



NOTICE OF MEETING

EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD

MONDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 4.00 PM

VIRTUAL REMOTE MEETING

Telephone enquiries to Anna Martyn Tel 023 9283 4870

Email: anna.martyn@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Membership

Councillor Suzy Horton (Chair)

Councillor Frank Jonas BEM
Councillor Terry Norton

Councillor Jeanette Smith
Councillor Judith Smyth

Diocesan representative - Church of England

Diocesan representative - Roman Catholic

Teacher Liaison Panel representative

(NB This agenda should be retained for future reference with the minutes of this meeting).

AGENDA

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Declarations of interests**
- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting - 14 October 2020 (Pages 3 - 10)**
- 4 **Portsmouth Education Strategy 2020-2023 - Update on progress in Year 1 (Pages 11 - 22)**

The report originally marked on the agenda to follow was published on 4 February 2021.

- 5 **LA response to the re-opening of schools in the Autumn term and the**

subsequent lockdown at the start of the Spring term (Pages 23 - 30)

6 Support and challenge for LA Maintained Schools (Pages 31 - 36)

The report originally marked on the agenda to follow was published on 4 February 2021.

Agenda Item 3

EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Education Advisory Board held virtually on Wednesday, 14 October 2020 at 4.00 pm.

Present

Councillor Suzy Horton (in the Chair)

Councillors Frank Jonas BEM
 Terry Norton
 Jeanette Smith
 Judith Smyth

Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director, Education, PCC

Debbie Anderson, Head of School Improvement & Early Years, Education, PCC

Fiona Calderbank and Steve Labeledz, Joint Chairs of the Portsmouth Education Partnership (PEP) Strategic Board

28. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Rob Sanders and Helen Reeder. Sarah Christopher (Portsmouth Education Partnership & Inclusion Manager) and Alison Jeffery (Director of Children, Families and Education) would join the meeting later as they had another commitment.

29. Declarations of interests

Councillor Horton declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as she is a governor at Craneswater Junior School. Councillor Norton declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as he is employed at Mayfield School through a cover agency, his partner is employed at Mayfield School and his daughter attends it. Councillor Smith declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as she works for Hampshire branch Unison and represents support staff in Hampshire schools. Debbie Anderson works as an Ofsted inspector but not in Portsmouth schools.

30. Minutes of previous meeting held on 15 July 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2020 be confirmed and signed by the chair as a correct record.

31. School improvement

Debbie Anderson, Head of School Improvement & Early Years, presented the report and highlighted the main points. As there were no statutory assessments/tests/exams in the previous academic year due to Covid-19 there were no performance data dashboards to help support the prioritisation of school improvement support for maintained schools. Therefore, schools

need clear and transparent criteria so they can see how support is prioritised. Criteria included the imminence of Ofsted inspections and new school leadership. Previous performance information and consistent trends could be considered; for example, a three-year downward trend, or anomalies where schools perform well in some areas but not in others. Ms Anderson will be reviewing the school improvement plans of maintained schools and will be looking to secure school improvement support from external sources that can benefit all schools in the city. An example of this is the opportunity to secure funding via the Hastings Opportunity Area and a potential twinning project focusing on literacy.

Ms Anderson confirmed that the PEP School Improvement Board has become the School Leadership and Effectiveness Board which has a focus on school leadership acknowledging that school leadership is key to improving standards in the city.

The Chair suggested that not having the dashboards may be a silver lining as it could be an opportunity to re-assess improvement strategies. The importance of leadership is crucial in setting the tone; a number of previously failing schools have dramatically improved with good leadership.

In response to questions from members, the following points were made.

With regard to effectiveness of school improvement with only Debbie Anderson in post, the Chair noted that the school improvement team had been reduced due to more schools becoming academies. Mr Stoneman said the £55 to £60,000 government funding allocated to school improvement was very little. Ms Anderson was responsible for statutory responsibilities for maintained schools as well as for the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service, Music Service and Early Years. The key was to getting the most from the collective resource available in the city and to capitalise on other opportunities such as the Hastings Opportunity Area twinning project and the potential of the Regional Teaching School Hubs that will be established next year.

With regard to having confidence in accurate results in view of the gaps in learning, officers explained they could not use 2020 results so had to use past trends. Although schools were invited to submit data to support the preparation of school profiles, they were for schools' sole use. When considering performance information the last three years have to be considered. Changes of leadership and the ongoing use of remote learning and the Catch-Up Premium also need to be considered. Fiona Calderbank said grades at her schools were not inflated. She sent the results of two sets of mocks to the Fisher Family Trust and used the algorithm. Schools who inflated grades would only face problems later on. Mr Stoneman assured members the local authority was not "taking the foot off the pedal" in aspiring to provide high quality education, as reflected in the Portsmouth Education Strategy.

The Chair noted it was heartening to hear schools talking about teaching and learning, despite the current Covid-19 crisis.

RESOLVED members of the Education Advisory Board note the school improvement prioritisation and support for 2020-21.

32. Response to Covid-19

Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director, Education, presented the report. Section 3 covered action taken after lockdown and Section 4 showed action taken since the previous meeting. Many of the workstreams established in the summer have been retained and merged into the PEP structures.

The Infection Control and Health & Safety group's stepped up work includes a support package comprising guidance, resources, template letters in the event of local outbreaks or lockdowns, which was sent to schools before term started.

Officers worked with Corporate Communications on the Welcome Back to School campaign. The Miss School Miss Out campaign was put on hold until after the autumn half-term. Attendance figures are better than expected with the majority of schools having over 95% attendance. 280 children have not returned to school, half of whom are known to Children's Services and Early Health and have a lead professional. Officers are working with schools via LA Link Co-ordinators to support this work. There is also a focus on elective home education (EHE) and a spike in requests with the aim of avoiding unsuitable EHE which is likely to lead a return to school. All schools are implementing the protocol. Compared with other local authorities in the South East Portsmouth is doing well in reducing the number of children who are inappropriately being home educated. Resources for schools and frontline staff working with families were distributed shortly before the start of term. Tracking and monitoring of vulnerable children not at school continues. Existing staff who were deployed into tracking roles have returned to their regular jobs so three full-time LA Education Link Co-ordinators will be employed with effect from November. Many schools used the Welcome Back templates but are now moving to how to support the remaining children to return to school. A bespoke wellbeing support package was developed from one used in Medway.

There is a weekly communications update to schools every Friday, a weekly PEP bulletin, fortnightly meetings with headteachers and Multi-Academy Trusts (MAT), and half-termly meetings with maintained schools.

Ms Calderbank noted that the gap between the pupil premium and normal attendance has grown four times so it is pupil premium attendance that has been affected and might need investigating.

In response to questions from members, the following points were made.

Mr Stoneman felt Portsmouth was prepared as well as could be for a second wave of Covid-19 or an immediate lockdown. It will be in a much better position as it will have the LA Link Co-ordinators in place and has already done work on digital and home learning, for example, where children have had to self-isolate due to a positive case in schools. Ms Calderbank noted that

by 22 October schools have a legal requirement to provide remote learning that is in line with the curriculum, not previous work.

With regard to schools being able to manage if school staff were waiting for tests or are overloaded with work, some schools had particularly felt the strain and as infection rates rise it will be more challenging. At the moment schools are managing but officers are under no illusions as rates rise.

Ms Calderbank and Mr Ladedz had both removed non-essential duties from teachers at their schools but creaks are starting to show. A school in Gosport has seven supply teachers and there is a five-day wait for test results. Some classes were doubled-up which is permissible as long the children are in a bigger bubble; half-term will be welcome. Mr Ladedz said waiting time for tests had stabilised but across the country generally staff absence is worse in November and February. Fewer schools are using supply teachers because of the risks that presents in terms of transmission of the virus. Portsmouth schools have managed very well so far but it is worrying how they will manage to cope to Christmas. Despite the unpredictable circumstances staff are committed to wanting children to do well. League tables for 2021 will be pointless so the focus is on seeing what children can achieve.

Sarah Christopher and Alison Jeffery joined the meeting at 4.45 pm.

Sarah Christopher, PEP and School Inclusion Manager, described the support available to schools. A pack with links and resources had been sent to all schools. Education is aware of the need to support headteachers. The government Wellbeing for Education Return grant is being used for initiatives such as using former headteachers who know Portsmouth well to provide a safe space for support; educational psychologists are available for ad hoc confidential conversations; training is to be made available to all schools on staff looking after their own wellbeing so they can look after the children.

The Chair requested her thanks to Mike Stoneman, Alison Jeffery and all Education staff to be placed on record. She had heard positive feedback from schools about the return to school.

RESOLVED members of the Education Advisory Board note the actions that have been taken over the past six months by the council and partners to respond to the pandemic and the ongoing work that is in place in order to continue to support education settings.

33. Portsmouth Education Strategy 2020-2023

Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director, Education, introduced the report, noting that the strategy had incorporated much of the work of the last six months and many of the priorities were Covid-19 related. Some consultation has taken place though not as much as was originally planned pre-Covid. The aim is to publish the strategy the following week. It will be delivered under the auspices of the PEP. The merger of the MATs Strategic Forum with the PEP Strategic Board is a welcome development as MATs (there are 11 in Portsmouth) have an important role in sharing their expertise. Mr Stoneman outlined the nine

priorities. Inclusion, Early Years and post-16 will continue to be a central theme running through all the priorities. Key points to note from the nine priorities were as follows:

1. Sue Samson, Chief Executive of the University of Chichester Academy Trust, has agreed to chair the School Leadership and Effectiveness Board. Andrew Olive, former chair of School Improvement Board, will continue to be part of the new Board.
2. A digital learning pioneers' group has been created by building on work done in the summer on remote access. The Thinking Schools Academy Trust has been commissioned to support this work with Natalie Sheppard, TSAT's Director of Education for Portsmouth in the lead. Until now Alison Bradley, a senior HMI seconded to Portsmouth, led a digital and home learning group. Since September officers have refined what schools need for digital learning; they do not want schools to be left behind. The first of a series of webinars was on safeguarding and the dangers of remote learning. Others have covered hybrid and flipped teaching; flipped teaching is where the teacher is at home and the pupils are at school. Secondary schools are more used to digital learning as the students are older and more independent but infant and primary schools might need more support. It was noted that there is a requirement for all schools to have remote learning plans in place by 22 October. Work is also taking place to ensure disadvantaged children have access to devices and the internet, including an initiative with Shaping Portsmouth and employer members.
3. Despite the focus on literacy maths is still important and there have been some successes with maths through the Solent Maths Hub. However, there are still significant issues with literacy and early language and this will be a key priority in 2020/21.
4. Simon Barrable, Principal of Portsmouth College, is chair of the ITT, Teacher Recruitment and Retention Group. Since Covid-19 there has been renewed interest in teaching as a career and most ITT providers are reporting an increase in numbers but work is still needed to attract and retain the best teachers.
5. The Infection Control and Health & Safety Group builds on the work done in the summer. It is chaired by Helen Atkinson, Director of Public Health, and will continue for the foreseeable future.
6. Safeguarding is a new priority following two schools being judged by Ofsted as inadequate due to safeguarding and weaknesses identified in some schools' completion of the Safeguarding and Early Help Compact Audit tool.
7. Sarah Christopher reported that funding has now been secured for a third Mental Health Support Team so that all schools in the city will be supported. Portsmouth may now be one of the few areas in the country with full coverage across schools.

8. There have been some improvements with attendance and reductions in exclusions last year. The attendance campaign Miss School Miss Out is likely to resume after half-term and some elements have returned, for example, penalty notices for holidays taken in term-time. The focus to date has been on welcoming back pupils and tracking and monitoring vulnerable children and young people, supported by the LA Education Link Co-ordinators.
9. There has been a significant expansion of primary school places and now the focus is on expanding secondary school places. The most significant and challenging area of work, however, is meeting the demand for children with complex special educational needs. Education is working on an inclusive strategy of expanding special school places but also supporting mainstream schools to become more inclusive. Meeting the demand has significant revenue funding challenges. The review of SEND and AP (Alternative Provision) accommodation review will be completed in November and will form the basis of a 3-5 year capital strategy for SEND and AP. This has already helped to inform a capital bid to members. .

Ms Calderbank noted the government was saving money on bursaries for new teachers as they realised more people were now interested in teaching; for example, the bursary for some science subjects had reduced from £30,000 to £7,000 and from £15,000 to zero for geography.

In response to questions from members, the following points were made.

With regard to the quality of new teachers and what type of applicants are being sought, the Chair said Teach Portsmouth was definitely having an impact; the first of a series webinars will give the opportunity to meet newly qualified teachers. Communications are designed to reach as many people as possible. She knew people who had become good teachers after other careers; however, members agreed it was important to attract teachers who are sufficiently resilient, not those who have no other plans.

Mr Stoneman said the first monthly Teach Portsmouth e-newsletter was published last week and there will be a teacher recruitment survey after half-term to establish the baseline on recruitment and vacancies. He would be happy to share the results with the Board.

Ms Anderson explained families had been surveyed to see what devices they had, particularly amongst younger children or multiple siblings, which showed where help was needed. Alison Critchley, Education & Business Partnerships Manager, is working with a digital donation scheme where devices are wiped and re-distributed. Ms Calderbank said about 15 Year 11 pupils had no devices but now there is only one as over the summer parents had obtained devices. Her school had purchased Chromebooks for pupils. Mr Stoneman mentioned 1:1 subscription models, which parents pay for but schools can fund some of the costs via the pupil premium. Mr Labeledz said about 15% of 2,000 pupils had no regular access to devices; the position is about three to four times worse in disadvantaged families. As a Trust they provided access by investing funding from other projects but have since switched to a

subscription model where disadvantaged families have a Chromebook for an annual subscription of £10. Schools need to make this level of investment to provide digital access. Members noted it could be difficult for parents to support digital learning where children have different devices in the same household.

Mr Labedz's view, as Co-Chair of PEP, was that retention was a bigger issue than recruitment. Payments after two, four or six years and staff development were more effective than "bribery" for people who were inappropriate as teachers. He acknowledged that existing school staff such as learning support assistants could be encouraged to become teachers and there is much support in place, for example, subject enhancement. Some very good teachers had had other roles in schools. There are several different routes into teaching, including without a degree, but complicated training models can deter people.

The Chair commended the model of training local people who can gain a degree while working; Teach Portsmouth could highlight it specifically.

Sarah Christopher explained that in Portsmouth the Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) sit within CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services) so there is a very clear link between them. The MHSTs are school based so referrals come through schools rather than self-referrals. They are still at an early stage and support is currently allocated according to school size and the free school meal headcount. Officers are working with the Children's Emotional Health & Wellbeing Group to consider a fair and transparent way of allocating resources when there is additional capacity in January. Currently secondary schools have on average at least one day per week of support and smaller schools have a half-day fortnightly. The MHSTs will recruit and support Youth Mental Health Ambassadors, reducing pressure on schools. There will be individual as well as group work based around evidence based interventions like CBT for issues such as anxiety and transitions. The MHSTs will have links with educational psychologists through a partnership group also comprising CAMHS, school nursing and early help.

Mr Stoneman advised that the building work in priority 9 had all been completed; there were slight delays to the Admiral Lord Nelson School work. Councillor Jonas said parents had been very positive and asked for thanks to be passed on to the headteachers of Admiral Lord Nelson and Mayfield Schools.

Members thought the strategy was very comprehensive. Mr Stoneman said that an updated version to be published the following week will include a revised section in the introduction on early years and language. Comments on the strategy, especially on Early Years and post-16 education, can be sent to Mr Stoneman. The final version will be circulated to Board Members.

RESOLVED that the Education Advisory Board endorse the final draft of the Portsmouth Education Strategy 2020 - 2023.

34. Dates of future meetings

Members of the Board noted the dates of the next meetings as follows (location to be confirmed):

- Wednesday 10 February 2021 at 4 pm
- Wednesday 14 July 2021 at 4 pm

The meeting concluded at 5.30 pm.

Councillor Suzy Horton
Chair

Agenda Item 4



THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Education Advisory Board
Subject:	Portsmouth Education Strategy 2020 - 2023: update on progress in Year 1 (from September 2020)
Date of meeting:	8 th February 2021
Report by:	Priority leads and chairs of PEP sub groups
Wards affected:	All

1. Requested by

- 1.1 Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director, Education

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of the report is to provide a summary of the progress that has so far been made in Year 1 in respect of the nine priorities that are contained within the Portsmouth Education Strategy 2020 - 2023.

3. Summary of progress against each of the nine priorities

3.1 Priority 1: strong leadership and ambition at all levels to improve effectiveness and outcomes

- The previous PEP School Improvement Board has been re-purposed as the School Leadership and Effectiveness Board (SLEB), with a revised terms of reference and membership. Membership is largely made up of senior school leaders from both Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) and LA maintained schools. The Board has met on two occasions and half-termly meetings have been scheduled for the remainder of this academic year.
- A key priority of the Board is to drive the effectiveness at individual school level which is critical to the success of this strategy by asking all schools to review the attainment and progress of children against the benchmark of attainment and progress by schools elsewhere in the country which have similar pupil profiles.
- To support this, work has already started by the Head of School Improvement & Early Years working closely with the Chair and Vice-Chair plus some other members of the Board to establish a scoping exercise to gather information on the process that MATs and LA

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

maintained schools use to set targets including family benchmarking tools and how leadership practice translates this into high support and high challenge in order to achieve the aspirational outcomes that we all desire. The aim is that best practice processes can be shared across the PEP and that common principles can be signed up to across the city to ensure both consistency and rigour.

- Aside from target setting, there is an agreed ambition that school leaders across the PEP can work together in smaller groups to add value, support and learn from individual school and MAT practice which evaluate the implementation of school plans and processes.
- In terms of leadership at all levels, middle and subject leaders are being developed through regular network meetings. This is supported by the Portsmouth Teaching School Alliance, the Solent Maths Hub, Portsmouth Music Hub, University of Portsmouth (MFL) and Hampshire LA Advisers (R.E. and History). The PEP & Inclusion Manager has oversight of network leads and is monitoring dates and progress of network meetings.
- To integrate the work of the Inclusion and the School Improvement Services, it has been agreed that SEND should be an agenda item on each of the subject leader network meetings, so that there is an on-going and consistent focus on improving outcomes for pupils with SEND in mainstream schools.
- Obviously, the Covid global pandemic has presented school leaders with certain challenges, not least the need to constantly be reactive and operational rather than strategic. This, along with the cancellation of formal assessments at every key stage in 2020 and 2021 has impacted on the progress of this Priority 1. The aim is to support school leaders by not adding to the pressure that they are under, but to undertake some of this work behind the scenes in order that the agreed and signed-up to consistent processes begin from September 2021

3.2 Priority 2: implement a digital learning strategy

- Never has there been a more urgent need for remote education than during this global pandemic and a third national lockdown, hence the priority around a digital learning strategy for Portsmouth.
- The commissioning of Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT) to work with officers of the local authority has been crucial in ensuring that the best possible education can be provided for children and young people when they need to remain at home as well as developing technological capabilities in our learners and education staff for the future.
- Following the first national lockdown from 23rd March 2020, the quality of practice and provision around remote education has really accelerated. It is true to say that the baseline (June 2020) and report (July 2020) revealed a wide variance across schools in Portsmouth. Notably, this identified a sense of urgency to progress this agenda beginning with a

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

workshop and webinar that were held before the end of the 2019/2020 academic year.

- The partnership working with TSAT has enabled all schools in Portsmouth to access webinars, documentation and support from a Digital Development Officer regardless of age/phase or designation. This has been vital in enabling Portsmouth schools to meet government deadlines:
 - remote education plans in place by the end of September 2020;
 - the Temporary Continuity Direction making it a legal obligation from 22nd October 2020 for schools to be able to move immediately to remote education where pupils have to self-isolate;
 - the requirement to publish remote education information for parents on how schools are meeting DfE expectations on school websites by 25th January 2021.
- Supporting parents of children with SEND to understand these challenges and to enable them to raise the challenges that families face have been facilitated through the Shaping Better Futures Together group and a blogpost on the Portsmouth SEND Local Offer website.
- Schools have been provided with much information related to remote education in the weekly communications from the LA to all school leaders (e.g. government expectations, example documentations, opportunities to access resources, support and guidance). This has enabled them to meet deadlines, respond to the Coronavirus pandemic developments and advance in their remote education capabilities.
- An example of the acceleration of digital education is in prevalence of a whole new range of terminology in this area (remote, blended, synchronous/asynchronous, flipped, hybrid).
- Groups to support the advancement of this Education Strategy include the Digital Drivers (Learning) Group which is driving forward the digital education across the city and oversees the Digital Pioneers and Digital Donation Groups. The work of the Curriculum and Remote Learning Group is currently integrated within each of these, as it is not possible to separate it out at this stage.
- LA maintained schools have submitted remote education plans to the LA to ensure that deadlines and DfE expectations have been met and the Head of School Improvement and Early Years has been instrumental in providing quality assurance and feedback.
- Ofsted remote inspections of schools this term start from 25th January 2021, with a particular focus on how well children and learners are being educated remotely.

3.3

Priority 3: improve outcomes in literacy with a focus on early language development

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

- The PEP **Early** Language and Literacy Group has been set up with a wide ranging membership including schools, colleges and early years settings, Portsmouth University, Portsmouth Teaching School Alliance, LA officers, health, libraries and charity organisations. The first meeting took place on 13th November 2020 and three workstreams have been established:
 - Review and relaunch the Early Years Language 'Plan on a Page'
 - Further develop Reading programmes across the city
 - Enhance literacy skills particularly focusing on transition points
- The pandemic has presented real challenges in moving this priority forward as schools, colleges and settings have had to deal with an ever-changing situation, health and safety requirements, staffing issues and the problems that Covid related illness and self-isolation have presented. This, along with the cancellation of formal assessments at every key stage in 2020 and 2021 has impacted on the progress of Priority 3.
- In spite of this, one significant major initiative has been introduced. A bid of £25,000 was secured through a literacy twinning project with Hastings Opportunity Area. Ten KS2 schools have been fully funded to take part in a project 'Reading for Purpose and Pleasure' undertaking training delivered by the high-performing Hackney Learning Trust on their **Destination Reader** programme. Even with the complications of the second week in the third national lockdown, nine of these schools participated on a whole day online training conference. Principles and resources have been shared and the next training day will cover work explanation on how this pedagogy can be implemented within the classroom.
- Another successful strand which is progressing is the work of '**Pompey Pirates**' through the charity organisation the Literacy Hubs. Their work is focused on closing the gap for disadvantaged pupils. Although hindered by the need to move to virtual sessions, Becca Dean, the project lead, has enabled Yr 6 pupils to publish a book of short stories that they have written, entitled 'The Adventures of Captain Rogers'.
- The **Early Years sector** have faced significant challenges since March 2020 throughout the pandemic, given the way that they are often treated differently to the rest of the education sector. The Head of School Improvement and Early Years has worked with the Early Years team to conduct a first review of the EY Language Plan on a Page. Our EY Advisory Teacher Ella Harbut is now taking a lead on this to ensure that other parties and sectors are involved in the review and agree a final version which is planned to be distributed and publicised widely.
- Some **moderation training events** have been held, particularly for Yr 2 and Yr 6 teachers although in light of the cancellation of KS1 and KS2 SATs, plus the checks for Yr 1 Phonics and Yr 4 Multiplication Tables, training, moderation and monitoring of testing will now need to be revised.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

3.4 Priority 4: Recruit, Retain and Grow the best teachers and Leaders

- The **Teach Portsmouth newsletter** has been published on a monthly basis and now has 295 unique subscribers. The newsletter will be expanding to include a new section on 'Teaching jobs of the month,' promoting vacancies from the PCC jobs portal.
- **Teach Portsmouth continues to adapt campaigns to fit a digital-first approach.** Webinars have become the latest addition to the marketing mix. Our last two webinar have seen over 80 people registered to date across both webinars. A third webinar will focus on retention, in particular CPD and progression opportunities in teaching. The **Teach Portsmouth Awards Live** continues despite a recent date change to 8 July. So far, the Portsmouth community have now nominated over 80 teachers, support teams or leaders in the city for the people's choice award. Nominations are still ongoing
- The **annual teacher recruitment event** is currently on hold due to impact of pandemic and the pressure on schools. A survey aimed at understanding the school requirements will sent out after half term and the ITT RR group will review this at the next meeting.
- The Teach Portsmouth team have been working on a series of **digital events** over the last year. This includes three webinars and a digital awards ceremony. The team are also supporting careers and progression by putting on a series of parents/carers information events. A new hub for webinars has now been introduced on the Teach Portsmouth website. The next webinar: progression on teaching will focus more on a 'retention offer' locally.

3.5 Priority 5: infection control, health and safety 3.2 Priority 2: implement a digital learning strategy

- The key focus has been on collaborative working between schools, education colleagues, public health, and Council health and safety advisors to ensure that schools have received comprehensive step by step guidance on **minimising the risk of transmission in schools** and enabling schools to respond appropriately to possible cases of Covid-19.
- The advice has evolved to respond to the various stages of the pandemic including the initial lockdown, the wider reopening of schools in June 2020, the full reopening of schools in September 2020, and the latest closure to those other than vulnerable children and children of key workers, including frequently asked questions (FAQs) based on the real challenges that head teachers and colleagues in school have faced.
- Since September a focus has been on **local outbreak planning** and ensuring that schools have the support and information that they need to make decisions about who needs to self-isolate, and that this is

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

communicated clearly, calmly and confidently to parents to build confidence in the school communities.

- Since December we have been working with schools on the measured introduction of **regular asymptomatic testing** for pupils and, in some instances, staff. Lateral flow testing of staff has now been introduced for staff in primary and secondary settings. Between January and March 2021 we will be working with Southampton University to introduce weekly saliva testing for pupils and staff in all secondary schools.
- **Vaccinations** are now being offered to a small number of education staff who provide 1:1 support to clinically vulnerable pupils in roles similar to those in health and social care e.g. in special schools.

3.6 Priority 6: safeguarding in education settings

- 37 schools completed the **Portsmouth Safeguarding and Early Help Compact Audit** assessment in 2020 and a further 30 are due to complete them in 2021 (these figures include independent schools). Every school who reported an indicator as requires improvement or inadequate submitted an action plan as to how they aimed to improve this
- Every school in the city (with the exception of 2 independent schools and colleges) now has a **dedicated safeguarding email** (safeguarding@....) to improve the communication between PSCP and schools and to support Project Encompass.
- Support has been offered and taken up by UTC Portsmouth (**currently judged inadequate by Ofsted due to safeguarding concerns**) in their improvement journey. Positive engagement is evident through the Portsmouth Compact to ensure that the school meets the requirements set out by Ofsted. PSCP has delivered Safeguarding training to UTC Trustees and staff have accessed the PSCP Multi-agency safeguarding training and DSL Masterclasses. The new DSL at the UTC has written an improvement plan in line with recommendations.
- Throughout the pandemic regular **safeguarding information** has been made available to schools through briefings and other means. Safeguarding has been prioritised in headteacher briefings to ensure robust arrangements are in place to contact all children who are not at school.
- PSCP has an extensive offer of **training and support** to schools, and attendance has been encouraging. This includes:
 - support for Designated Safeguarding leads (DSLs) through Masterclasses
 - Early Help and Child Protection Training for new DSLs or Deputy DSLs.
 - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) workshops

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

- ThinkuKnow training accredited by Child Exploitation & Online Protection Command (CEOP). This has been completed by seven schools since September 2020
- PSCP are now monitoring **contacts into the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** and have developed masterclass - contacting MASH, in order to improve contacts into MASH
- The **LA Link Co-ordinator** role is now well established with three full-time co-ordinators in post from October 2020. This system ensures all schools are aware of their pupils at risk of harm or in receipt of early help. Schools feedback underlines the value of regular conversations with the LA to unblock any operational barriers to effective joint working to protect children. See also to Priority 8 below.

3.7 Priority 7: emotional health and wellbeing

- **Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs)** are still operational and receiving referrals from schools. They are currently working remotely. The offer is bespoke to each school according to their needs.
- **Group work**, including groups for parents are being developed by MHST and will be rolled out shortly. These will be able to capture a number of families at a time, and would hope to capture some of those on the SPA and extended CAMHS waiting lists.
- The **third MHST**, which will extend coverage to all schools from 2022, has been recruited and started their training in January 2021.
- An additional **behaviour specialist role** has been created and recruited to. They will be able to work with children and young people with more complex needs.
- **Youth mental health ambassadors** were due to be recruited in secondary schools during the Autumn Term 2020, but has been delayed due to COVID restrictions.
- **A digital mental health service, Kooth**, has been commissioned and available since 1st January 2021. The provider is raising awareness with schools, colleges and across the children's workforce through workshops publicity.
- Wellbeing of staff, including our senior leaders, as well as that of pupils, has been a high priority this academic year.
- **Whole staff training** has been delivered in 10 settings with six further schools booked for the Spring Term.
- **Headteachers** have been supported by experienced ex heads through 5 wellbeing sessions, these have been attended by at least 17 different headteachers. Seven further sessions for headteachers have been booked throughout the remainder of the academic year and three session for senior leaders.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

- **School staff** have been offered 3 sessions on their own wellbeing with a further four scheduled. These have been attended "live" by staff from 18 different schools (in some cases as a whole school team) with a further 240 views of the recorded sessions.
- In addition, we have scheduled a series of six **action learning sessions** for 5 headteachers / heads of school in LA maintained who are new to post either this term or last and have offered to part fund coaching for any Portsmouth Headteacher.

3.8 Priority 8: ensure all pupils attend school

- **The Welcome Back to School campaign** was launched in the summer of 2020 to address some of the anxieties being experienced by families about the return to school. This campaign supported the hard work of schools and contributed to overall attendance during the Autumn term of over 90%.
- For pupils (and their families) who required additional support to get them back into school, **Welcome Back Plans** (short term plans of less than 6 weeks) were developed between schools and families. This enabled robust monitoring of progress via weekly reviews.
- **A team of LA Link Co-ordinators** have been deployed since the summer term, working with schools to identify and support those children who were most likely to struggle to return to school successfully in September. 3 permanent LA Link Co-ordinators have been recruited from November 2020 to continue with this work. Over 3,000 children are currently being monitored via a PRAG rating system, via weekly or fortnightly calls.
- **An escalation process** has been put in place to support schools to help parents meet their responsibilities to ensure children attend school or another education setting regularly.
- **Support and challenge** for schools to ensure effective leadership and management of school attendance is in place via termly monitoring of school attendance data by the Behaviour and Attendance Group (BAG), and half termly monitoring of the attendance of vulnerable groups via the Safeguarding and Vulnerable Children group.
- The **#missschoolmissout media campaign** has been paused due to the current restrictions on school attendance and will be revisited next year.
- **The EHE protocol** has been implemented and there has only been a small increase in the numbers of newly registered Electively Home Educated children as a result of the pandemic (24).

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

3.9 Priority 9: school buildings and places

- The building works for the **secondary sufficiency schemes** at: Admiral Lord Nelson School; Charter Academy; The Portsmouth Academy; St. Edmund's School; and Trafalgar School were all completed as planned by September 2020.
- The building works at **Redwood Park Academy and Cliffdale Primary Academy** required for special school places that are needed for Sept 2020 were completed as planned by September 2020.
- The **SEND and AP Accommodation Review** (phase 2) and a strategy which sets out the vision and model for future special school and AP places in the city has been completed. We are awaiting capital bid approval from the council for the programme of works required.
- Working with the ESFA and Delta Education Trust, the programme for the **special free school for autism** is on target for Sept 2022 completion. The planning application was submitted in January 2021.
- A **new location for the Battenburg Family Contact Centre** has been identified and is currently subject to a feasibility study and appraisal of terms and conditions. It is hoped to have this in place February 2021. This development will free up space on the site of **Cliffdale Primary Academy** and work has commenced on a long term plan for Cliffdale accommodation which is subject to capital funding approval.
- The **rebuild of Mayfield School** is currently on course for completion by July 2021.

4. Cross cutting themes

4.1 The Education Strategy also incorporates three cross cutting themes: inclusion, black lives matter and early years. A brief summary of progress against each of these themes is set out below.

4.2 Inclusion

- **Improving educational outcomes for children on SEN Support** - An action plan has been developed, including:
 - monitoring engagement with remote learning,
 - enhancing the CPD offer for schools in collaboration with school improvement and the teaching school,
 - developing a tool for schools to identify SEND CPD needs building on the SEN Support project and the Profile of Needs (see delivery plan for further details).
- **Inclusion Outreach Service** - new, more flexible, model of service delivery is proving successful e.g. more interventions were delivered in the Autumn term than in the whole of the previous year.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

- **Mainstream Inclusion capital grants** - criteria have been developed to implement grants to support schools adapt their buildings to enable greater inclusion of pupils with SEND (subject to capital funding being agreed).
- **Alternative Provision review** - the review of (internal) AP provision in secondary schools was due to take place last year but had to be delayed due to the pandemic. This is now scheduled for the summer term 2021.
- **Portsmouth Inclusive Education Quality Mark (PIEQM)** - 12 schools have now completed this, although pressures on schools due to the pandemic has resulted in some loss of momentum. We are awaiting the availability of the electronic version (delayed due to pressures on the Comms team) which will make completion of this self-assessment by schools easier. Full completion will also enable schools to achieve the Schools of Sanctuary accreditation.
- **Clarity about the continuation of the Turnaround model of working** - at the last SEND Board it was reported that the evaluation of this work had been very positive but that the funding for the project had come to an end and that the 3 staff involved are now part of the Early Help and Prevention Service. Work is now starting to examine how this project could be continued and a report will be going to the Schools Forum later in the year setting out a proposed way forward.

4.3 Black Lives Matter and Anti-Racism

- The principles for this group have been agreed as:
 - Review the learning resources currently available to support the teaching of themes relating to BAME communities, their contributions and experiences, and the teaching of the histories of the UK and the world
 - Share the development, practice and learning of settings, schools and colleges in working toward a more inclusive (decolonised) curriculum
 - Promote longer-term, transformational institutional change
 - Develop professional learning for education leaders and staff to promote and support this work in settings, schools and colleges
 - Establish a supportive network for BAME staff working in education in Portsmouth
 - Provide regular updates on the work of the group and the impact it is having on individuals, education settings and overall outcomes in the city.
- Work is underway on the initial priorities of:
 - Establishing a network for BAME staff working in education settings. This is intended to be a safe and supportive forum led

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

by the membership and linked with the PCC BAME staff group. Headteachers have been asked to make staff aware of this and an initial meeting will take place this term.

- Wider engagement across the city including via councillors to win hearts and minds

4.4 Early Years

- The **Early Years Recover and Reset Group**, with representatives from across the whole of the EY sector in Portsmouth, has continued to meet in order to facilitate discussion, gather views and shape future work.
- EYFS Managers in **school clusters** meet termly to discuss national and local issues and share best practice.
- **Early Adopters Cluster** - newly formed group created to support EYFS leads who are part of the EA programme, trialling the new statutory EYFS and EYFSP.
- Regular updates sent to all EY providers on best practice in home learning offers, linked in to national resources such as Hungry Little Minds and Tiny Happy People.
- **Parents as Partners virtual training** delivered in August 2020 to support practitioners to develop their own home learning environment offer.
- **Early language Plan on a Page sub group** established as part of the PEP Early Language and Literacy Development Group.
- Robust **infection control procedures** in place in early years settings and regular updates given to providers in bulletins. PEP Infection Control Group updates are also shared with providers.
- Early Years is open to all children and we have seen a **significant increase in Covid-19 positive cases** amongst staff and parents and to a lesser extent in children. This has caused many settings to close for a period of self-isolation or close bubbles within their settings.
- **Lateral flow testing** is now being made available to staff in early years settings through the council ahead of community testing which will be made available to all providers in the next few weeks
- Full day care settings which predominantly support working parents are reporting high attendance, but smaller pre-schools and nurseries have very few children attending during this third lockdown. Childminders remain steady and continue to support critical worker and vulnerable school children before and after school.
- The Early Years Service is tracking the number of **vulnerable children** attending each week which informs the weekly DfE data request. Providers also do this on an individual basis and have robust procedures in place if they have serious concerns.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

- **Emotional health and wellbeing** - there was an initial concern that children would struggle to settle back in to settings after long absences due to the first lockdown. Whilst there are some children who have struggled with the disruption over the past few months, the general feedback is that children are very happy to be with their providers and have settled back well after prolonged absences or school holidays.
- **Sufficiency** - over the past few months we have seen four settings close who were no longer able to be financially viable.
- The council were able to give **Covid Grants** to all providers in order to help their sufficiency during the pandemic. £2,700 for Nurseries and £500 for childminders. A further allocation is due to be made later this term subject to available funding with the Early Years Block of the DSG.
- There are concerns about the **loss of private income** during Covid related closures where staff and children have had to self-isolate. This may lead to bigger sufficiency problems over the next few months, and the council will continue to have a regular dialogue with all providers to see how they can be supported.

.....
Signed by Director of Children, Families and Education

Appendices:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

Agenda Item 5



THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Education Advisory Board
Subject:	Response to Covid-19
Date of meeting:	8th February 2021
Report by:	Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director, Education
Wards affected:	All

1. Requested by

- 1.1 Alison Jeffery, Director of Children, Families and Education

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This report sets out details of the work and ongoing work that has, and is continuing to be undertaken, by the council and partners to support education settings in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. It builds on the report that was presented on 14th October 2020 and provides the latest update and the education response to the 3rd national lockdown and the closure of schools to the majority of pupils with the exception of key worker children and vulnerable learners.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 **It is recommended that members of the Education Advisory Board note the actions that have been taken over the past nine months by the council and partners to respond to the pandemic and the ongoing work that is in place in order to continue to support education settings.**

4. The initial response to the pandemic

- 4.1 Following the decision by the government to close education settings from 23rd March 2020 the council worked closely with partners to agree and quickly put into place a response that would support education settings and protect and safeguard vulnerable learners. The initial response is set out below in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.7:

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

- 4.2 A Covid-19 working group was established and chaired by the Deputy Director. This included a broad range of education leaders from schools, colleges, Multi Academy Trusts and early years settings as well as council officers and a representative from the Regional Schools Commissioner office. This group provided an important vehicle to consult on what was needed, agree priorities to focus on and to have oversight of the workstreams that followed and the actions that were being taken by each workstream. This was summarised in an overarching plan which was continually updated.
- 4.3 Six workstreams were quickly established, brief details of which are given below:
- **Infection control and health & safety** - chaired by the Director of Public Health. Weekly updates and guidance on infection control were provided to education settings and basic packages of PPE were delivered to all schools.
 - **Digital learning and home learning** - chaired by the seconded Ofsted HMI. The work supported the delivery of remote access to education and the preparations of a more comprehensive offer for the Autumn term exploiting the advantages of digital technology. A baseline survey was completed during the summer term to support this.
 - **Emotional health and wellbeing** - chaired by the PEP and Inclusion Manager. A range of resources were developed to support schools both in terms of the emotional health of pupils and staff.
 - **Safeguarding and vulnerable learners** - chaired by the Head of Service for Inclusion. Work included the deployment of the LA Link Co-ordinators details of which are given in paragraph 3.6
 - **Transitions pre-school through to key stage 2** - chaired by the Early Years Advisory Teacher.
 - **Transitions key stage 2 through to key stage 5** - chaired by the Post-16 Commissioning Manager. Work included the development of the Flying Start website and resources which supported the transition of Year 11 learners to post-16.
- 4.4 To ensure there were good **communications** between the council and headteachers, weekly virtual meetings were held with headteachers consisting of 3x primary heads (central, north and south), secondary heads and special school heads. Bi-weekly meetings were also held with CEOs of multi academy trusts and also with heads of LA maintained schools. These were chaired by the Director, Children, Families and Education. In addition to meetings a daily email from the Director went out to all school leaders and partners providing key information and resources with links to dedicated pages on the PEP website.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

- 4.5 In addition to the workstreams and above communications, a weekly **'recovery and reset' reference group for early years settings** was established and business sustainability service (Hempsalls) was commissioned to support the market.
- 4.6 An early decision was also made to deploy **LA Link Co-ordinators to every school in the city to support the tracking and monitoring of vulnerable children and young people**, particularly those that were not accessing school, to ensure they and their families were getting the right support. Schools welcomed the opportunity to triangulate their
- 4.7 **LA Link Officers** were deployed to LA maintained schools in order to provide support and sign off health & safety checks, risk assessments and plans for re-opening schools to specific year groups as required by government.

5. Preparing the opening of schools to all year groups

- 5.1 During the summer, the council and partners worked hard to support schools to re-open to all year groups from September. A summary of the response is set out below in paragraphs 5.2 to 5.9.
- 5.2 Whilst the Covid-19 Working Group was stepped down a number of the **workstreams were retained** including: digital learning; infection control; emotional health & wellbeing; and safeguarding & vulnerable learners. These have now been merged into the PEP structures which are shown on page 4 of the new education strategy 2020 - 2023.
- 5.3 The **infection control and health & safety group** stepped up their work to pull together a package of support that included guidance, resources, flowcharts and template letters that schools could send out to parents to cover a range of scenarios where there was a positive case, outbreak, local lockdown, etc.
- 5.4 A **Welcome Back to School campaign** was launched over the summer in order to reassure parents and carers about their children returning to schools and to demonstrate that schools were doing everything that was necessary to make schools safe. The previous school attendance campaign 'Miss School Miss Out' is currently on hold.
- 5.5 Alongside the Welcome Back to School campaign, a **Welcome Back toolkit and resources** for schools was produced and distributed. Similar versions were done for front line practitioners working with families and also a version for partner organisations.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

- 5.6 The arrangements for **tracking and monitoring vulnerable children and young people** were continued but due to the fact services were being stood up again and those redeployed as LA Link Co-ordinators were having to return to their roles, a decision was made to recruit 3 full time Co-ordinators.
- 5.7 To further support vulnerable children and in particular those that might struggle to return to school, a template for **Welcome Back Plans** were distributed which many schools have used during the first few weeks of the Autumn term.
- 5.8 Also distributed ahead of the first week of term was a **Welcome Back to School wellbeing support package for schools** based on a similar package that was developed in Medway.
- 5.9 The arrangements that were in place during the summer term to support **communications** continued into the Autumn term but on a less frequent basis. Briefings for headteachers were held bi-weekly rather than every week and the daily communications were reduced to a weekly message on a Friday. Bi-weekly meetings with MATs continued and briefings for LA maintained schools returned to half termly.

6. Ongoing support during the Autumn term

- 6.1 During the Autumn term the council, working closely with schools, MATs and our partners, continued to focus on supporting **school attendance and support for our vulnerable children**. Attendance remained relatively high but there was significant disruption due to rising numbers of positive cases in schools which led to many pupils having to self-isolate and access remote education.
- 6.2 The council continued to support schools in the **tracking and monitoring of vulnerable children** and we were able to confirm in November the appointment of 3 full time LA Education Link Co-ordinators.
- 6.3 Significant work was done to support **remote education**. Through our contract with the Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT) we have been able to offer dedicated support to all schools including a range of webinars and resources. A key focus has been on developing interactivity between teachers and pupils. This has included live lessons which many schools are operating and regular feedback and communication between the teacher and pupils. Support was also provided to our primary schools to purchase devices and equipment through funding from the local Elementary Education Trust.

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

- 6.4 Support was also given to our school leaders in terms of **emotional health and wellbeing** and included regular sessions being delivered by Joy Squibb and Ian Hunkin, together with an offer of a coach / mentor.
- 6.5 In the absence of any national voucher scheme, and using funds from the Covid-19 Winter Grant scheme, the council established a **food voucher scheme for eligible FSM children**, through a contract with EdenRed. This was successfully delivered.

7. Response to 3rd national lockdown and closure of schools from 4th January 2021

- 7.1 On 4th January 2021 the 3rd national lockdown was announced which included the closure of schools until at least February half-term. Since then the government have announced that schools will not re-open until 8th March 2021 at the earliest, depending on factors including the rate of vaccination amongst priority groups. Children of key workers and vulnerable children will continue to be offered places by schools as far as they are able to and special schools and AP provision are expected to be fully open as all pupils are deemed vulnerable. In the case of the latter and due to staffing capacity issues and health and safety concerns this has not been possible with only a third of pupils currently accessing provision on site. It is hoped that through lateral flow testing and vaccinations for staff the situation will improve. Early Years settings have been required to remain fully open to all children throughout but are facing extreme pressures in meeting this demand due to staffing capacity issues.
- 7.2 The council has continued with many of the arrangements that were put in place last term and which are described in sections 4 and 5 of this report. In addition to this the council has provided a range of other support which are set out below in paragraphs 7.3 to 7.12.
- 7.3 With the majority of pupils now learning from home and the likelihood that this is set to continue for the majority of the Spring term, the focus on remote education has never been more important. TSAT's dedicated support remains in place and all schools were expected to set out for pupils, parents and carers, **information about their remote education provision** on their websites by 25th January 2021. The council has reviewed the plans for all our LA maintained schools, the majority of whom have used the DfE optional template.
- 7.4 **Engagement in remote education** varies between 80 to 95%, but there are now real concerns that engagement will drop as the lockdown continues, affecting disproportionately our most vulnerable learners. The

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

council will be monitoring this on weekly basis and schools will be asked to complete a simple weekly update to support this.

- 7.5 **Access to devices** remains an issue and in addition to the DfE allocations and the local scheme for primary schools that was launched last term, the council has been working with Shaping Portsmouth and partners to establish a digital donation scheme which we hope will provide more devices to schools in the forthcoming weeks.
- 7.6 The council's corporate communications team have produced new social media assets as part of the **Protect Portsmouth / Ready to Learn campaign**. The aim is to help parents with 'top tips' for remote learning, details of which can be found at: www.portsmouth.gov.uk/remoteteaching.
- 7.7 This term has seen a significant focus on **coronavirus testing** providing support to secondary and special schools in early January in terms of **lateral flow testing**, which was extended to primary schools. Support was brokered for The Harbour School through the University of Portsmouth to help train staff and establish the testing bays.
- 7.8 An important development has been the introduction of **weekly saliva testing** in our schools as part of a programme across the sub region and led by the University of Southampton. 3 secondary schools are participating in the first wave w/c 25th January and a second wave of 4 secondary schools will do so w/c 8th February, with the aim of including all secondary schools and colleges after half term. The saliva testing programme for staff and pupils offers a less intrusive and easier to administer method of testing.
- 7.9 Work is being done to ascertain if **lateral flow testing can be introduced into our early years** settings ahead of the community testing programme which will be established later in February and which will prioritise early years staff.
- 7.10 The council has also supported our schools in terms of **vaccinations** including prioritising staff that work with clinically vulnerable children resulting in the majority of our special school staff getting the vaccination, some staff in mainstream schools, a limited number of PCC Education staff who work directly with CEV children and all of our passenger assistants on home to school transport.
- 7.11 The announcement by the government to provide **food vouchers for FSM pupils** during the lockdown was welcomed but this will not include half term. The council will therefore be covering this through the Covid Winter

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Grant Fund, providing continuity for families who have FSM eligible children.

- 7.12 Through our progression career advisors we have been focussing our work on reducing the proportion of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, training and employment (NEET) including a focus on Year 11s as part of our Youth NEET Prevention Programme work. This has included building on last year's successful Flying Start website which this year will be supported by a range of webinars for parents and carers to support progression to post-16 education.

.....
Signed by Alison Jeffery, Director of Children, Families & Education

Appendices:**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 6



THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Education Advisory Board
Subject:	Support and challenge for LA Maintained Schools
Date of meeting:	Monday 8 th February 2021
Report by:	Debbie Anderson, Head of School Improvement and Early Years
Wards affected:	All

1. Requested by Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director - Education

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This report sets out how LA Maintained schools have been provided with support and challenge by the council's school improvement service in this academic year to date. This therefore covers the period that saw the full re-opening of schools in the Autumn term and the disruption that was caused during that term due to positive cases and pupils and staff having to self-isolate; and more recently the third national lockdown announced on 4th January 2021 which led to the closure of schools to pupils apart from children of critical workers and vulnerable learners.

3. Summary of the support and challenge to LA maintained schools

- 3.1 Support and challenge for LA Maintained schools has built upon the report of 14th October 2020, which recommended the school improvement prioritisation and support for 2020-2021, delivered by the Head of School Improvement and Early Years.
- 3.2 A key focus of our work in this academic year has been the support and challenge that has been provided to the two LA Maintained schools which currently have less than Good Ofsted judgements for Overall Effectiveness and as a result have received frequent contact from the Head of School Improvement and Early Years. This has been in the form of regular emails, telephone calls, virtual meetings and in-school risk-assessed visits. These two schools have been prioritised for additional support from LA commissioned external consultants, National Leaders of Education, subject specialists (Solent Maths Hub, PCC Lead Moderator, Early Years Advisory teacher). Specifically:

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

- a) Both schools have been included in the fully funded Destination Reader Key Stage 2 'Reading for Purpose and Pleasure' project, with two full days of training from Hackney Learning Trust. This was a result of a successful bid to Hastings Local Authority in an Opportunity Area twinning initiative.
 - b) Corpus Christi Catholic Primary and Milton Park Primary both received Ofsted monitoring visits during the Autumn 2020. The head teachers were provided with support in the form of questions and themes that had arisen from other schools' Ofsted experiences earlier in the term. Regular Ofsted updates have been disseminated to the two respective head teachers with opportunities for discussion on action points and evidence of improvement.
 - c) Subsequently, Corpus Christi Catholic Primary received an Ofsted monitoring visit on 27th and 28th January 2021, conducted remotely by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The Head of School Improvement and Early Years supported the head teacher prior to the inspection through a scrutiny of the school's documentation and rehearsal of potential inspection discussions. The official report will be published in due course.
- 3.3 In September 2020 the local authority was successful in securing school to school support for two LA Maintained schools (Corpus Christi and Mayfield). This comprised five days of National Leader of Education (NLE) work for each school through a 'Recovering from Covid' DfE funded opportunity.
- 3.4 Prioritised LA Maintained schools have been able to access external support from educational consultants where they already have pre-established relationships, particularly where face to face work from the summer term 2020 had been cancelled. The Head of School Improvement and Early Years has commissioned this work as it provides support and challenge in areas of school improvement such as quality assuring teaching and learning, co-production and review of school strategic documents, support with monitoring and evaluation and curriculum development.
- 3.5 Other LA Maintained schools have had proportionate contact with the Head of School Improvement and Early Years to discuss current and future priorities, strategic plans, challenges and opportunities to agree support and development. This has included a number of face to face risk-assessed school visits during the autumn term, especially for two new head teachers in the city where they are implementing rapid change, despite the implications of Covid-19.
- 3.6 The local authority brokers additional support from local partners, for example, prioritised LA Maintained schools have had commissioned work undertaken by our local Lead Moderator and the Assistant Solent Maths Hub Lead for Primary. With specific subject specialist knowledge in English and maths respectively, both have undertaken work scrutiny of pupils' books, supported teachers and

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

leaders to make accurately assessed judgements, then challenged to plan next steps in learning which will drive improved pupil progress.

- 3.7 During the autumn term 2020 LA maintained schools submitted strategic plans for school improvement and remote education. These have been reviewed and specific feedback given to our highest prioritised schools. Challenge has occurred through the need to be more specific about success criteria, how impact of actions will be measured and a stronger focus on outcomes. More recently, school plans which provide information for parents about remote education provision have been scrutinised with highly individualised advice and guidance for LA Maintained schools. Where DfE expectations have not been demonstrated in these school plans, leaders have been challenged to review, amend or reframe them.
- 3.8 Work in the summer identified a huge variance in the capability and resources around remote education in schools across the city. LA Maintained schools have been supported through the digital strategy work and the contract that the local authority has with the Thinking Schools Academy Trust, including access to a digital development officer. There has been significant continuing professional development for staff and school leaders in all phases as well as support for accessibility in the support to ensure that more children and young people have access to appropriate digital devices (refer to the update on Year 1 of the Portsmouth Education Strategy priority 2)
- 3.9 Following a successful bid to Hastings Local Authority (see 3.2a above), ten Key Stage 2 LA Maintained schools have been fully funded to participate in the Hackney Learning Trust Destination Reader programme. Schools were selected on the basis of expressed interest, previous Key Stage 2 attainment and progress results in 2019 and current Ofsted grading. Despite the third national lockdown school leaders, lead teachers and class teachers from each of the ten schools have attend two full days of remote training and have access to a wealth of very detailed resources. Feedback from the schools was highly positive and although the problem of implementation to pupils both in-school and at home is obvious, it is clear that schools are keen to get underway in this 'Reading for Purpose and Pleasure' project. Staff and pupil baseline questionnaires which are to be revisited will enable impact to be measured in the absence of national assessments this summer.
- 3.10 Half-termly briefings for LA Maintained schools have included a presentation on PiXL (Partners in Excellence), an organisation born out of the school improvement programme, London Challenge in 2004. It is a network of over 3,000 schools which focus on raising standards and self-esteem, improving life chances and broadening progression routes for all. Whilst there is an element of rigorous assessment, it also includes an extensive range of up to date resources, conferences and advisory support. The philosophy and approaches

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

of PiXL align with the Portsmouth Education Strategy priority 1 and the work of the PEP School Leadership and Effectiveness Board.

- 3.11 Following the cancellation of the 2021 primary national curriculum assessments (key stage 1, key stage 2, year 1 phonics screening check and year 4 multiplication tables check), the moderation and assessment training and activities that had been planned have been re-purposed to ensure that schools are further supported in making accurate assessment judgements, particularly for year 2 and year 6 teachers. Trained moderators will use new assessment guidance to support schools and offer non-statutory moderation visits in June. This will be supplemented with crucial transition training for year 2 and year 3 teachers, and year 6 and year 7 teachers.
- 3.12 LA Maintained school head teachers new to post are supported through a local authority Induction Briefing and by being assigned a local peer colleague head teacher as a buddy/mentor. This is supporting those new to headship and more experienced school leaders who are new to their schools and the local authority. Those head teachers who are new to headship have also been supported through the set up of a small network group, with specific coaching sessions from an experienced coach to enable open and honest dialogue, peer support and a sharing of experiences as they develop through this academic year.
- 3.13 Undoubtedly, the Coronavirus global pandemic has presented all school leaders with enormous challenges. LA Maintained school leaders along with those in multi academy trusts have benefited from wellbeing sessions facilitated by the local authority, weekly communications and the swift response of officers to their needs and requests in these unprecedented times. It has been vital that we reinforce open lines of communication with LA Maintained schools to ensure that they are supported to deliver the very best education for our children and young people. Invitation and specific involvement in groups and boards of the Portsmouth Education Partnership during the pandemic has re-established the supportive and collective moral purpose of LA maintained schools in the diverse education landscape across the city.

.....
Signed by Director of Children, Families and Education

Appendices:

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

This page is intentionally left blank