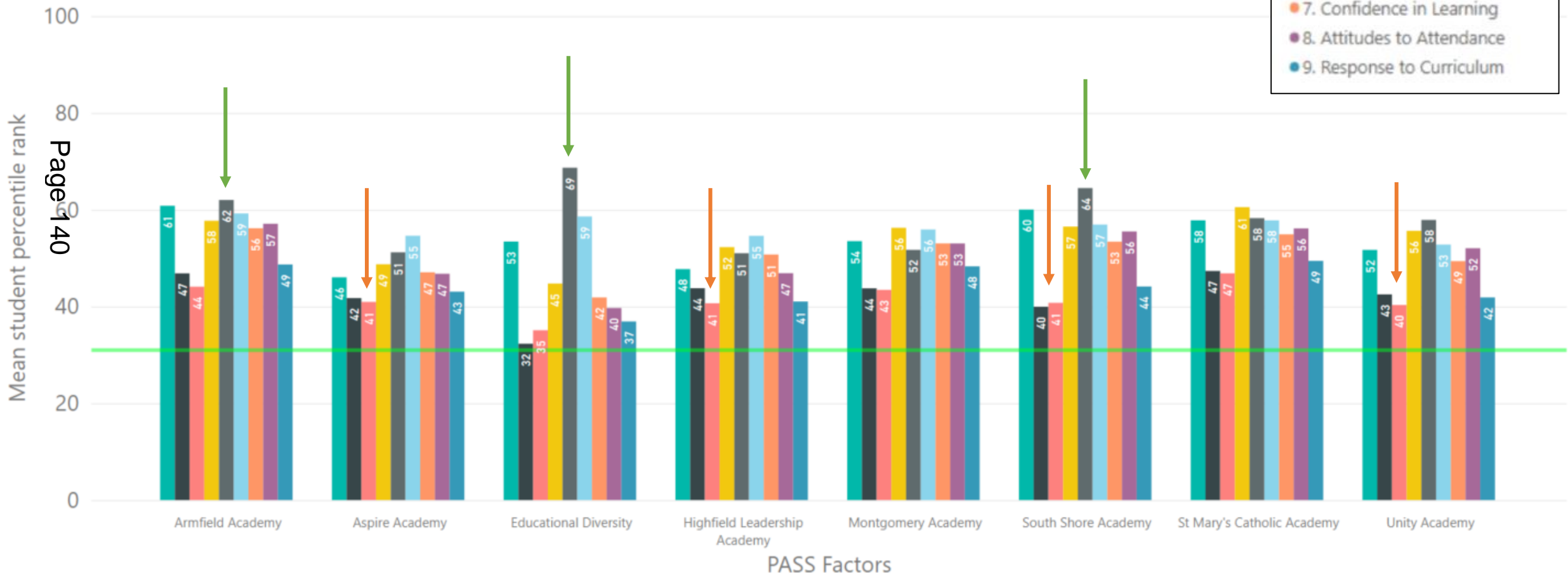
PASS Autumn 2020 by year group

- PASS Factors**
- 1. Feelings About School
 - 2. Perceived Learning Capability
 - 3. Learner Self Regard
 - 4. Preparedness for Learning
 - 5. Attitudes to Teachers
 - 6. General Work Ethic
 - 7. Confidence in Learning
 - 8. Attitudes to Attendance
 - 9. Response to Curriculum



PASS Autumn 2020 by school

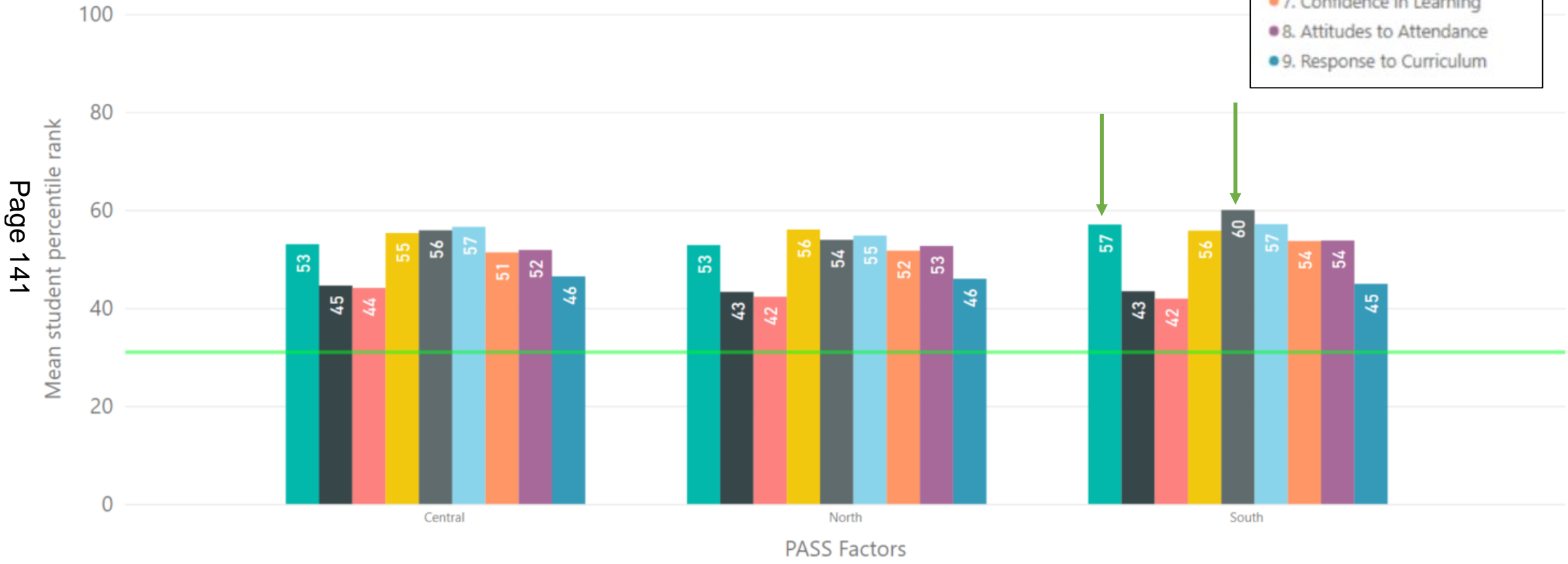
- PASS Factors**
- 1. Feelings About School
 - 2. Perceived Learning Capability
 - 3. Learner Self Regard
 - 4. Preparedness for Learning
 - 5. Attitudes to Teachers
 - 6. General Work Ethic
 - 7. Confidence in Learning
 - 8. Attitudes to Attendance
 - 9. Response to Curriculum



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PASS Autumn 2020 by region

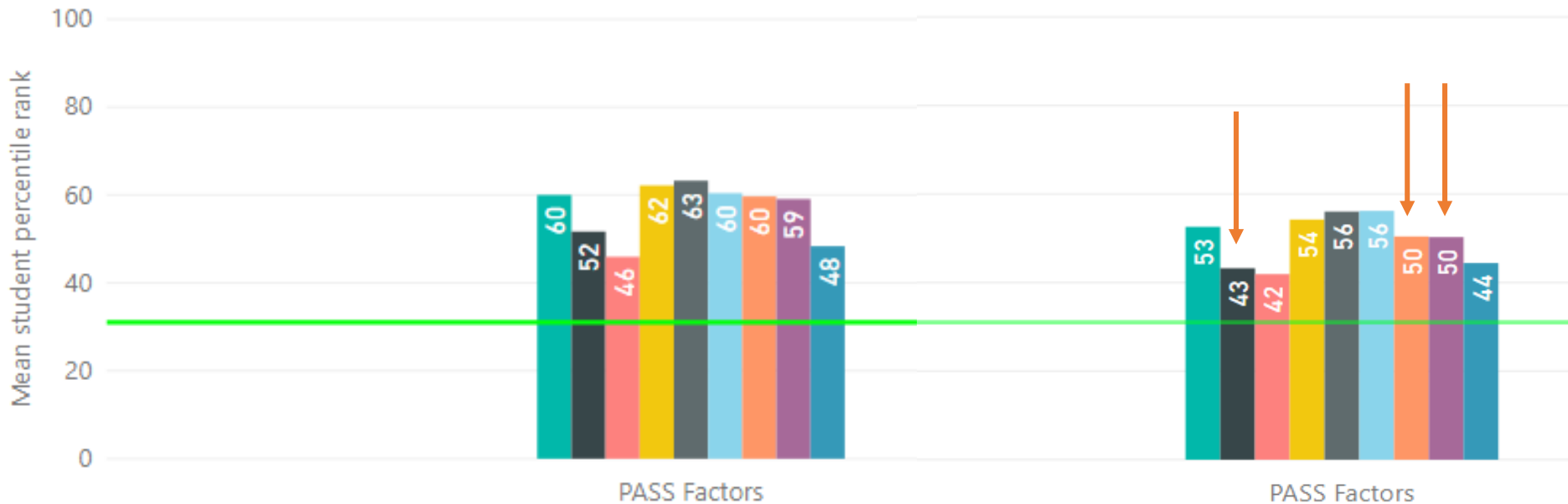
- PASS Factors**
- 1. Feelings About School
 - 2. Perceived Learning Capability
 - 3. Learner Self Regard
 - 4. Preparedness for Learning
 - 5. Attitudes to Teachers
 - 6. General Work Ethic
 - 7. Confidence in Learning
 - 8. Attitudes to Attendance
 - 9. Response to Curriculum



PASS - Class of 2024 (current Yr8)

- PASS Factors**
- 1. Feelings About School
 - 2. Perceived Learning Capability
 - 3. Learner Self Regard
 - 4. Preparedness for Learning
 - 5. Attitudes to Teachers
 - 6. General Work Ethic
 - 7. Confidence in Learning
 - 8. Attitudes to Attendance
 - 9. Response to Curriculum

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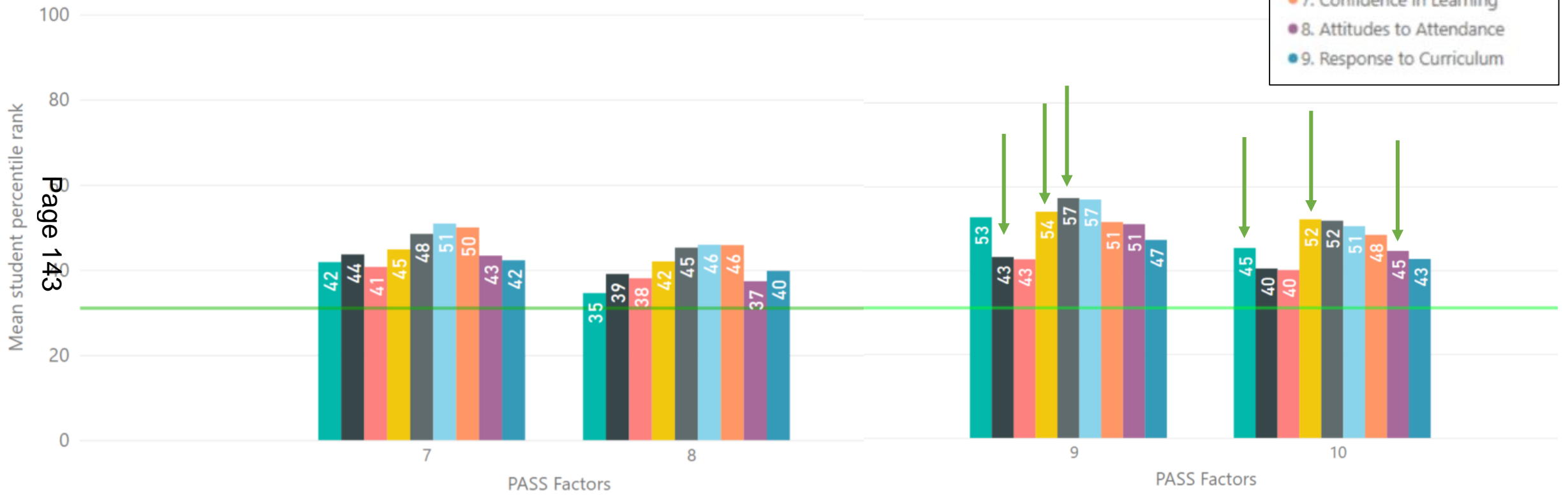


Year 7 in Autumn 2019 (1285 students)

Year 8 in Autumn 2020 (1049 students)

PASS – Class of 2022 and 2023 (Current Yr9 and Yr10)

- PASS Factors**
- 1. Feelings About School
 - 2. Perceived Learning Capability
 - 3. Learner Self Regard
 - 4. Preparedness for Learning
 - 5. Attitudes to Teachers
 - 6. General Work Ethic
 - 7. Confidence in Learning
 - 8. Attitudes to Attendance
 - 9. Response to Curriculum



Year 7 and 8 in summer 2019 (2348 students)

Year 9 and 10 in Autumn 2020 (1728 students)

PASS – key observations

- All average scores across every school and year group are above the 31st percentile, which equates to high satisfaction with pupil's school experience.
- Year 7 show more positive attitudes than Year 8 – 10. This is to be expected.
- Average scores across the three regions are very similar.
- The current Year 8 have seen a decrease in their scores since they were Year 7. This is to be expected.
- However, the current Year 9 and 10 have both seen increases in their scores since their testing window in summer 2019.

Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Paul Turner, Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Early Years
Date of Meeting:	7 October 2021

INCLUSION IN EDUCATION SCRUTINY REVIEW RECOMMENDATION MONITORING

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To receive an annual progress update on the recommendations arising from the scrutiny review of Inclusion in Education.

2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To monitor the implementation of the report's recommendations/actions.

3.0 Reasons for recommendations:

3.1 To maintain an overview of previous scrutiny recommendations.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council Priority:

5.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background Information

6.1. At the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on 10 September 2020, Members agreed the final report from the scrutiny review on Inclusion of Blackpool

pupils in secondary education.

6.2 The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee has received regular updates on the agreed recommendations since that time. Members are asked to consider the attached annual progress report, with the most recent updates highlighted in red.

6.3 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 12(a) - Inclusion in Education Scrutiny Review Action Plan.
Appendix 12(b) – School Admissions Code.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

Recommendation		Cabinet Member's Comments	Rec Accepted by Executive	Target Date for Action	Lead Officer	Committee Update
R1	(a) Blackpool's In-Year Admissions process should be reviewed by the School Admissions team as a matter of urgency.	Agreed	Yes	Jan 2021	Paul Turner	This has been reviewed and it meets the nationally agreed requirements of the school admissions code. Updates to the national school admissions code means that this will be tightened even further.
	(b) Academies should maintain clear and positive lines of communication with parents and make efforts to discourage requests for in-year transfers wherever possible. The Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion should closely monitor all in-year transfers and report any concerns to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee.	Agreed	Yes	Jan 2021	Paul Turner Academy Heads	This has been actively happening since September. The numbers of in-year moves have reduced significantly, although this may be because of Covid as well as action on behalf of the Council and partners.

	<p>(c) Appropriate training and guidance should be provided to all Academy staff who receive enquiries about admissions to ensure correct and appropriate advice is offered to parents. Academies should maintain records of all training undertaken, with the Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion undertaking annual checks of training records.</p>	<p>Partly agreed – the Council has no legal jurisdiction over the Academies but will work closely with them to clarify admissions guidance and to act in an advisory role.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Update Jan 2021</p>	<p>Paul Turner Academy Heads</p>	<p>This has not yet been offered due to the Covid crisis and demands upon people's time. NB – It will be offered, but Academies can choose any provider, so there may not be 100% coverage.</p>
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Recommendation	Cabinet Member's Comments	Rec Accepted by Executive	Target Date for Action	Lead Officer	Committee Update	
	<p>(d) Admission meetings with parents and start dates for new pupils should be provided by Academies within timeframes agreed with the Council to avoid lengthy delays and prolonged gaps in a pupil's education provision. The Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion should closely monitor admission meeting timeframes and pupil start dates and report any concerns to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee.</p>	<p>Agreed, however national consultation on proposed changes to the School Admissions Code is currently ongoing and anticipated to be completed by January 2021. These changes will impact implementation of the recommendation but can be incorporated into guidance provided to Academies.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Update Jan 2022</p>	<p>Paul Turner Academy Heads</p>	<p>Ongoing. Timeliness of admissions is very good in Blackpool, currently.</p>

	(e) More prescriptive admissions procedures should be reintroduced by the Council's Admissions Team, with a unified procedure agreed with the Academies and introduced across the trusts. The Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion should lead on the coordination and implementation of the admission procedures.	Partly agreed – whilst supportive of this recommendation, the Council lacks legal jurisdiction but will seek to standardise admissions procedures across the Academies as far as possible within its advisory role.	Yes	Update Jan 2022	Paul Turner	Outside of our scope as we are not the admissions authority for the Academy Trusts operating in Blackpool. NB – This will also be tightened up as part of the national amendments to the school admissions code.
R2	Wider communication and publication of the continued pursuit of court proceedings should be implemented by Academies to discourage Elective Home Education applications in cases where non-attendance sanctions are being pursued. Academy Principals and Headteachers should report their implemented measures to the Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion.					Ongoing. Families that have opted for Elective Home Education due to the Covid-19 pandemic are being encouraged to return to school. Around 30 pupils have returned to school. More will return over the next few months.

		Partly agreed – the Council would advise discouragement of EHE only in cases where provision has been identified as being unsatisfactory and can act in its advisory role to Academies to suggest a tightening up of their procedures.	Yes	Update Jan 2022	Paul Turner Academy Heads	
R3	The appeals process should be clearly explained to parents via the provision of a simple information leaflet clearly explaining the process, to be produced by the Council's Admissions Team and issued by Academies.	Agreed	Yes	Nov 2021	Paul Turner	Appeals information is now clearly outlined and accessible to parents via the Council's website and as such is now easier for parents to access and navigate. Due to amendments to the school admissions code, parents now have a wider right to appeal.

	Recommendation	Cabinet Member's Comments	Rec Accepted by Executive?	Target Date for Action	Lead Officer	Committee Update
R4	The Council should ensure that Fair Access Process meetings should return to their previous format whereby Headteachers were present and involved in the process. Commitment to attend from Academies would be required in order to allow fair and transparent administration of the allocation of places. The Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion to report back to the Committee on the implementation of the recommendation within twelve months.	Partly agreed – Academies have ultimate control over their own processes but the Council is supportive in putting the recommendation to the Academy Chief Executives and Headteachers for implementation.	Yes	Update April 2022	Paul Turner Academy Heads	Ongoing. Representatives have again stated that they wish for the In Year Process to remain as it is, currently. There is, however, a new consultation with Academy Headteachers to decide the best way forwards with this panel.
R5	(a) To address the issue of each Academy operating its own appeals process, the whole system should be reviewed and brought into alignment across the Academies. This would be coordinated by the Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion in conjunction with the trusts.	Not accepted. The appeals process is managed individually by each Academy and as such the Council is unable to enforce alignment across the Academies as a whole.	No		Paul Turner	Outside of our control.
	(b) Appeal letters to parents should be more user-friendly and all Academies should use the same format. This would be coordinated and approved by the Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion.	Partly agreed – the Council is supportive of the recommendation and will work with Academy Trusts to advise on the format of appeal letters.	Yes	Update Jan 2022	Paul Turner	Ongoing.

	Recommendation	Cabinet Member's Comments	Rec Accepted by Executive?	Target Date for Action	Lead Officer	Committee Update
R6	That the Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion work with all academies to identify the support required within each school for pupils in need of mental health provision, for example in the form of counselling sessions from appropriately trained specialists. Once the support required had been identified, to work with the academies to put that provision in place and report back to the Committee on progress in approximately twelve months.	Agreed		Jan 2022	Paul Turner	A full time equivalent counsellor, based at Educational Diversity is now available to provide Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to all schools. The service includes a free four week placement on referral through the Athena panel. Mr Turner agreed to report back to the Committee on the impact of the counselling service in twelve months' time. An additional counsellor will also start work after Christmas 2021, with the Resilience Coach team.

R7	To request that Academies consider the reintroduction of Council representation on their Local Governing Bodies in order to allow valuable input from elected Councillors and an additional link with the Local Authority.	Agreed – the Council will issue the request to Academies.	Yes	Jan 2022	Paul Turner Academy Heads	Ongoing. Some Academies are reintroducing local governing committees, which will allow greater local representation.
R8	A Blackpool Schools' Pledge should be created by the Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion, in conjunction with Academy Principals and Headteachers, with the joint aim of providing timely and appropriate school places for all Blackpool secondary pupils. All Academy Headteachers should be encouraged to sign up to and adhere to the Pledge. The Pledge should be reviewed annually with the Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion reporting any compliance issues to the Committee.	Agreed – this can be incorporated into the launch of the 'Ten Year Education Strategy.'	Yes	Jan 2022	Paul Turner Academy Heads	Ongoing. The amendments to the school admissions code will encourage this further.



Department
for Education

School Admissions Code

Mandatory requirements and statutory guidance for admission authorities, governing bodies, local authorities, schools adjudicators and admission appeals panels

September 2021

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The Statutory Basis for the School Admissions Code

1. The School Admissions Code ('the Code') has been issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ('SSFA 1998')¹. The Code has been made following a consultation under Section 85(2) of the SSFA 1998 and after being laid before Parliament for forty days.
2. This Code comes into force on **1 September 2021** and, unless otherwise stated, applies with immediate effect. The Code applies to admissions to all maintained schools in England. It should be read alongside the School Admission Appeals Code and other guidance and law that affect admissions and admission appeals in England.
3. This Code imposes mandatory requirements and includes guidelines setting out aims, objectives and other matters in relation to the discharge of functions relating to admissions by the bodies listed below:
 - a) **Admission authorities of maintained schools** as defined in Section 88(1) (a) and (b) of the SSFA 1998²
 - b) **Governing bodies and local authorities (when not admission authorities)**
 - c) **Schools Adjudicators**
 - d) **Admission Appeal Panels.**

These bodies have a statutory duty to act in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Code.

Application of the Code to Academies

4. Academies, by which we mean Academy Schools³, (including those that are Free Schools, University Technical Colleges and Studio Schools), are state-funded, non fee-paying independent schools set up under a Funding Agreement between the Secretary of State and the proprietor of an Academy (most commonly, and hereafter, referred to as an Academy Trust). Academies are required by their funding agreements to comply with the Code and the law relating to admissions, although the Secretary of State has the power to vary this requirement where there is demonstrable need.

¹ Where statutory provisions have been amended, any references to them are references to them as amended.

² For community and voluntary controlled schools the admission authority is usually the local authority, but it may be the governing body if the local authority with the governing body's agreement has delegated responsibility to it for determining admission arrangements. Governing bodies are the admission authorities for foundation schools (including Trust schools) and voluntary aided schools.

³ Academies are defined in Section 1A of the Academies Act 2010.

Compliance with the Code

5. It is the responsibility of admission authorities to ensure that admission arrangements⁴ are compliant with this Code. Where a school is their own admission authority, this responsibility falls to the governing body or Academy Trust.
6. Section 88P of the SSFA 1998 requires local authorities to make reports to the Schools Adjudicator about such matters connected with relevant school admissions as required by the Code. Minimum requirements for that report are set out at paragraph 3.30 of this Code and include an assessment of the effectiveness of Fair Access Protocols and co-ordination in their area, how admission arrangements affect the interests of looked after children and previously looked after children, and the number and percentage of lodged and upheld parental appeals. The report **must** be published locally. The Schools Adjudicator will report annually to the Secretary of State on Fair Access.
7. Objections to the admission arrangements of both maintained schools and Academies can be made to the Schools Adjudicator whose decisions are binding and enforceable⁵.
8. The Secretary of State may refer the admission arrangements of any school to the Schools Adjudicator at any time if the Secretary of State considers that they do not or may not comply with the mandatory requirements of this Code or the law.
9. The Schools Adjudicator may investigate the admission arrangements of any school that the Adjudicator considers do not or may not comply with the mandatory requirements of this Code or the law.
10. Any decision of the Schools Adjudicator will be binding on the admission authority. The admission authority **must**, where necessary, revise their admission arrangements to give effect to the Schools Adjudicator's decision within two months of the decision (or by **28 February** following the decision, whichever is sooner), unless an alternative timescale is specified by the Adjudicator. An Adjudicator's determination is binding and enforceable. Where admission authorities fail to implement decisions of the Adjudicator the Secretary of State may direct the admission authority (either the governing body, the local authority, or Academy Trust) to do so under Section 496 or 497 of the Education Act 1996 or the Funding Agreement.

⁴ Admission arrangements means the overall procedure, practices, criteria, and supplementary information to be used in deciding on the allocation of school places and refers to any device or means used to determine whether a school place is to be offered.

⁵ Section 88H of the SSFA 1998.

11. The table below sets out the admission authority for each type of school in England.

Type of School	Who is the admission authority?	Who deals with complaints about arrangements?	Who is responsible for arranging/ providing for an appeal against refusal of a place at a school?
Academies	Academy Trust	Schools Adjudicator	Academy Trust
Foundation Schools	Governing body	Schools Adjudicator	Governing body
Voluntary aided schools	Governing body	Schools Adjudicator	Governing body
Community Schools	Local Authority	Schools Adjudicator	Local Authority
Voluntary controlled schools	Local Authority	Schools Adjudicator	Local Authority

Introduction

Purpose of this Code

12. The purpose of the Code is to ensure that all school places for maintained schools and Academies (excluding maintained special schools and special academies⁶) are allocated and offered in an open and fair way. The Code has the force of law, and where the words ‘**must**’ or ‘**must not**’ are used, these represent a mandatory requirement.

13. Admission authorities and local authorities **must** also comply with the regulations and legislation set out in the Appendix to this Code.

Overall principles behind setting arrangements

14. In drawing up their admission arrangements, admission authorities **must** ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear, and objective. Parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated.

How admissions work

15. In summary, the process operates as follows:

- a) All schools **must** have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school. Admission arrangements are determined by admission authorities.
- b) Admission authorities **must** set (‘determine’) admission arrangements annually. Where changes are proposed to admission arrangements, the admission authority **must** first publicly consult on those arrangements⁷. If no changes are made to admission arrangements, they **must** be consulted on at least once every 7 years. Consultation **must** be for a minimum of 6 weeks and **must** take place between **1 October** and **31 January** of the school year before those arrangements are to apply (the determination year). For example: for arrangements which are to apply for entry in September 2023, consultation **must** be

⁶ A maintained special school is a school maintained by the local authority, which is specifically organised to make special educational provision for pupils with special educational needs. A special academy is an Academy including a free school, which meets the criteria set out in Section 1A(2) of the Academies Act 2010. A special academy may be subject to the Code and other relevant admissions law (as they apply to maintained schools) through its funding agreement in relation to any child or young person with SEN it admits without an Education, Health and Care Plan.

⁷ Except where the change is an increase to a school’s published admission number (see paragraph 1.3) or is made to comply with any mandatory requirements of the Code or The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 (hereafter the “School Admissions Regulations 2012”).

completed by 31 January 2022. This consultation period allows parents, other schools, religious authorities, and the local community to raise any concerns about the proposed admission arrangements.

- c) Once all arrangements have been determined, arrangements can be objected to and referred to the Schools Adjudicator. Objections to admission arrangements **must** be referred to the Adjudicator by **15 May** in the school year before those arrangements are to apply (the determination year). For example: for arrangements which are to apply for entry in September 2023, objections **must** be referred to the Adjudicator by 15 May 2022. Any decision of the Adjudicator **must** be acted on by the admission authority and admission arrangements amended accordingly. The local authority will collate and publish all the admission arrangements in the area in a single composite prospectus.
- d) In the normal admissions round⁸ parents apply to the local authority in which they live for places at their preferred schools. Parents are able to express a preference for at least three schools. The application can include schools outside the local authority where the child lives: a parent can apply for a place for their child at any state-funded school in any area. If a school is undersubscribed, any parent that applies **must** be offered a place. When oversubscribed, a school's admission authority **must** rank applications in order against its published oversubscription criteria and send that list back to the local authority. Published admission arrangements **must** make clear to parents that a separate application **must** be made for any transfer from nursery to primary school, and from infant to junior school.
- e) All preferences are collated and parents then receive an offer from the local authority at the highest preference school at which a place is available. The offer is made on National Offer Day – this is **1 March** for secondary schools or **16 April** for primary schools (or the next working day where 1 March or 16 April fall on a weekend or bank holiday), in the year in which the child will be admitted.
- f) Parents, and in some circumstances children, have the right to appeal against an admission authority's decision to refuse admission. The admission authority **must** set out the reasons for the decision, that there is a right of appeal and the process for hearing such appeals. The admission authority **must** establish an independent appeals panel to hear the appeal. The panel will decide whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal. Where a panel upholds the appeal, the school is required to admit the child.

⁸ The "normal admissions round" covers applications for admission in a relevant age group, which are made in time for the local authority to offer a school place on National Offer Day. The deadlines for submitting applications to be allocated on National Offer Day are 31 October for secondary school and 15 January for primary school.

Section 1: Determining Admission Arrangements

1.1 Admission authorities are responsible for admissions and **must** act in accordance with this Code, the School Admission Appeals Code, other laws relating to admissions⁹, and relevant human rights and equalities legislation.

Published Admission Number (PAN)

1.2 As part of determining their admission arrangements¹⁰, all admission authorities **must** set an admission number for each 'relevant age group'¹¹.

1.3 Own admission authorities are not required to consult on their PAN where they propose either to increase or keep the same PAN¹². For a community or voluntary controlled school, the local authority (as admission authority) **must** consult at least the governing body of the school where it proposes either to increase or keep the same PAN. All admission authorities **must** consult in accordance with paragraph 1.45 below where they propose a decrease to the PAN. Community and voluntary controlled schools have the right to object to the Schools Adjudicator if the PAN set for them is lower than they would wish. There is a strong presumption in favour of an increase to the PAN to which the Schools Adjudicator **must** have regard when considering any such objection.

1.4 Admission authorities **must** notify their local authority of their intention to increase the school's PAN and reference to the change should be made on the school's website. If, at any time following determination of the PAN, an admission authority decides that it is able to admit above its PAN, it **must** notify the local authority in good time to allow the local authority to deliver its co-ordination responsibilities effectively. Admission authorities may also admit above their PAN through in-year admissions. The PAN only applies to the relevant age group. This means that admission authorities may not refuse admission to other age groups on the grounds that they have already reached their PAN. They may, however, refuse admission where the admission of another child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

1.5 Any admissions above the PAN as set out in paragraph 1.4 above will not constitute an increase to the PAN¹³. Information on variations to the PAN after admission arrangements have been determined for a particular school year is set out in paragraph 3.6 of this Code.

⁹ The main provisions relating to admissions are in Chapter 1 of Part 3 of the SSFA 1998.

¹⁰ See Sections 88C and 88D of the SSFA 1998.

¹¹ This is the age group at which pupils are or will normally be admitted to the school e.g. reception, year 7 and year 12 where the school admits external applicants to the sixth form (Section 142 of the SSFA 1998).

¹² Regulation 14 of School Admissions Regulations 2012.

¹³ Where an enlargement of school premises is proposed the governing body of a maintained school is required to observe the relevant regulations, currently the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/3110). For Academies, such changes are agreed with the Secretary of State through the Funding Agreement.

Oversubscription criteria

1.6 The admission authority for the school **must** set out in their arrangements the criteria against which places will be allocated at the school when there are more applications than places and the order in which the criteria will be applied. All children whose Education, Health and Care Plan¹⁴ names the school **must** be admitted. If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants **must** be offered a place (with the exception of designated grammar schools - see paragraph 2.8 of this Code).

1.7 All schools **must** have oversubscription criteria for each 'relevant age group' and the highest priority **must** be given, unless otherwise provided in this Code, to looked after children¹⁵ and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted¹⁶. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted¹⁷ (or became subject to a child arrangements order¹⁸ or special guardianship order¹⁹). All references to previously looked after children in this Code mean such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Oversubscription criteria **must** then be applied to all other applicants in the order set out in the arrangements.

1.8 Oversubscription criteria **must** be reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation. Admission authorities **must** ensure that their arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with a disability or special educational needs, and that other policies around school uniform or school trips do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child. Admission arrangements **must** include an effective, clear, and fair tie-breaker to decide between two applications that cannot otherwise be separated.

¹⁴ An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the local authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education, health and social care provision required for that child.

¹⁵ A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

¹⁶ A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

¹⁷ This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders).

¹⁸ Child arrangements orders are defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

¹⁹ See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

1.9 It is for admission authorities to formulate their admission arrangements, but they **must not**:

- a) place any conditions on the consideration of any application other than those in the oversubscription criteria published in their admission arrangements;
- b) take into account any previous schools attended, unless it is a named feeder school;
- c) give extra priority to children whose parents rank preferred schools in a particular order, including 'first preference first' arrangements;
- d) introduce any new selection by ability²⁰;
- e) give priority to children on the basis of any practical or financial support parents may give to the school or any associated organisation, including any religious authority²¹. The exception to this is where parents pay optional nursery fees to the school or school-run nursery, for additional hours on top of their 15-hour funded early education, where children from the school nursery class or school-run nursery are given priority for admission to Reception;
- f) give priority to children according to the occupational, marital, financial, or educational status of parents applying. The exceptions to this are children of staff at the school and those eligible for the early years pupil premium, the pupil premium and the service premium who may be prioritised in the arrangements in accordance with paragraphs 1.39 – 1.42;
- g) take account of reports from previous schools about children's past behaviour, attendance, attitude, or achievement, or that of any other children in the family;
- h) discriminate against or disadvantage disabled children, those with special educational needs, or those applying for admission outside their normal age group where an admission authority has agreed to this under paragraphs 2.18 to 2.20;
- i) prioritise children on the basis of their own or their parents' past or current hobbies or activities (schools which have been designated as having a religious character²² may take account of religious activities, as laid out by the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination²³);
- j) in designated grammar schools that rank all children according to a

²⁰ There is a general restriction on selection by ability. Only the following schools are permitted to use selection by ability: designated grammar schools; schools with partially selective arrangements which already had such arrangements in place during the 1997/98 school year; and school sixth forms. Grammar schools are designated as such by order made by the Secretary of State under Section 104 of the SSFA 1998.

²¹ This includes any donations, paid work, or voluntary activity, which supports or benefits the school or any associated organisation, including any religious organisation, or its employees either directly or through work in the community. This does not include any religious activities as permitted by paragraph 1.9(i) for schools which have been designated as having a religious character, or instances where the admission authority has chosen to list children of staff within their oversubscription criteria as permitted by paragraph 1.39 of this Code.

²² Designated by order under Section 69(3) of the SSFA 1998.

²³ Schedule 3 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012. For Academies, the representative body or person is set out in the Funding Agreement.

- pre-determined pass mark and then allocate places to those who score highest, give priority to siblings of current or former pupils;
- k) in the case of schools with boarding places, rank children on the basis of a child's suitability for boarding – more information on boarding schools is set out at paragraphs 1.43 - 1.44 below;
 - l) name fee-paying independent schools as feeder schools;
 - m) interview children or parents. In the case of sixth form applications, a meeting may be held to discuss options and academic entry requirements for particular courses, but this meeting cannot form part of the decision making process on whether to offer a place. Boarding schools may interview children to assess their suitability for boarding;
 - n) request financial contributions (either in the form of voluntary contributions, donations, or deposits (even if refundable)) as any part of the admissions process – including for tests; or
 - o) request photographs of a child for any part of the admissions process, other than as proof of identity when sitting a selection test.

1.10 This Code does not give a definitive list of acceptable oversubscription criteria. It is for admission authorities to decide which criteria would be most suitable to the school according to the local circumstances. The most common are set out below.

Siblings at the school

1.11 Admission authorities **must** state clearly in their arrangements what they mean by 'sibling' (e.g. whether this includes step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address or siblings who are former pupils of the school). If an admission authority wishes to give some priority to siblings of former pupils, it **must** set out a clear and simple definition of such former pupils and how their siblings will be treated in the oversubscription criteria (bearing in mind the restrictions set out in paragraph 1.9 above).

1.12 Some schools give priority to siblings of pupils attending another state funded school with which they have close links (for example, schools on the same site, or close links between two single sex schools). Where this is the case, this priority **must** be set out clearly in the arrangements.

Distance from the school or nodal points

1.13 Admission authorities **must** clearly set out how distance from home to the school and/or any nodal points used in the arrangements will be measured. This **must** include making clear how the 'home' address will be determined and the point(s) in the school or nodal points from which all distances will be measured. This should include provision for cases where parents have shared responsibility for a child following the breakdown of their relationship and the child lives for part of the week with each parent. The selection of a nodal point **must** be clearly explained and made on reasonable grounds.

Catchment Areas

1.14 Catchment areas **must** be designed so that they are reasonable and clearly defined²⁴. Catchment areas do not prevent parents who live outside the catchment of a particular school from expressing a preference for the school.

Feeder Schools

1.15 Admission authorities may wish to name a primary or middle school as a feeder school. The selection of a feeder school or schools as an oversubscription criterion **must** be transparent and made on reasonable grounds.

Social and medical need

1.16 If admission authorities decide to use social and medical need as an oversubscription criterion, they **must** set out in their arrangements how they will define this need and give clear details about what supporting evidence will be required (e.g. a letter from a doctor or social worker) and then make consistent decisions based on the evidence provided.

Selection by ability or aptitude

1.17 The admission authorities for all selective schools **must** publish the entry requirements for a selective place and the process for such selection in their admission arrangements.

Grammar schools

1.18 Only designated grammar schools²⁵ are permitted to select their entire intake on the basis of high academic ability²⁶. They do not have to fill all of their places if applicants have not reached the required standard.

1.19 Where arrangements for pupils are wholly based on selection by reference to ability and provide for only those pupils who score highest in any selection test to be admitted, no priority needs to be given to looked after children or previously looked after children.

1.20 Where admission arrangements are not based solely on highest scores in a selection test, the admission authority **must** give priority in its oversubscription criteria to all looked after children and previously looked after children who meet the pre-set standards of the ability test.

²⁴ R v Greenwich London Borough Council, ex parte John Ball Primary School (1989) 88 LGR 589 [1990] Fam Law 469 held that pupils should not be discriminated against in relation to admission to the school simply because they reside outside the local authority area in which the school is situated. Section 86(8) of the SSFA 1998 places an equal duty on local authorities to comply with parental preference in respect of parents living within and outside their boundary.

²⁵ As designated by the Education (Grammar School Designation) Order 1998 (SI 1998/2219). Where a designated grammar school converts to become an Academy, the Academy is permitted to continue selecting their entire intake: Section 6(3) of the Academies Act 2010.

²⁶ Section 104 of the SSFA 1998.

Pre-existing, partially selective schools

1.21 Partially selective schools select a proportion of their intake by ability. Where schools can partially select, they **must** publish the entry requirements for a selective place, and the process for such selection. They **must** offer places to other children if there are insufficient applicants who have satisfied the published entry requirements for a selective place.

1.22 Partially selective schools **must not** exceed the lowest proportion of selection that has been used since the 1997/98 school year²⁷.

1.23 In relation to the proportion of pupils admitted on a selective basis, where arrangements provide for only those pupils who score highest in any selection test to be admitted, no priority needs to be given to looked after children or previously looked after children. Where such arrangements are not based on highest scores in a selection test, the admission authority **must** give priority in its oversubscription criteria to all looked after children and previously looked after children who meet the pre-set standards of the test. For the allocation of the remainder of places after selection, looked after children and previously looked after children **must** again be given first priority for admission.

Selection by aptitude

1.24 Schools that have arrangements to select by aptitude **must not** allow for more than 10 per cent of the total admissions intake to be allocated on the basis of such aptitude (even if the school has more than one specialism). The only specialist subjects on which a school may select by aptitude are:

- a) physical education or sport, or one or more sports;
- b) the performing arts, or any one or more of those arts;
- c) the visual arts, or any one or more of those arts;
- d) modern foreign languages, or any such language; and
- e) design and technology and information technology. Only schools which selected on either of these specialist subjects in the school year 2007/08 and every subsequent year may continue to do so.

Banding

1.25 Pupil ability banding is a permitted form of selection²⁸ used by some admission authorities to ensure that the intake for a school includes a proportionate spread of children of different abilities. Banding can be used to produce an intake that is representative of:

- a) the full range of ability of applicants for the school(s);
- b) the range of ability of children in the local area; or
- c) the national ability range.

²⁷ Section 100 of the SSFA 1998.

²⁸ Section 101 of the SSFA 1998.

1.26 Admission authorities' entry requirements for banding **must** be fair, clear, and objective. Banding arrangements which favour high ability children that have been continuously used since the 1997/98 school year may continue but **must not** be introduced by any other school.

1.27 The admission authority **must** publish the admission requirements and the process for such banding and decisions, including details of any tests that will be used to band children according to ability.

1.28 Where the school is oversubscribed:

- a) looked after children and previously looked after children **must** be given top priority in each band, and then any oversubscription criteria applied within each band, and
- b) priority **must not** be given within bands according to the applicant's performance in the test.

1.29 Schools that operate admission arrangements which include both banding and selection of up to 10% of pupils with reference to aptitude, **must** set out clearly in their admission arrangements how those two methods of selection will be applied.

1.30 Children with Education, Health and Care Plans may be included in banding tests and allocated places in the appropriate bands but, regardless of any banding arrangements, they **must** be allocated a place if their Education, Health and Care Plan names the school.

Tests for selection

1.31 Tests for all forms of selection **must** be clear, objective, and give an accurate reflection of the child's ability or aptitude, irrespective of sex, race, or disability. It is for the admission authority to decide the content of the test, providing that the test is a true test of aptitude or ability.

1.32 Admission authorities **must**:

- a) ensure that tests for aptitude in a particular subject are designed to test only for aptitude in the subject concerned, and not for ability;
- b) ensure that tests are accessible to children with special educational needs and disabilities, having regard to the reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils required under equalities legislation; and
- c) take all reasonable steps to inform parents of the outcome of selection tests²⁹ before the closing date for secondary applications on **31 October** so as to allow parents time to make an informed choice of school - while making clear that this does not equate to a guarantee of a selective place.

1.33 Admission authorities **must not** adjust the score achieved by any child in a test to take account of oversubscription criteria, such as having a sibling at the school.

²⁹ This does not apply to testing as part of banding arrangements, as described in paragraphs 1.25 – 1.30 of this Code.

Random allocation

1.34 Local authorities **must not** use random allocation as the principal oversubscription criterion for allocating places at all the schools in the area for which they are the admission authority. Admission authorities that decide to use random allocation when schools are oversubscribed **must** set out clearly how this will operate, ensuring that arrangements are transparent, and that looked after children and previously looked after children are prioritised.

1.35 The random allocation process **must** be supervised by someone independent of the school, and a fresh round of random allocation **must** be used each time a child is to be offered a place from a waiting list.

Faith based oversubscription criteria in schools designated with a religious character

1.36 As with other publicly funded mainstream schools, these schools are required to offer every child who applies, whether of the faith, another faith or no faith, a place at the school if there are places available. Schools designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character (commonly known as faith schools) may use faith-based oversubscription criteria³⁰ and allocate places by reference to faith where the school is oversubscribed.

1.37 Admission authorities **must** ensure that parents can easily understand how any faith-based criteria will be reasonably satisfied. Admission authorities for schools designated with a religious character may give priority to all looked after children and previously looked after children whether or not of the faith, but they **must** give priority to looked after children and previously looked after children of the faith before other children of the faith. Where any element of priority is given in relation to children not of the faith, they **must** give priority to looked after children and previously looked after children not of the faith above other children not of the faith³¹.

1.38 Admission authorities for schools designated as having a religious character **must** have regard to any guidance from the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination when constructing faith-based admission arrangements, to the extent that the guidance complies with the mandatory provisions and guidelines of this Code. They **must** also consult with the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination when deciding how membership or practice of the faith is to be demonstrated. Church of England schools **must**, as required by the Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 1991³², consult with their diocese about proposed admission arrangements before any public consultation.

³⁰ Funding Agreements for entirely new Academies (i.e. not converters from the maintained sector, or those sponsored Academies with a predecessor school) and Free Schools with a religious character provide that where the school is oversubscribed at least 50% of places are to be allocated without reference to faith.

³¹ Regulation 9 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012.

³² Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 1991 (No.2).

Children of staff at the school

1.39 Admission authorities may give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children of staff in either or both of the following circumstances:

- a) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; and/or
- b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

1.40 Admissions authorities **must** specify in their admission arrangements how this priority will be applied, for example, which groups of staff it will apply to.

Children eligible for pupil premium, early years premium or service premium

1.41 Admission authorities may give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children eligible for the early years pupil premium³³, the pupil premium³⁴ and also children eligible for the service premium³⁵. Admission authorities should clearly define in their arrangements the categories of eligible premium recipients to be prioritised.

1.42 Admission authorities may give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children eligible for the early years pupil premium, the pupil premium, or the service premium who:

- a) are in a nursery class which is part of the school; or
- b) attend a nursery that is established and run by the school. The nursery **must** be named in the admission arrangements and its selection **must** be transparent and made on reasonable grounds.

Maintained boarding schools

1.43 Maintained boarding schools can set separate admission numbers for day places and boarding places³⁶. A maintained boarding school can interview applicants to assess suitability for boarding, but such interviews **must** only consider whether a child presents a serious health and safety hazard to other boarders or whether they would be able to cope with and benefit from a boarding environment. To help with this assessment, they may also use a supplementary information form, and information provided by the previous school and by the child's home local authority (on safeguarding issues). These processes, and the timeline for them, **must** be clearly set out in the school's admission arrangements.

³³ The early years pupil premium is additional funding paid to support disadvantaged children receiving government-funded early education, as per Section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006.

³⁴ The pupil premium is additional funding paid annually to schools under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the attainment of disadvantaged children.

³⁵ The service premium is additional funding paid annually to schools under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the pastoral needs of the children of Armed Services personnel.

³⁶ Boarding places are places for pupils who are provided with overnight board and lodging by the school. Day places are places for pupils who attend school on a daily basis, including pupils who participate in optional school activities outside school hours (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, music lessons, tea, and supervised homework sessions).

1.44 Boarding schools **must** give priority in their oversubscription criteria in the following order:

- a) looked after children and previously looked after children;
- b) children of members of the UK Armed Forces who qualify for Ministry of Defence financial assistance with the cost of boarding school fees;
- c) children with a 'boarding need', making it clear what they mean by this.

Consultation³⁷

1.45 When changes³⁸ are proposed to admission arrangements, all admission authorities **must** consult on their admission arrangements (including any supplementary information form) that will apply for admission applications the following school year. Where the admission arrangements have not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that admission authorities **must** consult on their admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period³⁹.

1.46 Consultation **must** last for a minimum of 6 weeks and **must** take place between **1 October** and **31 January** in the determination year.

1.47 Admission authorities **must** consult with:

- a) parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen;
- b) other persons in the relevant area⁴⁰ who in the opinion of the admission authority have an interest in the proposed admissions;
- c) all other admission authorities within the relevant area (except that primary schools need not consult secondary schools);
- d) whichever of the governing body and the local authority is not the admission authority;
- e) any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the local authority; and
- f) in the case of schools designated with a religious character, the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination.

³⁷ See also paragraph 1.3. Regulations 12 to 17 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012 cover consultation requirements.

³⁸ An increase to PAN, or a change to the admission arrangements to comply with the mandatory provisions of the Code or the School Admissions Regulations 2012, is not a change requiring consultation.

³⁹ A consultation on a proposal to increase or keep the same PAN by a local authority as admission authority with the governing body of a voluntary controlled or community school is not a consultation for the purposes of calculating a seven year period without consultation.

⁴⁰ As set out in the Glossary.

1.48 For the duration of the consultation period, the admission authority **must** publish a copy of their full proposed admission arrangements (including the proposed PAN) on the school's website or its own website (in the case of a local authority) together with details of where comments may be sent and the areas on which comments are not sought⁴¹. Admission authorities **must** also send, upon request, a copy of the proposed admission arrangements to any of the persons or bodies listed above inviting comment. Failure to consult effectively may be grounds for subsequent complaints and appeals.

Determination

1.49 All admission authorities **must** determine⁴² their admission arrangements, including their PAN, every year, even if they have not changed from previous years and a consultation has not been required by **28 February** in the determination year⁴³.

1.50 Once admission authorities have determined their admission arrangements, they **must** notify the appropriate bodies⁴⁴ and **must** publish a copy of the determined arrangements on the school's website or their own website (in the case of a local authority) by **15 March** in the determination year⁴⁵ and continue displaying them for the whole offer year (the school year in which offers for places are made). Admission authorities **must** also send a copy of their full, determined arrangements to the local authority as soon as possible before **15 March** in the determination year. Admission authorities for schools designated with a religious character **must** also send a copy of their arrangements to the body or person representing their religion or religious denomination.

1.51 Where an admission authority has determined a PAN that is higher than in previous years, they **must** notify the local authority that they have done so and make specific reference to the change on their website.

1.52 Local authorities **must** publish on their website the proposed admission arrangements for any new school or Academy which is intended to open in their area within the determination year, details of where the determined arrangements for all schools, including Academies, can be viewed, and information on how to refer objections to the Schools Adjudicator. Local authorities **must** publish these details by **15 March** in the determination year⁴⁶.

1.53 Following determination of arrangements, any objections to those arrangements **must** be made to the Schools Adjudicator. Objections to admission arrangements **must** be referred to the Schools Adjudicator by **15**

⁴¹ Regulation 16 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012.

⁴² Determination occurs at the point at which the admission arrangements are formally agreed by the admission authority. This decision should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which it is made.

⁴³ Regulation 17 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012.

⁴⁴ In addition to the bodies listed at paragraph 1.47 (c), (d) and (f) and so far as not covered by them, all governing bodies for community and voluntary controlled schools in the relevant area.

⁴⁵ The governing body of a community or voluntary controlled school must also publish this information on the school's website – see regulation 10 of the School Information Regulations 2008.

⁴⁶ Regulation 18 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012.

May in the determination year⁴⁷. Admission authorities that are not the local authority **must** provide all the information that the local authority needs to compile the composite prospectus no later than **8 August**, unless agreed otherwise⁴⁸.

Composite prospectuses

1.54 Local authorities **must** publish online - with hard copies available for those who do not have access to the internet - a composite prospectus for parents by **12 September**⁴⁹ in the offer year, which contains the admission arrangements and any supplementary information forms for each of the state-funded schools in the local authority area to which parents can apply (i.e. all schools including Academies). They **must** ensure that this information is kept up to date throughout the period in which it is possible for parents to apply for a place for their child, including updating it with information about any new schools which open in their area during the offer year. They **must** ensure the prospectus is written in a way that makes it clear and accessible to all parents.

⁴⁷ Regulation 23 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012. See also paragraphs 3.2 - 3.5 of this Code regarding objections to the Schools Adjudicator.

⁴⁸ Regulation 7 of the School Information (England) Regulations 2008 SI 2008/3093.

⁴⁹ Regulations 5, 6 and Schedule 2 of the School Information (England) Regulations 2008.

Section 2: Applications and Offers

Applying for places in the normal admissions round

2.1 Local authorities **must** provide a common application form (CAF) that enables parents to express their preference for a place at any state funded school, with a minimum of 3 preferences in rank order, allowing them to give reasons for their preferences. While parents may express a preference for any state funded school – regardless of whether it is in the local authority area in which they live - admission authorities **must not** give any guarantees that a preference will be met.

2.2 The CAF **must** allow parents to provide their name, their address (including documentary evidence in support), and the name, address, and date of birth of the child. The child **must not** be required to complete any part of the CAF. Local authorities **must** provide advice and assistance to parents when they are deciding which schools to apply for⁵⁰.

2.3 Regardless of which schools parents express preferences for, the CAF is required to be returned to the local authority in the area that they live (the 'home' authority). The home authority **must** then pass information on applications to other local ('maintaining') authorities about applications to schools in their area. The maintaining authority **must** determine the application and inform the home local authority if a place is available. The offer to parents **must** be made by the home local authority.

2.4 In some cases, admission authorities will need to ask for supplementary information forms in order to process applications. If they do so, they **must** only use supplementary forms that request additional information when it has a direct bearing on decisions about oversubscription criteria or for the purpose of selection by aptitude or ability. Places **must** be allocated on the basis of the oversubscription criteria only. An applicant **must not** be given additional priority solely on the basis of having completed a supplementary form. Admission authorities **must not** ask, or use supplementary forms that ask, for any of the information prohibited by paragraph 1.9 above or for:

- a) any personal details about parents and families, such as maiden names, criminal convictions, marital, or financial status (including marriage certificates);
- b) the first language of parents or the child;
- c) details about parents' or a child's disabilities, special educational needs, or medical conditions;
- d) parents to agree to support the ethos of the school in a practical way;
- e) both parents to sign the form, or for the child to complete the form.

⁵⁰ In accordance with Section 86(1A) of the SSFA 1998.

2.5 Admission authorities may need to ask for proof of address where it is unclear whether a child meets the published oversubscription criteria. In these cases, they **must not** ask for any evidence that would include any of the information detailed above. Once a place has been offered, admission authorities may ask for proof of birth date, but **must not** ask for a 'long' birth certificate or other documents which would include information about the child's parents. In the case of previously looked after children, admission authorities may request a copy of the adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order and a letter from the local authority that last looked after the child, confirming that they were looked after immediately prior to that order being made, or such evidence that demonstrates a child was in state care outside of England prior to being adopted.

Applying for places at Sixth Form

2.6 Children and their parents applying for sixth form places may use the CAF, although if they are already on the roll, they are not required to do so in order to transfer into year 12. Admission authorities can, however, set academic entry criteria for their sixth forms, which **must** be the same for both external and internal places. School sixth form admission arrangements for external applicants **must** be consulted upon, determined, and published in accordance with the same timetable as for admission arrangements for other entry points. As with other points of entry to schools, highest priority in oversubscription criteria for sixth form places **must** be given to looked after children and previously looked after children who meet the academic entry criteria. As stated in paragraph 1.9 m) above, any meetings held to discuss options and courses **must not** form part of the decision process on whether to offer a place.

Allocating places

2.7 Admission authorities **must** allocate places on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only. A decision to offer or refuse admission **must not** be made by one individual in an admission authority. Where the school is its own admission authority the whole governing body, or an admissions committee established by the governing body, **must** make such decisions⁵¹. The admission authority **must** keep a clear record of any decisions on applications, including in-year applications.

2.8 With the exception of designated grammar schools, all maintained schools, and academies, including schools designated with a religious character, that have enough places available **must** offer a place to every child who has applied for one, without condition or the use of any oversubscription criteria.

⁵¹ Where it is not possible to convene a face to face meeting of a governing body or the admissions committee (where applicable) in order to make a decision on an application, decisions may be made 'virtually', provided members are 'present' – for example via telephone or video conference. Admission authorities must ensure their processes comply with relevant governance requirements.

2.9 Admission authorities **must not** refuse to admit a child solely because:

- a) they have applied later than other applicants;
- b) they are not of the faith of the school, in the case of a school designated with a religious character;
- c) they followed a different curriculum at their previous school;
- d) information has not been received from their previous school; or
- e) they have missed entrance tests for selective places.

2.10 In the normal admissions round, offers of primary and secondary places **must** be sent by the home local authority and schools **must not** contact parents about the outcome of their applications until after these offers have been received. Admission authorities **must not** provide any guarantees to applicants of the outcome of their application prior to the formal notification of any offers of a place in a suitable school by the home local authority.

2.11 Where a place is available for a child at more than one school, the home local authority **must** ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the child is offered a place at whichever of these schools is their highest preference. If the local authority is unable to offer a place at one of the parents' preferred schools it **must**, if there are places available, offer a place at another school.

Offering a place

2.12 Where schools are oversubscribed, admission authorities **must** rank applications in accordance with their determined arrangements. The qualifying scheme **must** ensure that:

- a) only one offer per child is made by the local authority;
- b) for secondary school applications, all offers **must** be made on the same secondary National Offer Day i.e. **1 March or the next working day**, and
- c) for primary school applications, all offers **must** be made on the same primary National Offer Day i.e. **16 April or the next working day**.

Withdrawing an offer or a place

2.13 An admission authority **must not** withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. Where the parent has not responded to the offer, the admission authority **must** give the parent a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not. Where an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application **must** be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if an offer is refused.

2.14 A school **must not** withdraw a place once a child has started at the school, except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether to withdraw the place, the length of time that the child has been at the school **must** be taken into account. For example, it might be considered appropriate to withdraw the place if the child has been at the school for less than one term.

Waiting lists

2.15 Each admission authority **must** maintain a clear, fair, and objective waiting list until at least **31 December** of each school year of admission, stating in their arrangements that each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Priority **must not** be given to children based on the date their application was received, or their name was added to the list. Looked after children or previously looked after children allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol **must** take precedence over those on a waiting list⁵².

Infant class size

2.16 Infant classes (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) **must not** contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher⁵³. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

- a) children admitted outside the normal admissions round with Education, Health and Care Plans specifying the school;
- b) looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- c) children admitted after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process;
- d) children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal;
- e) children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance;
- f) children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- g) children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil;
- h) children with special educational needs who are normally taught in

⁵² Admission authorities for schools designated with a religious character must treat looked after children and previously looked after children on their waiting list in line with the principles set out in paragraph 1.37.

⁵³ 'Teacher' is defined in Section 4 of the SSFA 1998.

a special educational needs unit⁵⁴ attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school⁵⁵.

Admission of children below compulsory school age⁵⁶ and deferred entry to school

2.17 Admission authorities **must** provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. The authority **must** make it clear in their arrangements that where they have offered a child a place at a school:

- a) that child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday;
- b) the child's parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made; and
- c) where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

2.18 Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child⁵⁷ may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1. Admission authorities **must** make clear in their admission arrangements the process for requesting admission out of the normal age group.

2.19 Admission authorities **must** make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social, and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born

⁵⁴ A special educational needs unit forms part of a school and is specially organised to provide education for pupils with special educational needs.

⁵⁵ The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012.

⁵⁶ Compulsory school age is set out in Section 8 of the Education Act 1996 and the Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) Order 1998. A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March, and 31 August.

⁵⁷ The term summer born children relates to all children born from 1 April to 31 August. These children reach compulsory school age on 31 August following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on 31 August). It is likely that most requests for summer born children to be admitted out of their normal age group will come from parents of children born in the later summer months or those born prematurely.

prematurely. They **must** also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority **must** set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

2.20 Where an admission authority agrees to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the local authority and admission authority **must** process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. They **must not** give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

Children of UK service personnel and crown servants

2.21 For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, admission authorities **must**:

- a) allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (as long as one is available), provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. Admission authorities **must not** refuse to process an application and **must not** refuse a place solely because the family do not yet have an intended address, or do not yet live in the area.
- b) use the address at which the child will live when applying their oversubscription criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. Admission authorities **must** use a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address when considering the application against their oversubscription criteria, where a parent requests this.
- c) **not** reserve blocks of places for these children.
- d) ensure that arrangements in their area support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children. Arrangements **must** be appropriate for the area and be described in the local authority's composite prospectus.

Co-ordination

2.22 Each year all local authorities **must** formulate and publish on their website by **1 January** in the relevant determination year, a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for the normal admissions round and late

applications⁵⁸ for all publicly funded schools within their area⁵⁹. Where the scheme is substantially different from the scheme adopted for the previous academic year, the local authority **must** consult the other admission authorities in the area and any other local authorities it determines. Where the scheme has not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that the local authority **must** consult on the scheme at least once every seven years, even if there have been no changes during that period. Following any such consultation, which **must** be undertaken with a view to ensuring the admission of pupils in different local authorities is, as far as reasonably practicable, compatible with each other, the local authority **must** determine the qualifying scheme and **must** take all reasonable steps to secure its adoption. A local authority **must** inform the Secretary of State whether they have secured the adoption of a qualifying scheme by **28 February** in the determination year. The Secretary of State may impose a scheme where a scheme has not been adopted. All admission authorities **must** participate in co-ordination for the normal admissions round and late applications and provide the local authority with the information it needs to co-ordinate admissions by the dates agreed within the scheme. Local authorities **must** make application forms available to parents who wish to apply to a school in a neighbouring area which operates a different age of transfer (e.g. middle schools), and process these as it would in its normal admissions round.

In-year admissions

2.23 A parent can apply for a place for their child at any school, at any time. Local authorities are not required to co-ordinate in-year applications⁶⁰ for schools for which they are not the admission authority. They may, however, co-ordinate in-year applications for any or all own admission authority schools in their area, with the agreement of the relevant admission authorities. In 2021, local authorities **must** publish information on their website by **31 October 2021** to explain how in-year applications can be made and how they will be dealt with from 1 November 2021 until 31 August 2022. **In all subsequent years**, local authorities **must** publish information on their website by **31 August** at the latest each year to explain how in-year applications can be made and how they will be dealt with from 1 September onwards in that year. This includes setting out which schools they will co-ordinate the applications for and which schools will manage their own in-year admissions. They **must** also set out contact details for any admission authority that manages its own in-year admissions.

2.24 To enable local authorities to do this, **in 2021** own admission authority schools **must** inform the local authority by **1 October** whether they intend to be part of the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme for the period to 31 August 2022 (where this is offered). **In all subsequent years**, own admission authorities **must** inform the local authority by **1 August** at the latest each year

⁵⁸ "Late applications" are applications for entry in a relevant age group which are submitted before the first day of the first term in the admission year but have not been made in time to enable the local authority to offer a place on National Offer Day.

⁵⁹ Regulations 26 to 32 and Schedule 2 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012 cover the requirements for such schemes.

⁶⁰ An application is an in-year application if it is for the admission of a child to a relevant age group, but it is submitted on or after the first day of the first term of the admission year, or if it is for the admission of a child to an age group other than a relevant age group.

whether they intend to be part of the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme for the following 1 September to 31 August (where this is offered) or whether they will be managing their own in-year admissions. By the same date, for schools that intend to be part of the local authority's in-year co-ordination for the following academic year, they **must** also provide the local authority with all the information that the local authority is required to publish on its website, including application forms.

2.25 Local authorities **must** provide a suitable application form (and a supplementary information form where necessary) for parents to complete when applying for a place for their child at a school for which they co-ordinate in-year admissions. Where a local authority receives an in-year application for a school which manages its own in-year admissions, it **must** promptly forward the application to the relevant admission authority, which **must** process it in accordance with its own in-year admission arrangements.

2.26 In 2021, own admission authorities and governing bodies **must** set out on the school's website by **31 October 2021** how in-year applications will be dealt with from the 1 November 2021 until 31 August 2022. **In all subsequent years**, they **must** set out by **31 August** at the latest each year, on the school's website how in-year applications will be dealt with from the **1 September** until the following **31 August**. They **must** set out how parents can apply for a school place, and, where they manage their own in-year admissions, provide a suitable application form for parents to complete (and a supplementary information form where necessary), and set out when parents will be notified of the outcome of their application and details about the right to appeal. If the admission authority is to be a part of the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme, it **must** provide information on where parents can find details of the relevant scheme. An admission authority, governing body or local authority **must** provide a hard copy of the information about in-year applications on request for those who do not have access to the internet.

2.27 Local authorities **must**, on request, provide information to prospective parents about the places still available in all schools within their area. To enable them to do this, the admission authorities for all schools in the area **must** provide the local authority with details of the number of places available at their schools whenever this information is requested, to assist a parent seeking a school place. Such details should be provided no later than two school days following receipt of a request from the local authority.

2.28 With the exception of designated grammar schools, all maintained schools, and academies, including schools designated with a religious character, that have places available **must** offer a place to every child who has applied for one, without condition or the use of any oversubscription criteria, unless admitting the child would prejudice the efficient provision of education or use of resources. For example, admission authorities **must not** refuse to admit a child solely because:

- a) they have applied later than other applicants;
- b) they are not of the faith of the school in the case of a school designated with a religious character;
- c) they have followed a different curriculum at their previous school; or
- d) information has not been received from their previous school.

2.29 Where an admission authority is dealing with multiple in-year admissions and do not have sufficient places for every child who has applied for one, they **must** allocate places on the basis of the oversubscription criteria in their determined admission arrangements⁶¹ only. If a waiting list is maintained, it **must** be maintained in line with paragraph 2.15.

2.30 Parents **must not** be refused the opportunity to make an application or be told that they can only be placed on a waiting list rather than make a formal application. Upon receipt of an in-year application, the admission authority, or the local authority if it is co-ordinating the admissions authority's in-year admissions, should aim to notify the parents of the outcome of their application in writing within 10 school days, but they **must** be notified in writing within 15 school days⁶². Where an application is refused, the admission authority **must** also set out the reason for refusal and information about the right to appeal in accordance with paragraph 2.32. Where an admission authority manages its own in-year admissions, it **must** also notify the local authority of every application and its outcome as soon as reasonably practicable, but should aim to be within two school days, to allow the local authority to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area and to ensure they are aware of any children who may not have a school place.

2.31 Where an applicant is offered a school place following an in-year application, and the offer is accepted, arrangements should be made for the child to start school as soon as possible, particularly where the child is out of school.

Right to appeal

2.32 When an admission authority informs a parent of a decision to refuse their child a place at a school for which they have applied, it **must** include the reason why admission was refused; information about the right to appeal; the deadline for lodging an appeal and the contact details for making an appeal. Parents **must** be informed that, if they wish to appeal, they **must** set out their grounds for appeal in writing⁶³. Admission authorities **must not** limit the grounds on which appeals can be made.

School closure

2.33 Where a maintained school or Academy is to be closed, the local authority **must** collaborate with all schools in their area to consider the best way to secure provision for children in other local schools.

⁶¹ The determined admission arrangements that relate to the admission of pupils in the relevant school year.

⁶² This does not apply to grammar schools which must, instead, notify a parent in writing within 15 school days of their in-year application of either the date for the assessment of ability or the reason for refusal with information about the right to appeal (where the admission authority chooses not to assess the child's ability because admitting an additional child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources).

⁶³ Where a looked after child has been refused a school place, it is likely to be more appropriate for the local authority looking after the child to use the powers of direction set out in paragraphs 3.27 to 3.29 of the Code, than to submit an appeal.

Section 3: Ensuring Fairness and Resolving Issues

The Schools Adjudicator

3.1 The Schools Adjudicator **must** consider whether admission arrangements referred to the Schools Adjudicator comply with the Code and the law relating to admissions. The admission authority **must**, where necessary, revise their admission arrangements to give effect to the Schools Adjudicator's decision within two months of the decision (or by **28 February** following the decision, whichever is sooner), unless an alternative timescale is specified by the Schools Adjudicator. The Schools Adjudicator's determination is binding and enforceable.

3.2 Local authorities **must** refer an objection to the Schools Adjudicator if they are of the view or suspect that the admission arrangements that have been determined by other admission authorities are unlawful. If requested by the Schools Adjudicator, admission authorities **must** provide the information set out in Schedule 1 to the School Admissions Regulations⁶⁴.

3.3 Any person or body who considers that any maintained school or Academy's arrangements are unlawful, or not in compliance with the Code or relevant law relating to admissions, can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator⁶⁵. The following types of objections cannot be brought⁶⁶:

- a) objections that seek to remove selective arrangements at a maintained school (which are permitted under Section 105 to 109 of the SSFA 1988) or a selective Academy;
- b) objections about own authority admission's decision to increase or keep the same PAN;
- c) objections about a decision by the admission authority of a voluntary controlled or community school to increase or keep the same PAN, unless the objection is brought by the governing body of the school;
- d) objections in respect of an agreed variation from the Code in relation to admission arrangements for an Academy;
- e) objections to arrangements which raise the same or substantially the same matters as the adjudicator has decided on for that school in the last 2 years⁶⁷; and
- f) anonymous objections⁶⁸.

3.4 The Schools Adjudicator may also consider arrangements that come to its attention by other means, which they consider may not comply with mandatory requirements.

⁶⁴ Regulation 25 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012.

⁶⁵ Section 88H of the SSFA 1998.

⁶⁶ Regulation 21 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012.

⁶⁷ Regulation 22 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012.

⁶⁸ Regulation 24 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012. The person or body referring the objection must provide their name and address to the adjudicator.

3.5 Objections to admission arrangements **must** be referred to the Schools Adjudicator by **15 May** in the determination year⁶⁹. Further information on how to make an objection can be obtained from the [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#).

Variations

3.6 Once admission arrangements have been determined for a particular school year, they cannot be revised by the admission authority unless such revision is necessary to give effect to a mandatory requirement of this Code, admissions law, a determination of the Schools Adjudicator or any misprint in the admission arrangements⁷⁰. Admission authorities may propose other variations where they consider such changes to be necessary in view of a major change in circumstances. Such proposals **must** be referred to the Schools Adjudicator (for maintained schools) or the Secretary of State (for academies⁷¹) for approval, and the appropriate bodies notified⁷². Where the local authority is the admission authority for a community or voluntary controlled school, it **must** consult the governing body of the school before making any reference. A variation to increase a school's PAN is not required to be referred to the Schools Adjudicator⁷³.

3.7 Admission authorities **must** notify the appropriate bodies⁷⁴ of all variations and **must** display a copy of the full varied admission arrangements on the school's website or their website (in the case of a local authority) until they are replaced by different admission arrangements. Local authorities **must** display the varied admission arrangements on their website where an admission authority has raised its PAN.

Children who have been permanently excluded twice or display challenging behaviour

3.8 Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools there is no need for an admission authority to comply with parental preference for a period of two years from the last exclusion⁷⁵. The twice excluded rule does not apply to the following children:

- a) children who were below compulsory school age at the time of the permanent exclusion;
- b) children who have been reinstated following a permanent exclusion (or would have been reinstated had it been practicable to do so);
- c) children whose permanent exclusion has been considered by a

⁶⁹ Regulation 23 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012.

⁷⁰ Regulation 19 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012.

⁷¹ Section 88E of the SSFA 1998.

⁷² In addition to the bodies listed at paragraph 1.47 (c), (d) and (f) and so far as not covered by them, all governing bodies for community and voluntary controlled schools in the relevant area.

⁷³ Regulation 20 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012.

⁷⁴ See footnote 44.

⁷⁵ Section 87 of the SSFA 1998.

review panel, and the review panel has decided to quash a decision not to reinstate them following the exclusion; and

- d) children with Education, Health and Care Plans naming the school.

3.9 Admission authorities **must not** refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry, except for where paragraph 3.8 applies.

3.10 Where an admission authority receives an in-year application for a year group that is not the normal point of entry and it does not wish to admit the child because it has good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour⁷⁶, it may refuse admission⁷⁷ and refer the child to the Fair Access Protocol⁷⁸.

3.11 An admission authority should only rely on the provision in paragraph 3.10 if it has a particularly high proportion of either children with challenging behaviour or previously permanently excluded pupils on roll compared to other local schools and it considers that admitting another child with challenging behaviour would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

3.12 The provision in paragraph 3.10 cannot be used to refuse admission to looked after children, previously looked after children; and children who have Education, Health and Care Plans naming the school in question.

3.13 Admission authorities **must not** refuse to admit a child thought to be potentially disruptive, or likely to exhibit challenging behaviour, on the grounds that the child is first to be assessed for special educational needs.

Fair Access Protocols

3.14 Each local authority **must** have a Fair Access Protocol to ensure that unplaced and vulnerable children, and those who are having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, are allocated a school place as quickly as possible.

⁷⁶ For the purposes of this Code, behaviour can be described as challenging where it would be unlikely to be responsive to the usual range of interventions to help prevent and address pupil misbehaviour **or** it is of such severity, frequency, or duration that it is beyond the normal range that schools can tolerate. We would expect this behaviour to significantly interfere with the pupil's/other pupils' education or jeopardise the right of staff and pupils to a safe and orderly environment.

⁷⁷ A child with challenging behaviour may also be disabled as defined in the Equality Act 2010. When considering refusing admission on these grounds, admission authorities must consider their duties under that Act. Admission authorities should also consider the effect of the decision of the [Upper Tribunal in C & C v The Governing Body of a School, The Secretary of State for Education \(First Interested Party\) and The National Autistic Society \(Second Interested Party\) \(SEN\) \[2018\] UKUT 269 \(AAC\)](#) about the implications of the Equality Act 2010 when a pupil exhibits a tendency to physical abuse of other persons as a consequence of a disability.

⁷⁸ Paragraph 1.9(g) does not apply where an admission authority takes account of past behaviour as evidence for concerns about challenging behaviour, solely for the purpose of making a decision on whether it would be appropriate to refuse admission on the basis described in paragraph 3.10.

3.15 The Protocol **must** be consulted upon and developed in partnership with all schools in its area. Once the Protocol has been agreed by the majority of schools in its area, all admission authorities **must** participate in it. Participation includes making available a representative who is authorised to participate in discussions, make decisions on placing children via the Protocol, and admitting pupils when asked to do so in accordance with the Protocol, even when the school is full⁷⁹. Local authorities **must** provide admission authorities with reasonable notice and information as to how and when discussions around the placement of children via the Protocol will take place.

3.16 No school - including those with places available – should be asked to take a disproportionate number of children who have been permanently excluded from other schools, who display challenging behaviour, or who are placed via the Protocol. Fair Access Protocols **must** also set out how the needs of children who have been permanently excluded, and children for whom mainstream education is not yet possible, will be met.

3.17 Fair Access Protocols may only be used to place the following groups of vulnerable and/or hard to place children, where they are having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, and it can be demonstrated that reasonable measures have been taken to secure a place through the usual in-year admission procedures⁸⁰:

- a) children either subject to a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan⁸¹ or having had a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan within 12 months at the point of being referred to the Protocol;
- b) children living in a refuge or in other Relevant Accommodation at the point of being referred to the Protocol;
- c) children from the criminal justice system;
- d) children in alternative provision who need to be reintegrated into mainstream education or who have been permanently excluded but are deemed suitable for mainstream education;
- e) children with special educational needs (but without an Education, Health and Care plan), disabilities or medical conditions;
- f) children who are carers;
- g) children who are homeless;
- h) children in formal kinship care arrangements⁸²;

⁷⁹ Decisions about admitting children under the Protocol can be made by one individual in an admission authority provided that suitable authority has been delegated to that individual. Admission authorities must ensure this process complies with relevant governance requirements.

⁸⁰ For example, where an application has been made to at least one school and this has been refused, or the local authority has confirmed that there are no places available at any school within a reasonable distance.

⁸¹ Child in Need Plans and Child Protection Plans are plans of help and protection to address safeguarding and welfare needs, where a child has been assessed by the local authority as being a child in need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 and/or as suffering or likely to suffer significant hardship under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989. See also statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) (pages 35 and 48-49).

⁸² As evidenced by either a child arrangements order not relating to either birth parent or a special guardianship order.

- i) children of, or who are, Gypsies, Roma, Travellers, refugees, and asylum seekers;
- j) children who have been refused a school place on the grounds of their challenging behaviour and referred to the Protocol in accordance with paragraph 3.10 of this Code;
- k) children for whom a place has not been sought due to exceptional circumstances⁸³;
- l) children who have been out of education for four or more weeks where it can be demonstrated that there are no places available at any school within a reasonable distance of their home. This does not include circumstances where a suitable place has been offered to a child and this has not been accepted; and
- m) previously looked after children for whom the local authority has been unable to promptly secure a school place⁸⁴.

3.18 Eligibility for the Fair Access Protocol does not limit a parent's right to make an in-year application to any school for their child. Admission authorities **must** process these applications in accordance with their usual in-year admission procedures (as set out in paragraphs 2.23-2.31). They **must not** refuse to admit such children on the basis that they may be eligible to be placed via the Fair Access Protocol. The parent will continue to have the right of appeal for any place they have been refused, even if the child has been offered a school place via the Fair Access Protocol.

3.19 There is no duty for local authorities or admission authorities to comply with parental preference when allocating places through the Fair Access Protocol, but parents' views should be taken into account.

3.20 Fair Access Protocols should seek to place a child in a school that is appropriate to any particular needs they may have. The Fair Access Protocol **must not** require a school automatically to admit a child via the Fair Access Protocol, in place of a child permanently excluded from the school.

3.21 Where it has been agreed that a child will be considered under the Fair Access Protocol, a school place **must** be allocated for that child within 20 school days. Once they have been allocated a school place via the Fair Access Protocol, arrangements should be made for the child to start at the school as soon as possible.

3.22 In the event that the majority of schools in an area can no longer support the principles and approach of their local Fair Access Protocol, they should initiate a review with the local authority. There should be a clear process for how such a review can be initiated within each Fair Access Protocol. The existing Fair Access

⁸³ It is for the local authority to decide whether a child qualifies to be placed via the Protocol on this basis, based on the circumstances of the case.

⁸⁴ In most cases use of the Fair Access Protocol should be unnecessary for a previously looked after child. We would expect the local authority to aim to secure a school place particularly promptly for a previously looked after child and for admission authorities to cooperate with this. The local authority may consider swift use of their general powers of direction (under paragraphs 3.26-3.28) or asking the Secretary of State to consider a direction (under paragraph 3.29) to be the most suitable course of action if a school place for a previously looked after child cannot be agreed with an admission authority promptly.

Protocol will remain binding on all schools in the local area until the point at which a new one is adopted.

Local authority powers of direction (general)

3.23 A local authority has the power⁸⁵ to direct the governing body of a maintained school for which they are not the admission authority to admit a child in their area even when the school is full. The local authority can only make such a direction in respect of a child in the local authority's area who has been refused entry to, or has been permanently excluded from, every suitable school within a reasonable distance. The local authority **must** choose a school that is a reasonable distance from the child's home and from which the child is not permanently excluded. It **must not** choose a sixth-form that selects by ability unless the child meets the selection requirements, or a school that would have to take measures to avoid breaking the rules on infant class sizes if those measures would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

3.24 Before deciding to give a direction, the local authority **must** consult the governing body of the school, the parent of the child and the child if they are over compulsory school age. If, following consultation, the local authority decides to direct, it **must** inform the governing body and head teacher of the school. The governing body can appeal by referring the case to the Schools Adjudicator within 15 days. If it does this, the governing body **must** tell the local authority. The local authority **must not** make a direction until the 15 days have passed and the case has not been referred.

3.25 If the case is referred to the Schools Adjudicator, the Schools Adjudicator may either uphold the direction, determine that another maintained school **must** admit the child or decide not to issue a direction. The Adjudicator's decision is binding. The Schools Adjudicator **must not** direct a school to admit a child if this would require the school to take measures to avoid breaking the rules on infant class sizes and those measures would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

Local authority powers of direction (looked after children)

3.26 A local authority also has the power⁸⁶ to direct the admission authority for any maintained school in England (other than a school for which they are the admission authority) to admit a child who is looked after by the local authority, even when the school is full. The local authority **must not** choose a school from which the child is permanently excluded but may choose a school whose infant classes are already at the maximum size⁸⁷.

3.27 Before deciding to give a direction, the local authority **must** consult the admission authority of the school it proposes to direct. The admission authority **must** tell the local authority within 7 days whether it is willing to admit the child.

⁸⁵ Sections 96 and 97 of the SSFA 1998.

⁸⁶ Sections 97A-C of the SSFA 1998.

⁸⁷ Looked after children are excepted pupils outside of the normal admissions round under the School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012.

If, following consultation, the local authority decides to direct, it **must** inform the admission authority, the governing body (if the school is a voluntary controlled or community school), the local authority that maintains the school, and the head teacher. The admission authority can appeal by referring the case to the Schools Adjudicator within 7 days. If the child has been permanently excluded from two other schools and the most recent exclusion was within the previous two years, the governing body (if the school is a voluntary controlled or community school) may also refer the case to the Schools Adjudicator. The admission authority or governing body **must not** refer the case unless it considers that admitting the child would seriously prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. If the admission authority or governing body does refer the case, it **must** notify the local authority that looks after the child. The local authority **must not** make a direction until the 7 days have passed and the case has not been referred.

3.28 If the case is referred to the Schools Adjudicator, the Schools Adjudicator may either uphold the direction or determine that another maintained school in England **must** admit the child. The Schools Adjudicator's decision is binding. The Schools Adjudicator **must not** direct an alternative school to admit a child unless the local authority that looks after the child agrees, nor if the child is permanently excluded from that school, nor if the admission of the child would seriously prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

Secretary of State's power of direction (Academies)

3.29 Where a local authority considers that an Academy will best meet the needs of any child, it can ask the Academy to admit that child but has no power to direct it to do so. The local authority and the Academy will usually come to an agreement, but if the Academy refuses to admit the child, the local authority can ask the Secretary of State to intervene. The Secretary of State has the power under an Academy's Funding Agreement to direct the Academy to admit a child and can seek advice from the Schools Adjudicator in reaching a decision⁸⁸.

Local authority reports

3.30 Local authorities **must** produce an annual report on admissions for all the schools in their area for which they co-ordinate admissions. **From 2022**, it **must** be published locally and sent to the Schools Adjudicator by **31 October** each year covering the prior academic year. The report **must** cover as a minimum:

- a) information about how admission arrangements in the area of the local authority serve the interests of looked after children and previously looked after children, children with disabilities and children with special educational needs, including any details of where problems have arisen;
- b) an assessment of the effectiveness of Fair Access Protocols including how many children were admitted to each school under it; and
- c) any other issues the local authority may wish to include.

⁸⁸ Section 25(3A) of the SSFA 1998.

Appendix 1 – Relevant Legislation

1. This appendix sets out the primary legislation and regulations most relevant to admissions decisions. Admission authorities, Schools Adjudicators, appeal panels, local authorities and maintained schools **must** comply with the relevant law as well as acting in accordance with the provisions of this Code. This Code and the School Admission Appeals Code (the Codes) are applied to Academies through their Funding Agreements. The information here aims to signpost the relevant law; it does not aim to provide definitive guidance on interpreting the law: that is for the courts.

Equality Act 2010

2. This Act consolidates the law prohibiting discrimination, harassment and victimisation and expands the list of protected characteristics. All schools **must** have due regard to their obligations under the Act and review their policies and practices to make sure these meet the requirements of the Act, even if they believe that they are already operating in a non-discriminatory way.
3. An admission authority **must not** discriminate on the grounds of disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation, against a person in the arrangements and decisions it makes as to who is offered admission as a pupil.
4. An admission authority **must not** harass a person who has applied for admission as a pupil, in relation to their disability; race; or sex.
5. An admission authority **must not** victimise a person in relation to a protected act either done, or believed to have been done, by that person (e.g. bringing proceedings under the Equality Act 2010) in the arrangements and decisions it makes as to who is offered admission as a pupil.
6. This Act contains limited exceptions to the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion or belief and sex. Schools designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character are exempt from some aspects of the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief and this means they can make a decision about whether or not to admit a child as a pupil on the basis of religion or belief. Single-sex schools are lawfully permitted to discriminate on the grounds of sex in their admission arrangements.
7. Admission authorities are also subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty and therefore **must** have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in relation to persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
8. The protected characteristics for these purposes are: disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

9. Further guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty is available in the Department for Education's [Advice to Schools on the Equality Act 2010](#), on the website of the Government Equalities Office and from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Human Rights Act 1998

10. The Human Rights Act 1998 confers a right of access to education. This right does not extend to securing a place at a particular school. Admission authorities, however, do need to consider parents' reasons for expressing a preference when they make admission decisions, though this may not necessarily result in the allocation of a place. These might include, for example, the parents' rights to ensure that their child's education conforms to their own religious or philosophical convictions (as far as is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure).
11. Please note the case of *R (Hounslow London Borough Council) v School Admission Appeal Panel for Hounslow (2002)* regarding exceptional circumstances⁸⁹.

School Standards and Framework Act 1998

12. Chapter 1 of Part 3 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 contains the key provisions regarding school admissions, including the statutory basis for this Code.
13. Section 86 of the SSFA 1998 provides that the admission authority for a maintained school (with the exception of those that select wholly by ability) **must** comply with any preference expressed by a parent except where to do so would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.
14. Section 94 of the SSFA 1998 provides that parents (and in some circumstances children) may appeal against a decision to refuse admission to the school. Two or more admission authorities in the same local authority area may make joint arrangements.
15. The Codes largely include the provisions relating to school admissions made in regulations. The most relevant regulations are:
 - a) The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012;
 - b) The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012;
 - c) The School Admissions (Appeals) (England) Regulations 2012; and
 - d) The School Information (England) Regulations 2008.

⁸⁹ See <https://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2002/900.html>

Appendix 2– Sample Admission Arrangements

*These example arrangements are provided for illustrative purposes only – they are not “suggested” arrangements and should not be seen as such. Arrangements for individual schools **must** be set in the context of local circumstances.*

The school has an agreed admission number of 240 pupils for entry in year 7. The school will accordingly admit up to 240 pupils in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received. All applicants will be admitted if 240 or fewer apply.

If the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan where the school is named in the Plan, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in order:

- (1) A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order⁹⁰ including those who appear [to the admission authority] to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).
- (2) Children with a sibling attending the school at the time of application. Sibling is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.
- (3) Other children by distance from the school, with priority for admission given to children who live nearest to the school as measured by using Ordnance Survey data to plot an address in this system. Distances are measured as the crow flies from the main entrance of the child's home to the main entrance of the school as specified by the local authority's GIS.

Random allocation will be used as a tie-break in category '3' above to decide who has highest priority for admission if the distance between two children's homes and the school is the same. This process will be independently verified. If a tie-break is required in earlier categories to decide who has priority for admission between two children, distance from the school will be used to decide as measured above.

⁹⁰ An adoption order is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders). A 'child arrangements order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Families may seek a place for their child outside of his/her normal age group under various circumstances such as ill health, if the child is gifted and talented or when the child has experienced problems.

The Admissions Timeline

The timetable and procedures for admissions are set out in both this Code and the School Admissions Regulations 2012. The admissions timeline applies to all state funded schools including Academies and Free Schools (through their funding agreement).

Local authorities have a key role in providing information to parents on admission arrangements and schools in their area and in co-ordinating school admissions for parents for all state funded schools. Local authorities will also be notified and have oversight of the outcome of all in-year applications.

In the normal admissions round, parents apply to the local authority in which they live for places at their preferred primary or secondary schools, and the local authority makes an offer of a place on National Offer Day. For late applications (those which are submitted before the first day of the first term but are too late for an offer to be made on National Offer Day), parents also apply to and receive an offer from the local authority. There is no requirement for local authorities to co-ordinate in-year applications (applications for the admission of a child to a relevant age group that are made on or after the first day of the first term, or for the admission of a child to an age group other than a relevant age group) but they **must**, on request, provide information to a parent about the places still available in all schools within its area, and a suitable form for parents to complete when applying for a place for their child at a school for which they co-ordinate in-year admissions within the area. Where a local authority receives an in-year application for a school which manages its own in-year admissions, it **must** promptly forward the application to the relevant admission authority, which **must** process it in accordance with its own in-year admission arrangements. Any parent can apply for a place for their child at any time to any school outside the normal admissions round. Parents can apply directly to own admission authority schools who are managing their own in-year applications.

Example timetable

Determination Year (2021/22)

(The school year in which admission authorities determine their admission arrangements)

Date	Relevance
1 October 2021	Earliest date to start consultation on proposed arrangements. Consultation must last a minimum of 6 weeks.
1 October 2021	Governing bodies must provide information about in-year applications to local authorities for the period until 31 August 2022.

31 October 2021	Local authority must publish information on their website to explain how in-year applications can be made and how they will be dealt with for the period until 31 August 2022. Governing bodies must also publish information about in-year applications by the same date.
1 January 2022	Deadline for the local authority to formulate a co-ordinated scheme for state funded schools in their area, including any new school or Academy which is expected to open.
31 January 2022	Deadline for the completion of the consultation on proposed admission arrangements.
28 February 2022	Deadline for admission arrangements to be determined even if they have not changed from the previous year and a consultation has not been required.
28 February 2022	After which the Secretary of State may impose a co-ordinated scheme if local agreement has not been secured by this date.
15 March 2022	Deadline for admission authorities to send a copy of their full determined admission arrangements to their local authority and publish those arrangements on the schools website or on their website (in the case of a local authority).
15 March 2022	Deadline for local authorities to publish on their website the proposed admission arrangements for any new school or Academy which is intended to open within the determination year, details of where the determined arrangements for all schools, including Academies, can be viewed, and information on how to refer objections to the Schools Adjudicator.
15 May 2022	Deadline for objections to the Schools Adjudicator.
1 August 2022	Deadline for admission authorities to inform the local authority whether they intend to be part of the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme and provide all information to the local authority that the local authority is required to publish on its website in relation to how in-year applications can be made from September onwards.
8 August 2022	Deadline for governing bodies to provide admission arrangements information to the local authority to allow them to compile composite prospectus.
31 August 2022	Deadline for local authorities to publish on their website details about how in-year applications can be made and how they will be dealt with from the September onwards for all schools in their area. Governing bodies must also publish information about in-year applications by the same date.

Offer Year (2022/23)

Date	Relevance
12 September 2022	Deadline for local authorities to publish composite prospectus.
31 October 2022	National closing date for secondary school applications.
31 October 2022	Deadline for local authorities to report to the Schools Adjudicator on admission arrangements in their area.
15 January 2023	National closing date for primary school applications.
28 February 2023	Deadline for admission authorities to publish their appeals timetable on their website.
1 March 2023	National offer day for secondary school places.
16 April 2023	National offer day for primary school places.

Appeals

The timescales within which admission authorities **must** ensure that appeals are heard are detailed in Section 2 of the School Admission Appeals Code. For example, for applications made in the normal admissions round, appeals **must** be heard within 40 days of the deadline for lodging appeals.

Admission Year (2023/24)

Date	Relevance
September 2023	New intake starts at school.

Glossary

Academic Year

A period commencing with 1 August and ending with the next 31 July, as defined by Section 88M of the SSFA 1998.

Admission Authority

The body responsible for setting and applying a school's admission arrangements. For community or voluntary controlled schools, this body is the local authority unless it has agreed to delegate responsibility to the governing body. For foundation or voluntary aided schools, this body is the governing body of the school. For Academies, this body is the Academy Trust.

Admission Arrangements

The overall procedure, practices and oversubscription criteria used in deciding the allocation of school places including any device or means used to determine whether a school place is to be offered.

Admission Number (or Published Admission Number – (PAN))

The number of school places that the admission authority must offer in each relevant age group of a school for which it is the admission authority. Admission numbers are part of a school's admission arrangements.

Banding

A system of oversubscription criteria in which all children applying for a place at a banding school are placed into ability bands based on their performance in a test or other assessment. Places are then allocated so that the school's intake either reflects the ability profile of those children applying to the school, those children applying to a group of schools banding jointly, the local authority ability profile or the national ability profile.

Catchment Area

A geographical area, from which children may be afforded priority for admission to a particular school. A catchment area is part of a school's admission arrangements and must therefore be consulted upon, determined, and published in the same way as other admission arrangements.

Common Application Form (CAF)

The form parents complete, listing their preferred choices of schools, and then submit to local authorities when applying for a school place for their child as part of the local co-ordination scheme, during the normal admissions round. Parents must be allowed to express a preference for a minimum of three schools on the relevant common application form as determined by their local authority. Local authorities may allow parents to express a higher number of preferences if they wish.

Composite prospectus

The prospectus that a local authority is required to publish by 12 September in the offer year. This prospectus must include detailed admission arrangements of all maintained schools and academies in the area (including admission numbers and catchment areas).

Conditionality

Oversubscription criterion that stipulates conditions which affect the priority given to an application, for example taking account of other preferences or giving priority to families who include in their other preferences a particular type of school (e.g. where other schools are of the same religious denomination). Conditionality is prohibited by this Code.

Co-ordination / Co-ordinated Scheme

The process by which local authorities co-ordinate the distribution of offers of places for schools in their area. All local authorities are required to co-ordinate the normal admissions round and late applications for primary and secondary schools in their area. There is no requirement for local authorities to co-ordinate in-year admissions, but they can offer to do so if they wish. Own admission authority schools can take in-year applications directly from parents, provided they notify their local authority of each application and its outcome.

Determined Admission Arrangements

Admission arrangements that have been formally agreed by the admission authority, for example, agreed at a meeting of the admission authority and the decision recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Determination Year

The school year immediately preceding the offer year. This is the school year in which admission authorities determine their admission arrangements.

Education, Health and Care Plan

An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the local authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education, health and social care provision required for that child.

First Preference First

Oversubscription criterion that giving priority to children according to the order of other schools named as a preference by their parents, or only considering applications stated as a first preference. The First Preference First oversubscription criterion is prohibited by this Code.

Governing Bodies

School governing bodies are bodies corporate responsible for conducting schools with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. Governing bodies have three key roles: setting strategic direction, ensuring accountability, and monitoring and evaluation.

Grammar Schools (designated)

These were the 163 schools that were designated under Section 104(5) of the SSFA 1998 as grammar schools. A 'grammar school' is defined by Section 104(2) of that Act as a school which selects all (or substantially all) of its pupils on the basis of general (i.e. academic) ability. At the time of publication, most grammar schools have converted to Academy status.

Home Local Authority

A child's home local authority is the local authority in whose area the child resides.

Infant Class Size Exceptions

The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 permit children to be admitted as exceptions to the infant class size limit. These are set out in paragraph 2.15.

Infant Class Size Limit

Section 1 of the SSFA 1998 limits the size of an infant class (i.e. a class in which the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven during the school year) to 30 pupils per school teacher.

In-year application

An application is an in-year application if it is for the admission of a child to a relevant age group and it is submitted on or after the first day of the first school term of the admission year; or it is for the admission of a child to an age group other than a relevant age group.

Late application

Late applications are applications for entry in a relevant age group which are submitted before the first day of the first term in the admission year but have not been made in time to enable the local authority to offer a place on National Offer Day.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

An independent, impartial, and free service that investigates complaints about maladministration of certain public bodies.

Looked After Children (see also Previously Looked After Children)

Children who are in the care of local authorities as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. In relation to school admissions legislation a 'looked after child' is a child in public care at the time of application to a school.

Maintaining Local Authority

The area in which a school is located is referred to as the maintaining local authority.

National Offer Day

The day each year on which local authorities are required to send the offer of a school place to all parents in their area. Secondary National Offer Day is 1 March (or the next working day). Primary National Offer Day is 16 April (or the next working day).

Nodal Point

A fixed geographical point, other than the location of the school, from which children may be afforded priority for admission to a particular school, based on the distance from the child's home to the nodal point. A nodal point is part of a school's admission arrangements and must therefore be consulted upon, determined, and published in the same way as other admission arrangements. The selection of such a point must be clearly explained and made on reasonable grounds.

Normal Admissions Round

The period during which parents are invited to express a minimum of three preferences for a place at any state-funded school, in rank order on the common application form provided by their home local authority. This period usually follows publication of the local authority composite prospectus on 12 September, with the deadlines for parental applications of 31 October (for secondary places) and 15 January (for primary places), and subsequent offers made to parents on National Offer Day as defined above.

Offer Year

The school year immediately preceding the school year in which pupils are to be admitted to schools under the admission arrangements in question. This is the school year in which the offers of school places are communicated.

Oversubscription

Where a school has a higher number of applicants than the school's published admission number.

Oversubscription Criteria

This refers to the published criteria that an admission authority applies when a school has more applications than places available in order to decide which children will be allocated a place.

Previously Looked After Children

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).

Reception Class

Defined by Section 142 of the SSFA 1998 as a class in which education is provided which is suitable for children aged five and any children who are under or over five years old whom it is expedient to educate with pupils of that age.

Relevant Accommodation

The term 'relevant accommodation' is used in relation to the proposed local authority duty to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children. For the purposes of this Code 'relevant accommodation' is a safe place to stay for victims and their children fleeing domestic abuse. This can include, but is not limited to, refuges, specialist safe accommodation, sanctuary schemes and second stage accommodation.

Relevant Age Group

The age group to which children are normally admitted. Each relevant age group must have admission arrangements, including an admission number. Some schools (for example schools with sixth forms which admit children into the sixth form) may have more than one relevant age group.

Relevant Area

The area for a school (determined by its local authority and then reviewed every two years) within which the admission authority for that school must consult all other prescribed schools on its admission arrangements.

Schools Adjudicator

A statutory office-holder who is appointed by the Secretary of State for Education but is independent. The Schools Adjudicator decides on objections to determined admission arrangements of all state-funded schools and variations of determined admission arrangements for maintained schools. The Schools Adjudicator also deals with referrals of directions by local authorities to maintained schools to admit a child and provides advice on requests to the Secretary of State by local authorities to direct academies to admit children.

School Year

The period beginning with the first school term to begin after July and ending with the beginning of the first such term to begin after the following July, as defined by Section 579 of the Education Act 1996.

Twice Excluded Pupils

A child who has been permanently excluded from two or more schools.

Waiting Lists

A list of children held and maintained by the admission authority when the school has allocated all of its places, on which children are ranked in priority order against the school's published oversubscription criteria.

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05/21

Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager.
Date of Meeting:	7 October 2021

COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the contents of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee's Workplan.

2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To approve the Committee Workplan, taking into account any suggestions for amendment or addition.

2.2 To monitor the implementation of the Committee's recommendations/actions.

3.0 Reasons for recommendations:

3.1 To ensure the Workplan is up to date and is an accurate representation of the Committee's work.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council Priority:

5.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background Information

6.1. Scrutiny Workplan

A Scrutiny Workplanning Workshop was held on Monday 7 June 2021 to consider items for inclusion on the Committee's workplan for the 2020/2021 municipal year. The workplan is a flexible document that sets out the work that will be undertaken by the Committee over the course of the year, both through scrutiny review and Committee meetings. Attached at Appendix 13(a) is the Committee's Workplan for 2021/2022.

6.2 Committee Members are invited to suggest topics at any time that might be suitable for scrutiny review through completion of the Scrutiny Review Checklist. The checklist forms part of the mandatory scrutiny procedure for establishing review panels and must therefore be completed and submitted for consideration by the Committee, prior to a topic being approved for scrutiny.

6.3 The next topic for scrutiny review has been agreed as **Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools** which will aim to review the provisions within schools to support the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, with an identified link to SEND target of: *'Children and young people with SEND to enjoy good physical and mental health and wellbeing emotional health.'*

A working group will be established following the Committee meeting and a scoping meeting scheduled for October 2021.

6.4 Special Committee Meeting

As previously agreed, a special meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee is to be arranged in order to invite young people from JustUz to present the Corporate Parent Panel's Annual Report, as well as to receive an update on the work of Headstart and a presentation on Blackpool Families Rock. The meeting was originally delayed due to restrictions around meeting in person, but it is now proposed that the special meeting be scheduled to take place in January 2022 at a date to be confirmed.

6.5 Implementation of Recommendations/Actions

The table attached at Appendix 13(b) has been developed to assist the Committee in effectively ensuring that the recommendations made by the Committee are acted upon. The table will be regularly updated and submitted to each Committee meeting.

Members are requested to consider the updates provided in the table and ask follow up questions as appropriate to ensure that all recommendations are implemented.

6.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 13(a): Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee Workplan.
Appendix 13(b): Implementation of Recommendations/Actions.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

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Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee - Work Plan 2021/2022	
Special Meeting TBC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Headstart Update – To receive an update on the work of Headstart. 2. Blackpool Families Rock - To receive a presentation on the Blackpool Families Rock working model. 3. Corporate Parent Panel Annual Report – To receive the Corporate Parent Panel Annual Report and information from JustUz.
9 December 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children's Social Care Improvement - To receive an update in relation to the Council's approach to tackling domestic abuse. 2. Mental Health and Wellbeing of Young People - To receive information on provisions to support young people's mental health and wellbeing. 3. Educational Diversity – To receive an update report on the impact of the counselling service introduced at Educational Diversity in November 2020. 4. SEND Provision – To receive detailed plans of any proposals for SEND provision at the Oracle building. 5. SEND Strategy – To consider the final version of the SEND Strategy. 6. Better Start Scrutiny Review – Update on recommendations.
27 January 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to the YOT Improvement Plan. 2. Children's Social Care Improvement – To receive specific data around the support given to young people turning 18 and the number of vulnerable young people accessing services. 3. Education/SEND – To receive information on the impact of the pandemic on early language and speech development. 4. Children Born Into Care – To receive an update on the ongoing work looking at children born into care. 5. Young Inspectors – To receive an update on the work of the Young Inspectors.
24 March 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to the YOT Improvement Plan. 2. Children's Social Care Improvement – To receive the findings of the Department for Education Care Review launched in January 2021. 3. Education/SEND – To receive an update in relation to the education priority area of 'Inclusion'. 4. CSAP Annual Report – To receive the annual report from CSAP. 5. Schools Response to the Pandemic Scrutiny Review – Recommendation monitoring and the impact of the pandemic on pupil attainment.

Scrutiny Review Work	
February 2021	Input into the development of the SEND Vision and Strategy. The final version of the Strategy is anticipated to be ready for Committee consideration in October 2021.
Completed May 2021	Blackpool Better Start Following Committee approval, the final report from the review was approved by the Executive in July 2021. A progress update will be provided to the Committee in December 2022.
October 2021	Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools To review the provisions within schools to support the mental health and wellbeing of pupils. Potential link to SEND target of: <i>'Children and young people with SEND to enjoy good physical and mental health and wellbeing emotional health.'</i>

TBC	<p>Young People classed as Not In Employment, Education or Training (NEET) To consider this cross-cutting issue which disproportionately affects vulnerable young people. To include the potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on training/employment opportunities for young people, as well as considering the breadth of the offer in Blackpool and whether young people are adequately directed to available opportunities.</p>
TBC	<p>SEND Funding and Capacity Cabinet Member referral.</p>
TBC	<p>The Experience of Looked After Children in Blackpool To gain an understanding of the journey of a cohort of Our Children including scrutiny of their experiences with various partners such as the Police, Health Services and schools. To potentially also include their experiences of Alternative Provision. Links to the following themes taken from the CSC Improvement Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Improve the systems and quality of Agency Decision Maker's processes for approval and matching of foster carers and adopters.</i> <i>2. Ensure that our social workers are prepared for court proceedings.</i>

MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
1	09.01.20	To receive the findings of the National Association of Children's Services examining the costs of residential placements for children and the impact on Local Authorities.	March 2022	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services	This work was never completed by DfE due to Covid-19 and will now be built into a care review launched by DfE in January 2021, with an expected 12 month timescale. Outcomes of care review anticipated by March 2022.	Not yet due.
2	09.01.20	To receive results of YOT re-inspection once completed.	October 2021	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services	To be considered at the 7 October Committee meeting.	
3	09.01.20	To receive the findings of the Department for Education impact study on out of area placements.	March 2022	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services	This work was never completed by DfE due to Covid-19 and will now be built into a care review launched by DfE in January 2021, with an expected 12 month timescale. Outcomes of care review anticipated by March 2022.	Not yet due.
4	09.01.20	To receive a presentation on the Blackpool Families Rock model of working.	TBC	Kara Haskayne, Head of Safeguarding and Principal Social Worker	To be presented at the Special meeting of the Committee, date as yet to be confirmed but anticipated for November 2021.	Not yet due.
5	10.09.20	To seek further information from the Director of Community and Environmental Services on the work underway to review ways to increase youth service provisions across the town.	October 2021	John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services	Lead officers to attend the 7 October CYP Scrutiny Committee meeting to discuss the scope of the review and the proposed approach that will be taken with regards to consultation and mapping work in order to enable the Committee to feed into the process.	
6	19.11.20	The town-wide Pupil Attitude to Self and School (PASS) survey data be brought to a	October 2021	Paul Turner, Head of School Standards,	To be considered at the 7 October Committee meeting.	

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
		future meeting of the Committee.		Safeguarding and Inclusion		
7	19.11.20	Mr Turner advised that a full time equivalent counsellor, based at Educational Diversity was now available to provide Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to all schools. Mr Turner agreed to report back to the Committee on the impact of the counselling service in twelve months' time.	December 2021	Paul Turner, Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion		Not yet due.
8	28.01.21	That the data relating to the proportion of Our Children who were looked after be reported to a future meeting of the Committee following the outcomes of the working party examining the issue.	TBC	Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Service	Target date to be identified.	
9	22.04.21	To receive regular updates in relation to the concerns raised around children at the cited Secure Training Centre.	Ongoing	Sara McCartan, Head of Adolescent Service		
10	22.04.21	To receive further data on Blackpool's mental health hospital admission rates once available.	TBC	Stephen Ashley, CSAP Independent Scrutineer	Target date to be identified.	
11	22.04.21	That details of further work on the Council's response to domestic abuse be brought to	December 2021	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services		Not yet due.

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
		a future meeting of the Committee.				
12	22.04.21	That further information and initial results from the contextual safeguarding pilot be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.	October 2021	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services	To be considered at the 7 October Committee meeting.	
13	22.04.21	That more specific data around the support given to young people turning 18 and the number of vulnerable young people accessing services be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.	February 2022	Victoria Gent, Director of Children's Services		Not yet due.
14	24.06.21	To request that Mr Turner present the full detailed plans of the SEND provision proposals at the Oracle once available.	December 2021	Paul Turner, Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion		Not yet due.
15	24.06.21	To request that Ms Richards provide further details of the Resilient Therapy approach to Committee members following the meeting		Jeanette Richards, Assistant Director of Children's Services	Circulated to Committee members 12/07/21	Completed
16	24.06.21	To request that Mr Turner provide details of the numbers of practitioners who had completed the Brain Story training to Committee		Paul Turner, Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion	Circulated to Committee members 14/07/21	Completed

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
		members following the meeting and that any Councillor interested in completing the online Brain Story training should contact Mr Turner directly to request access.				
17	24.06.21	To receive regular updates on the work of the Young Inspectors with an update to be considered by the Committee at its meeting on 9 December 2021.	Dec 2021	Kirsty Fisher, Engagement Officer		Not yet due.