



Children, Young People & Education Committee

Date:	Thursday, 28 January 2021
Time:	6.00 p.m.
Venue:	Virtual meeting

Contact Officer: Victoria Simpson
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AGENDA

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION
2. APOLOGIES
3. MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATION OF INTERESTS
4. MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS COMMITTEE (Pages 1 - 10)
5. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

5A - PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Notice for public questions must be put in writing to the Monitoring Officer no later than midday three working days before the meeting (Monday 25 January) and should be sent to committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk

5B - STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS

A member of the public may speak on up to two non-procedural items on any Agenda if notice has been given no later than midday **3 working days before the start of the meeting (Monday 25 January)**. No speech should exceed **three minutes**. Please give notice to committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk

For petitions please give notice in advance of the meeting to committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk

5C - QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

SECTION A - KEY AND OTHER DECISIONS

- 6. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND THE CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEMES FOR 2022-2023 (Pages 11 - 50)**
- 7. SECTION B - BUDGET REPORTS**
- 8. BUDGET CONSULTATION (Pages 51 - 58)**
- 9. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING (Pages 59 - 64)**

SECTION C - PERFORMANCE REPORTS

SECTION D - REVIEWS/ REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

- 10. UPDATE ON SEND IMPROVEMENT PLAN (Pages 65 - 88)**
- 11. WIRRAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 89 - 94)**
- 12. CHILD POVERTY NOTICE OF MOTION (Pages 95 - 98)**
- 13. WORKING GROUP UPDATE: THE PROVISION OF FOOD & ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN IN SCHOOL HOLIDAYS DURING THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC (Pages 99 - 104)**
- 14. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 105 - 112)**

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 1 December 2020

Present: Councillor W Clements (Chair)

Councillors	K Cannon	J Robinson
	C Carubia	S Spoor
	AER Jones (In place of T Usher)	P Stuart
	M McLaughlin	A Wright
	Cherry Povall	

10 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed Members of the Children's, Young People and Education Committee, Officers and viewing members of the public to the online, virtual meeting.

11 APOLOGIES

A roll call of Councillors was undertaken by the Head of Legal Services. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tom Usher. Councillor Adrian Jones present as substitute.

12 MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on the agenda and, if so, declare and state what they were.

The following declarations were made.

Councillor Sarah Spoor	Personal interest by virtue of her parent representative on PCPW, a parent support group and her employment in a Liverpool City Region school.
Councillor Alison Wright	Personal interest by virtue of her membership of St Bridget's Educational Trust.
Councillor Chris Carubia	Personal interest by virtue of his position as Chair of Governors of a Primary School.
Councillor Wendy Clements	Personal interest by virtue of her involvement in Early Learning.
Councillor Moira McLaughlin	Personal Interest in Item 10, holiday food and activities for school and nursery age children during holidays, by virtue of her role as a Trustee of the Charity 'Feeding Birkenhead'
Councillor Jean Robinson	Personal Interest by virtue of her role in 'Early Years'

Councillor Adrian Jones	Personal Interest by virtue of his role as a School Governor and his daughters employment as a teacher.
Councillor Paul Stuart	Personal interest by virtue of his position as a Wirral Foster Carer.

13 **MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS COMMITTEE**

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2020 be agreed.

14 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

The Head of Legal Services informed the Children, Young People and Education Committee that no public questions, or requests to make a statement had been made.

15 **PROPOSED RECOMMISSIONING OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Julie Webster, Director of Public Health introduced a report of the Director for Children, Families and Education that sought agreement to progress Public Health’s proposed commissioning intentions for 2021-2022 for Public Health services for children and young people. These services supported the delivery of the Healthy Child Programme for 0-19 years.

The proposals in the report linked to the delivery of the Wirral Plan 2025 and the statutory responsibilities of the local authority in respect of public health: services which helped people live happy, healthy, independent and active lives, with public services there to support them when they needed it.

The Director of Public Health apprised Members that all Public Health contracts were subject to on-going evaluation as part of a clearly defined commissioning cycle, which is designed to maximise return on investment and improve outcomes. This methodology ensured that Public Health services (and contracts) were consistently and routinely tested against a range of criteria. Criteria against which contracts are tested include the following:

- Evidence base e.g. academic research, engagement feedback, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Performance of targets e.g. financial and activity based and outcomes against plans and benchmarking information
- Value for money
- National policy and technical guidance e.g. Public Health Outcomes Framework
- Strategic direction e.g. Wirral Plan strategic aspirations (narrowing the gap in life expectancy), delivery of Public Health outcomes through council services

- Legal and contractual frameworks e.g. incorporate national updates to contract templates used for NHS providers.

Members noted that the following services were to be retendered during the 2021/2022 financial year as the current contracts concluded on the 31st August 2021:

- Preventative and Early Intervention Secondary School Based Service for young people (counselling - Action for Children)
- Confidential Young People's Online Counselling and Advice Service (Kooth.com - Xenzone)
- Healthy Child Programme (Health Improvement) for 0 -19 year olds (breastfeeding; healthy weight; substance misuse; sexual health and relationship education for professionals) (Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust)
- Sexual Health Education for young people (Brook)

Members questioned the Director of Public Health on a number of matters within the report, and the Director responded accordingly. Members noted that the proposals would provide an opportunity to reconsider the funding and delivery models, enabling the potential release of cost savings and the refocussing of service delivery. The Director highlighted a correction in recommendation one of the report that should have stated a figure of £1,548,858.

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements; and
Seconded by Councillor Moira McLaughlin

and

RESOLVED – That

- (1) **the Director of Public Health be authorised to re-commission contracts totalling £1,548,858 for four Children's Public Health Programmes as detailed in paragraph 3.4 of the report, for initial one year contracts (1 September 2021 – 31 August 2022) with an annual value of £774,429 with the option of a one year extension for each; and**
- (2) **the short-term contract period proposed to enable a more collaborative and joint commissioning approach to be developed across the system be noted.**

16 SEND STRATEGY

Paul Boyce, Director for Children, Families and Education introduced his report that set out the Local Area Strategy for improving outcomes and life chances for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Appendix 1 to the report contained the SEND Strategy and Appendix 2 the contained the SEND Improvement Plan. The Director thanked Sue Talbot, Assistant Director: Education for her involvement in the preparation of the report and introduced two key officers who would update Members on the Strategy - Tarun Ghosh, Head of Service SEND and Inclusion at Wirral Council and Richard Crockford, Deputy Director for Quality & Safety Wirral CCG, and lead officer on SEND.

The report informed that for many families, feedback had indicated that the SEND reforms had brought about positive change, but for some the process had been troublesome and not easy to navigate.

The strategy focused on reducing inequality and links to two Council priorities:-

- Brighter futures for young people and families – regardless of their background or where they live
- Services which help people live happy, healthy, independent, and active lifestyles, with public services there to support them when they needed it.

It was reported that considerable consultation had been undertaken to determine the key priorities. Two SEND summits had been held with over 150 stakeholders across the Local Area attending. Feedback had been received from the SEND Youth Voice group, Parent Carer Partnership Wirral, parents, and SEN support young people. Over 250 young SEND people had engaged in the consultation and shaped the four priorities. The main priority was to improve the quality of provision and outcomes for young people with SEND. To do this the focus was on:-

- Identifying needs at the earliest point and providing the appropriate support.
- Ensuring that young people were ready for each stage of their school life and prepared for adulthood.
- Increasing participation and engagement young people and their families. In doing so ensuring that all changes to policy/processes takes account of the views of young people, their parents, and carers as well as professionals.

Members questioned the officers on the content of the report, and the officers responded accordingly.

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements; and
Seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia

and

RESOLVED – That

- (1) the Local Area SEND Strategy be supported; and**
- (2) a copy of the Local Area SEND Improvement plan be circulated to Members following the meeting, with an update on progress to be presented to the January meeting of the Children, Young People and Education Committee.**

17 **SEND - SELF ASSESSMENT**

Paul Boyce, Director for Children, Families and Education introduced his report, taken in conjunction with the previous item, that set out a summary of the Local Area Special Educational Needs / Disabilities (SEND) self-assessment that had been contributed to by representatives from education, health and social care, as well as feedback from young people, parents and carers.

The Director's report informed that the Self Evaluation Framework (SEF) was a document that provides an ongoing evaluation of how successful the Local Area was at meeting the needs of SEND young people as well as the impact of services. Three questions are used to enable the Local Area partners, young people and parent/carers and all stakeholders to objectively reflect impact. The questions were:

- How effectively does each service area identify children and young people who have (SEND)?
- How effectively does each service area assess and meet the needs of children and young people who have SEND?
- How effectively does each service area improve outcomes for children and young people who have SEND?

The SEF summary also linked with the four key priorities from the SEND Strategy 2020-24.

- To improve the quality of provision and outcomes for young people with SEND.

To do this the focus was on:

- Identifying needs at the earliest point and provide the appropriate support.

- Ensure that young people are ready for each stage of their school life and prepared for adulthood.
- Increase participation and engagement young people and their families. In doing so ensure that all changes to policy/processes takes account of the views of young people, their parents, and carers as well as professionals.

Members questioned the Director for Children, Families and Education on the content of his report, and the Director responded accordingly.

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements; and
Seconded by Councillor Kate Cannon

and

RESOLVED - That

- (1) **the SEND SEF Summary be noted; and**
- (2) **regular updates on the progress and impact to date around key priorities be presented to the Children, Young People and Education Committee.**

18 **APPOINTMENT OF CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD MEMBERS**

Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal Services introduced the report of the Director of Law and Governance that apprised the Children, Young People and Education Committee, in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions and the terms of the Constitution, of the requirement to appoint Members to the Corporate Parenting Board of the Council for 2020 / 2021.

The report informed that under its Terms of Reference, the Children, Young People and Education Committee was responsible for the appointment of a Sub-Committee and Working Group of five (5) or more members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee, politically balanced, together with [two] non-voting co-opted young people with recent (within the last five years) direct experience of being looked after by, or receiving services as a care leaver from the Council, with delegated authority to exercise responsibility for the Council's functions relating to the delivery by or on behalf of the Council, of Corporate Parenting functions with the exception of policy decisions which will remain with the Children and Young People's Committee.

The Head of Legal Services apprised Members that the Corporate Parenting Board Membership (5 members) would comprise of political proportionality 2 (Labour):2 (Conservative):1 (Liberal Democrat).

The following nominations were received and agreed:

Labour

Councillor Kate Cannon
Councillor Tom Usher

Conservative

Councillor Wendy Clement
Councillor Anne Wright
Councillor Cherry Povall (Deputy)

Liberal Democrat

Councillor Chris Carubia

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements; and
Seconded by Councillors Jean Robinsons and Chris Carubia,

and

RESOLVED - That

- (1) **the Corporate Parenting Board be confirmed appointed for 2020-21, including the appointment of named deputies; and**
- (2) **the following Members be confirmed to serve on the Corporate Parenting Board in 2020-21, (names of the remaining deputies to be provided to the Head of Legal Services in due course).**

Labour

**Kate Cannon
Tom Usher**

Conservative

**Wendy Clement
Anne Wright
Cherry Povall (Deputy)**

Liberal Democrat

Chris Carubia

19 **HOLIDAY FOOD AND ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOL AND NURSERY AGE CHILDREN DURING HOLIDAYS**

Mark Camborne, Assistant Director Neighbourhood Safety and Transport introduced a report of the Director for Children, Families and Education that provided an update further to the proposal agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee regarding the provision of free school meals (FSM) in school holidays during the COVID-19 pandemic since March. The report also

included next steps to develop a sustainable approach to the provision of FSM and support to eligible children and those on the cusp in the medium and longer term.

The report informed that the Policy & Resources Committee agreed a proposal for a project co-ordinated by local charity Neo Community (Feeding Birkenhead), working in partnership with schools and local community-based feeding groups and organisations, to provide food and activities to children eligible for Free School Meals over the Christmas 2020, February half-term 2021 and Easter 2021 holidays. This built upon learning from the operation of the Edsential Holiday Activity Fund over the summer, providing for adaptation of a successful model of delivery.

As noted at the Policy & Resources Committee and reported by the government after the report had been drafted, the Department for Work & Pensions announced on 8 November 2020 a significant package of extra targeted financial support for those in need over the winter period. This includes:

- £170m COVID Winter Grant Scheme to support children, families and the most vulnerable over winter.
- Holiday Activities and Food programme to be expanded, covering Easter, Summer and Christmas in 2021.
- Healthy Start payments set to rise from £3.10 to £4.25 a week from April 2021.

The report further informed that the Government had also pledged additional funding of £16m for food distribution charities, with conversations with FareShare and others ongoing as to how this is allocated.

Wirral's proposed allocation of the £170m COVID Winter Grant Scheme is £1,224,617; this was for the period 1 December 2020 – 31 March 2021. Through the Humanitarian Cell (Food Sub-Group), partners - agencies, local organisations and groups - have been engaged in the development of proposals for spend of the COVID Winter Grant Scheme. The engagement and additional funding (provided by both the Holiday Activities Fund and COVID Winter Grant) had seen the agreed approach built upon and extended.

Members questioned the Assistant Director Neighbourhood Safety and Transport, and the Assistant Director responded accordingly.

Members discussed nominations for the creation of a Working Group with key partners to explore options in relation to supporting children with food in the medium to longer term.

The following nominations were confirmed:

Labour
Councillor Jean Robinson

Conservative
Councillor Cherry Povall

Liberal Democrat
Councillor Chris Carubia

Independent
Councillor Moira McLaughlin

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements
Seconded by Councillor Moira McLaughlin

and

RESOLVED - That

- (1) **the approach set out supporting school and nursery age children over Christmas 2020 and February half term 2021, be noted;**
- (2) **to the creation of a Working Group, consisting of key partners and nominated Elected Members, to explore options in relation to supporting children with food in the medium to longer term, be agreed. All recommendations to be reported back to the Policy & Resources Committee in the New Year; and**
- (3) **the following Councillors be confirmed to serve on the Working Group.**

Labour
Jean Robinson

Conservative
Cherry Povall

Liberal Democrat
Chris Carubia

Independent
Moira McLaughlin

20 **CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION WORK PROGRAMME**

Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal Services introduced the report of the Director of Law and Governance that informed that the Children, Young People and Education Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the

corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which are within the remit of the Committee.

It was envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. The report provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Children, Young People and Education Committee was attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Members questioned the Head of Legal Services on the report and suggested a number of items for inclusion in the committee work programme that included:

- integrated front door, and a standing item for dashboard information;
and
- information on referral rates.

The Chair informed the committee that Members could feed information through to her and party spokespersons at any time for consideration for inclusion on the work programme.

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements
Seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia

and

RESOLVED - That

- (1) **the Children, Young People and Education Work Programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year be noted; and**
- (2) **any additional suggestions for items for consideration be submitted to the Chair or Committee Spokespersons.**



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, 28 January 2021

REPORT TITLE:	ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND THE CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEMES FOR 2022-2023
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

This report invites the Children, Young People and Education Committee to determine the Authority's admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools and the co-ordinated schemes for 2022-2023. This is a statutory requirement.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Children, Young People and Education Committee agree the proposed admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools and the Wirral co-ordinated schemes for 2022-2023 as set out in the appendices to the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Authority is required to determine admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools. The New School Admissions (England) Regulations (2003) also require the Authority to have in place a co-ordinated scheme for admissions to all primary and secondary schools including Academy schools, in 2022-23. The proposed schemes are attached along with proposed admission numbers for community and controlled schools (Appendices 1 and 2).

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The arrangements could remain unchanged, however, it is recommended that the variations detailed in section 3 are made for the reasons set out in the report.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Coronavirus (COVID-19) amendments to co-ordinated scheme for secondary schools: In August 2020 the co-ordinated scheme was amended in accordance with paragraph 3.6 of the School Admissions Code to take into account Department for Education guidance issued July 2020, "Coronavirus (COVID-19); assessment processes for selective school admissions".

These amendments included expanding the number of preferences from three to five to allow for Wirral parents to submit up to three selective preferences and two non-selective preferences, as the outcome of the selective assessments taking place in October 2020 (as per DfE guidance), would not be known until after 31st October deadline for applications. Where pupils did not reach the standard, the selective preferences would be withdrawn and their non-selective preferences become their highest preferences.

- 3.2 The variations to the secondary Scheme were consulted upon with the four non-Catholic selective schools, all other local schools, neighbouring authorities and the Diocesan bodies under paragraph 1.44 (c), (d) and (f) of the School Admissions Code, and submitted as per the DfE guidance to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA), although the variations proposed did not require formal OSA approval.
- 3.3 At the current time, it seems prudent to continue to retain five preferences within the secondary scheme; this will be reviewed again in Autumn 2021 for the 2023-2024 scheme (entry to Year 7 in 2023).
- 3.4 Minor updates have been made to both schemes to reflect and rationalise current day to day operational arrangements in place in the Admissions team, such as the introduction of an online Portal for Wirral schools to view applications. These amendments do not affect the admission policy criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools.
- 3.5 No other significant changes are proposed to be made to the admission arrangements in the co-ordinated schemes for admissions for primary or

secondary schools. A consultation was therefore not required (see 8.1), however the Schemes were published in accordance with the Admissions Code on the Council's School Admissions website and circulated to the standard consultees for any comments. Information relating to the status of schools and admission numbers has been updated to reflect the current position. This information is updated throughout the school year as it changes.

- 3.6 The Council as the admission authority must determine the admission arrangements every year, even if they have not changed from the previous year and a consultation has not been required. This must take place by 28th February each year.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It should be noted that the relevant co-ordinated schemes and the Fair Access Protocol apply to all Wirral primary and secondary schools, including Academy schools. There is additional emphasis on the importance of school governing bodies to understand and apply the Admissions Code, Wirral co-ordinated scheme and FAP correctly and fairly, otherwise schools will be open to challenge both at parental appeal and by the Schools Adjudicator and/or Secretary of State.
- 5.2 Section 8.20 of the secondary co-ordinated scheme and 7.8 of the primary co-ordinated scheme refers to overseas applications. This section may need to be further revised in the light of upcoming changes to the United Kingdom's position in relation to the European Economic Area. If so, amendments will be made at the time.
- 5.3 The date by which the arrangements must be determined is 28th February. These admission arrangements must then be published on the Council's website by 15th March. The deadline for objections against the admission arrangements to the Schools Adjudicator is 15th May.
- 5.4 In summer 2020, the Department for Education ran a consultation on revisions to the existing School Admissions Code (2014). The outcome of the consultation is awaited at time of writing. The Wirral co-ordinated schemes may therefore require amendment to bring them in line with any future version of the School Admissions Code as published by the DfE.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Fair Access Protocol requires a Local Authority Clerk to organise Fair Access Panels, prepare paperwork and disseminate Panel decisions to parents and schools. Fair Access Panels include Local Authority officers from various disciplines. The cost of this is met from the Council's budget.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Failure to determine the admission arrangements by 28th February of the preceding year would contravene the 2014 Admissions Code and associated guidance.
- 7.2 See also 5.1 above.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 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 period. The previous consultation was held in Autumn 2018 covering both primary and secondary schemes.

Variations made to the co-ordinated scheme for secondary schools in relation to 2021-22 due to COVID-19 DfE guidance were consulted on in August 2020 and have been ratified by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. The variations are being retained for a further year.

- 8.2 Other than minor operational amendments not affecting the admission policy criteria, no significant changes are proposed to either scheme, therefore a consultation is not required in relation to the 2022-23 co-ordinated admission schemes. However, the proposed Schemes were published on the Council's website on 1st December 2020 and notified to the standard consultee groups for comments. No comments were received during the consultation period.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.
- 9.2 An equality impact assessment has been completed and can be found at:
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2017-1>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of Greenhouse Gases.

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APPENDICES

Primary co-ordinated scheme for admissions 2022-23
Secondary co-ordinated scheme for admissions 2022-23

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[School Admissions Code](#)
[Wirral Fair Access Protocol](#)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	24th February 2020
Cabinet	25th February 2019
Delegated Authority	2nd October 2018
Cabinet	26th February 2018

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**SCHEME FOR THE CO-ORDINATION OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS
FOR MAINTAINED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE WIRRAL AREA
FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-2023**

This scheme fulfils the requirements for a scheme for co-ordinating admission arrangements under the School Admission (Co-ordination of Admissions Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008, made under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, for the area of Wirral Council. It builds on the well-established co-ordination of primary school admissions that have been a longstanding feature of local practice.

The scheme applies to arrangements whereby children are to be admitted to primary schools in the academic year 2022/23 and for subsequent years, subject to any review.

The co-ordinated scheme applies to all schools, excluding special schools, maintained by Wirral Council ("the Council") and to preferences expressed by Wirral resident parents and carers for schools maintained by other English local authorities (LA), academies and free schools. Admissions to other schools with independent status are not covered by this scheme.

1.0 Applications for school places for admission into Foundation 2 – the normal admission round

1.1 Wirral Council will act as the co-ordinating authority for all applications. Offers will be made by the Council, in its role as the home authority, on behalf of the admissions authority for the school allocated as follows:

Admissions Authority	Category of School
Wirral Council	All Wirral community and voluntary controlled schools
Governing body of school	All Voluntary Aided, Foundation, Trust and Academy schools
Maintaining Local Authority	Non-Wirral community and voluntary controlled schools

1.2 The admission arrangements for schools maintained by Wirral Council are published on the Council's website and in its information booklets, in line with the requirements

set out in the School Admissions Code. The Council's information booklets will be available electronically on the Council's website from 1 September. Hard copies will be obtainable by request from the Council from the start of the autumn term. Admissions arrangements are also available from each school on request.

- 1.3 All parents who live in the area administered by Wirral Council must apply for places in maintained and Academy primary schools either in Wirral or in the area of another Local Authority by completing a Wirral Parental Preference application. On-line applications are recommended and are made through the Council's website: www.wirral.gov.uk/schooladmissions. Parents who are unable to access the online admission system can request a paper application form from Wirral Council from the start of the autumn term.

The application (online or paper) provides an opportunity for the parent to:

- apply for up to 3 schools
- rank the schools applied for in order of preference

- 1.4 Applications for all schools, including Foundation, Trust, Academy and Voluntary Aided schools must be included on the application.

- 1.5 Applications for places sent direct by parents and carers to individual schools cannot be accepted and must be sent to the Council for inclusion within these arrangements.

- 1.6 Parents must return online and paper applications to Wirral Council by 15th January to ensure the allocation of a school place on 16th April or next working day (the National Offer date). Applications received after the published deadline of 15th January will be dealt with once the offer of places has been sent to parents on 16th April or next working day.

- 1.7 Parents can apply for school places only from the 1st September preceding admission to Foundation 2, that is, at the beginning of the academic year in which their child's 4th birthday falls. Children are normally admitted to school at the beginning of the academic year in which their 5th birthday falls.

- 1.8 **Deferred entry and part-time places.** Parents can request deferred entry or part-time attendance up until their child reaches compulsory school age (the term following their 5th birthday). The request must be made in writing to the Local Authority.

Child's age 5 birthdate between	First term of compulsory education
1 st January and 31 st March	Summer term (April)
1 st April and 31 st August	Autumn term (September)
1 st September and 31 st December	Spring term (January)

Parents should note that if a summer born child delays entry to the September after their fifth birthday, the child will ordinarily be expected to enter Year 1, not Foundation 2.

Parents of children born between 1st April and 31st August who wish to delay their child's entry to September, but are intending to request their child enters Foundation 2 rather than Year 1 are advised to apply as usual and to contact Wirral Council in writing prior to 15th January to discuss options (primaryplaces@wirral.gov.uk)

These requests will be considered on the circumstances of each individual case and will also require written agreement in principle from the allocated or intended preferred school. If agreed, deferred entry to Foundation 2 for a full year does not guarantee a place in any school. The child will then be in the year below their chronological age for the rest of their school career, including Key Stage assessments and selective tests for grammar schools. Parents must re-apply by 15th January of the following year and the application will be considered alongside the entry cohort according to the protocols and criteria in place at that time.

1.9 **Applications from separated parents.** Only one application can be processed for each child; therefore it is important that both parties in shared custody arrangements are in agreement over the preferred school(s) named. Where a child spends equal time with both parents, the child's main permanent residence should be submitted as their home address. If agreement cannot be reached, or if neither parent has been granted a Specific Issues Order in this respect, then the Council will accept the application from the parent with whom the child is "ordinarily resident". This is the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday), and is usually where the parent/carer receives child benefit for the child (where eligible). Proof of address and residence arrangements will be required with the application.

1.10 **Changes of address.** Parents and carers must inform the Council immediately of a change of address, even if details of a future change of residency were included on

the application form. The Council will require supporting evidence to show that the place of residency has changed; e.g. a letter from the solicitor confirming the completion date; a signed rental agreement showing the start of the tenancy and its duration. In addition further information may be requested – for example, copies of council tax and utility bills or any other information considered relevant to the application, including evidence of disposal of previous property. Information and supporting evidence must be received by 28th February. Proof of residency received after 28th February will not be used to assign a higher criterion for admission, but will be used to send the decision letter on the published offer date. We may remove a place where it has been identified that a change of address has taken place before 28th February and has not been declared.

- 1.11 **Home address.** This must be the child’s permanent home address where he/she lives with a person of parental responsibility as the main carer as defined by the Children Act 1989. Applicants must not give the address of a business, relative, childminder, friend, a temporary address or an address to which they hope to move. The home address must not be where parents have taken out a short term let on a property solely to use its address on the application form without any intention of taking up permanent residence there. Arrangements where parents leave and collect children from another relative or carer on a daily basis will be regarded as childcare arrangements, and the child will not be deemed to be “ordinarily resident” with that person. The Council will require proof of residence which may include proof of sale of a previous property.

Wirral Council regularly check addresses and **any deliberate misrepresentation will result in a place being withdrawn.** The Council acts on behalf of all Wirral admission authorities and reserves the right to request independent confirmation of the child’s place of residence, as felt appropriate. The Mainstream Admissions team may have to share the information provided with other departments of the Council in order to verify the authenticity of pupil’s addresses. This may include data held by Council Tax and/or Housing Benefit teams. The Council’s Fraud and Investigations Team may be asked to review the information that has been provided. This may include interviewing and taking a signed statement from the applicant.

- 1.12 **Withdrawal of places.** The Council has the right to withdraw any place offered on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application, or where a place has been offered in error.

2.0 Dealing with Applications

- 2.1 The Council's admissions criteria will be applied to rank the order of priority of each application for community schools and voluntary controlled schools.
- 2.2 The Council will provide Academy and Voluntary Aided Schools with details of those preference forms which include an application for their school by 21st February. Schools may also view applications for their school at any time via the online Portal.
- 2.3 Preference ranking will not be shared with school admission authorities in accordance with paragraph 1.9 of the School Admissions Code 2014 as this cannot lawfully be used when applying oversubscription criteria.
- 2.4 The Governing Bodies of Academy and Voluntary Aided schools will rank each application by applying the school's admission criteria and notify the Mainstream Admissions team of their ranking by 28th February.
- 2.5 Where a pupil is eligible to receive an offer of two or more school places then the Council will allocate the highest priority preference.
- 2.6 The Mainstream Admissions team will notify the Governing Bodies of Academy and Voluntary Aided primary schools of those pupils who will be allocated places at their school shortly before 16th April via the online Portal.
- 2.7 In March the Council will inform other Local Authorities of any pupils who are not resident in Wirral and to whom the Council can offer places at Wirral schools.

3.0 Determination of applications for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools

- 3.1 **Allocation of places.** Applications for all Community schools and also for Bidston Village Church of England (CE) Primary School, Holy Trinity CE Primary School (Hoylake), Millfields CE Primary School and St Bridget's CE Primary School (West Kirby) will be determined on the following basis:
 - 3.1.1 All children who have applied before 15th January will be eligible for a place so long as there is space within the school's admission number. If there are more applications than there are places available, then eligibility will be determined in accordance with the following scheme of priorities:
 - Children in care, and children who were in care but have been adopted or are subject to a residency order or special guardianship order ("previously in care")

- Then children who live in the school's catchment zone in the following priority order:
 - Children who already have older brothers or sisters (including half or step siblings living in the same household) at the school when they are due to start school. If there are more children with older brothers or sisters at the school than there are places available, we will give priority to children with the youngest brothers or sisters at the school. We will also treat a brother or sister at a corresponding junior school as a sibling. Where there is more than one applicant with a sibling in the same year group, priority will be given to those children who live nearest to the school. We measure distances from the child's home to the school gate nearest to the child's home using the shortest road route, unless it is possible to use a footpath which we consider to be a safe walking route, using the Council's computerised routing system.
 - Children who live nearest to the school. We measure distances from home to the school gate nearest to the child's home using the shortest road route, unless it is possible to use a footpath which we consider to be a safe walking route, using the Council's computerised routing system.

3.1.2 If places remain available, eligibility for children who do not live in the school's catchment area will be determined in accordance with the following scheme of priorities.

- Children who already have older brothers or sisters (including half or step-brothers and sisters living in the same household) at the school when they are due to start school. If there are more children with older brothers or sisters at the school than there are places available, we will give priority to children with the youngest brothers or sisters at the school. We will also treat a brother or sister at a corresponding junior school as a sibling. Where there is more than one applicant with a sibling in the same year group, priority will be given to those children who live nearest to the school. We measure distances from home to the school gate nearest to the child's home using the shortest road route, unless it is possible to use a footpath which we consider to be a safe walking route, using the Council's computerised routing system.
- Pupils who live nearest to the school. We measure distances from home to the school gate nearest to the child's home using the shortest road route, unless it

is possible to use a footpath which we consider to be a safe walking route, using the Council's computerised routing system.

3.1.3 If places remain available at the school after all "on time" applicants have been allocated at the initial allocation point, places will then be allocated to late applications received after 15th January, in accordance with the policy criteria, up to the school's admission number. See paragraph 5.0 below.

3.2 **Aided schools and Academies.** Applications for Academy schools and the Catholic and Church of England voluntary aided schools will be determined by the governing bodies of these schools in accordance with their published admission criteria.

Christ Church CE Aided Primary School in Birkenhead shares part of its catchment zone with two other schools - Woodchurch Road Primary School and Woodlands Primary School. Priority is given as detailed above in 3.1.1- 3.1.3.

3.3 **Mandatory Allocation.** Where it is not possible to allocate a place at any of the schools applied for, children resident in Wirral will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate Wirral school where there are places available. "Appropriate " where possible means community school if the parents' preferences indicate preferences for non-denominational education; or a Catholic school or Church of England school if the parents indicated a preference for education in a school of that denomination. The nearest school will be measured on shortest walking distance using the Council's computerised routing system.

3.4 **Special Needs.** All schools will be required to admit a pupil with an Education Health and Care Plan naming the school.

3.5 **Route measurements**

The "shortest road route" from home to school starts at the "seed point" of the home address as provided by the Ordnance Survey compiled from Royal Mail and/or local council data. The starting point connects to the nearest point of the Authority's digitised routing network. The digitised network is based on the Integrated Transport Network (ITN) supplied by Ordnance Survey and is accurately digitised to measure along the centre of roads. The Ordnance Survey ITN dataset is the most accurate road dataset available and is the definitive national road network for Great Britain. The ITN has been augmented by the Authority to take into account public footpaths and alleyways etc. that are approved to be safe for use by children, accompanied as necessary by an adult, by the Authority. The end point of the "shortest road route" is

the nearest open gate of the school officially available for use by pupils at the start and end of the school day. The location of these gates has been set by the Authority based on information provided by the school.

The “shortest road route” is not necessarily a driving route as it may use in part a non-driveable route, such as a footpath. The shortest road route is also not necessarily a walking route, because the measurement is along the centre of the road, not the edge (pavement or equivalent).

The same measuring system must be used for pupils in relation to admission to schools as this treats all pupils equally. Other measuring systems may give a different measurement but the Authority cannot take a measurement from another system into account. Online systems that parents may use for comparison, including Google Maps and walk-it.com etc. use the free Ordnance Survey Meridian dataset which is far less detailed, and consequently less accurate. They will not have an accurate starting point, will not bar unsuitable paths, and will not include accurate positions for the gates of the school being measured to.

For addresses outside the Authority’s digitised network of approximately 48 square miles, including overseas addresses, an internet mapping solution will be used, e.g. maps.google.co.uk.

4.0 Offer of Places

- 4.1 Parents and carers resident in Wirral who have made an online application will be informed by the Council of the school allocated by e-mail on 16th April or next working day, if a valid e-mail address has been provided. The e-mail will also inform the parent of their legal right to appeal to an independent panel and who to contact to make an appeal.
- 4.2 Parents and carers resident in Wirral who have submitted a paper application will be informed by the Council of the school allocated in writing. Letters will be despatched on 16th April or next working day, and will be sent by second class post. The letter will also inform the parent of their legal right to appeal to an independent panel and who to contact to make an appeal.
- 4.3 If places become available before the start of the autumn term, the Council will allocate them to children whose parents have either lodged an appeal but not been successful or who have expressed a continuing interest in a place at the school concerned. Parents can do this by online by e-mail or by returning the reply slip

attached to the paper allocation letter. If there are more children interested in a particular school than places available, the Council will use the same criteria to determine priorities as is used for the initial allocation.

- 4.4 All offers of places for schools covered by the Wirral scheme will be issued by the Council. Schools cannot offer places directly to parents.

5.0 Late applications

- 5.1 Applications received after the published deadline of 15th January will be dealt with after the offer of places have been sent to parents on 16th April or next working day. Wirral Council will send details of late applications for Academy and Voluntary Aided schools to the governors of the schools concerned by 23rd April or, for applications received after that date, within five days of receipt. An electronic Portal is in place for all schools to view applications as soon as they are received.
- 5.2 After the closing date for waiting list requests and the closing date for appeals to be lodged has passed, any available places will be re-allocated in accordance with the same order of priority as for the original allocation (see 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 above) and the policy criteria for own admission authority schools, including any late applications received up to that point, as a “mini-allocation”. After this, late applications/requests will be dealt with as they are received, including mandatory allocations where no preferred school can be allocated. School places that become available after the mini-allocation takes place will be re-allocated on the basis of the order of priority as set out in 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 above, and the policy criteria for own admission authority schools, taking into account any late applications or place requests received up to the date the place is re-allocated.
- 5.3 Parents will be notified in writing by Wirral Council. The letter will also inform the parent of their legal right to appeal for any Wirral school and who to contact to make an appeal. Parents should, where possible, lodge an appeal within 20 working days of receipt of notification of the outcome of their application.
- 5.4 Applications for Catholic or Church of England Aided Primary Schools and the Academies received after the published deadline of 15th January will be determined by reference to the schools’ published admission arrangements and the governors will inform Wirral Council of the outcome of the applications. Parents will be notified in writing by Wirral Council. The letter will also inform the parent of their legal right to appeal and who to contact to make an appeal. Parents should, where possible, lodge

an appeal within 20 working days of receipt of notification of the outcome of their application.

- 5.5 Parents and carers must accept or decline the offer of a late place within 10 working days of the offer date.

6.0 Waiting Lists

- 6.1 If at the end of the Summer Term a school is believed to be full, the Council will close the procedures and make no more reallocations. However, it may be that places will become available at the beginning of or during the Autumn Term. The Council will keep a list of children whose parents have expressed an interest in obtaining a place at the school if a place becomes available. In August, the Council will write to the parents of those children included in paragraph 4.3 who have expressed a continuing interest. This list will be held open during the Autumn Term. Priority on the list for community and controlled schools will be given to children in accordance with the criteria given in paragraphs 3.1.1 and 3.1.2. Each added child requires the list to be ranked again in line with the published admission criteria.

- 6.2 The Council will contact parents directly if a vacancy does occur. Schools must not notify parents that a place has become available but must inform the Council in order that an offer can be made by the home Local Authority. The Council will cease to hold the Foundation 2 waiting list at the end of the Autumn Term.

7.0 In Year applications outside the normal round of admissions

- 7.1 'In year' applications are those made during the school year into any year group, other than at the normal point of entry (i.e. the normal admission round). This will include applications from parents and carers of children moving into Wirral from another Local Authority area, moving within Wirral, or seeking to transfer to an alternative school for other reasons.
- 7.2 Applications for all schools including Academy and Voluntary Aided schools must be made on a common Transfer Form which can be submitted online via the Wirral Admissions Portal or downloaded from the Wirral School Admissions website. The form allows parents to state up to three school preferences ranked in priority order.
- 7.3 Schools should not deal with transfer application forms. Any forms received by schools should be forwarded to the Mainstream Admissions team.

- 7.4 Parents should contact the headteacher of their child's current school prior to application to discuss their request.
- 7.5 The Mainstream Admissions team will forward the documentation/online application notification to their current and preferred school(s). An electronic Portal is in place for schools to view incoming applications as they are received. Requests for transfer in Y6 other than moves from outside Wirral will be discouraged on educational grounds, but parents have the ultimate right to proceed with the request.
- 7.6 The Council will arrange for children in Years 1 and 2 to start at a community or voluntary controlled primary school in a similar way as Foundation 2 (Reception) age children. The appropriate year group is determined by the chronological age of the child.

Key Stage 1 – The Council will offer children places at their catchment school as long as this will not bring the class size to more than 30, and if the Council cannot offer an alternative school place within two miles of the parents home address.

The Council will agree a place in an out-of-zone school as long as:

- i) there is room within the admission number; and
- ii) there are not already 30 children in the class.

Where a school, which is below its admission number, has organised its Key Stage 1 into classes of 30 and the only way to admit another child would require the admission authority to take Qualifying Measures (that is, it would require the school to provide additional resources in terms of staff and accommodation), these are grounds on which the Council or other admission authority may refuse an application.

Key Stage 2 – Children are usually entitled to a place at their catchment school even though the school may be on or above its admission number. However, where there is a serious concern, for example about health and safety, there may be circumstances in which a Key Stage 2 place may be refused at a catchment school.

The Council will agree a place in an out-of-zone school as long as there is room within the admission number.

7.7 **Infant Class Size limit exceptions**

There are a limited number of exceptions to the Infant Class Size limit of 30. These children remain an excepted pupil for the time they are in an infant class, or until the class numbers fall back to the infant class size limit. They are:

- Children with statements of special educational need (SEN) or Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) admitted outside the normal admission round
- Looked after children and previously looked after children
- Children admitted because of a procedural error made by any admission authority in the original application process
- Children admitted following an appeal upheld by an independent appeals panel
- Children who move into a catchment area outside the normal admission round for whom there is no other school place within a shortest walking distance of 2 miles
- Children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admission round who move into a catchment area
- Twins and children from multiple births when one of the siblings is the 30th child admitted
- Children with SEN who are normally taught in an SEN unit attached to the school or who are registered with a special school, but attend some infant classes within a mainstream school

7.8 **Children of UK service personnel.** Places for these children will be allocated in advance if accompanied by an official letter with a relocation date and Unit postal address or quartering area address.

7.9 **Overseas applications.** Parents who have already moved to the UK from overseas who are British or European Economic Area (EEA) nationals, or who have an endorsed passport showing right of abode, can apply for places for their child at any school covered by this scheme.

Parents or children in these categories who do not yet live in the UK can apply before the date they move to the UK. However, the address to be used in the allocation will be the address that the child is living at on the closing date, unless a subsequent house move has been accepted up to the last date for changes in the coordinated scheme. A UK address will only be used once the child is residing at that address, and evidence will be required of this, as in paragraph 1.10 of this document.

For non-EEA nationals, the Council may ask to see passports and visas for verification and may confirm visa status with the Home Office if this is unclear or missing.

Children in the UK on a visitor's visa are not entitled to free state education. Any parents wishing to access education for their child whilst visiting the UK may however choose to pay for private education during their stay. The only waiver to this applies to children of visiting academics (parent has an Academic Visitor visa, up to 12 months) who may access free state education during their visit.

Visa over-stayers must be able to provide evidence of an on-going appeal in order to access free state education for the duration of the appeal process.

- 7.10 **Waiting Lists.** The Council will not keep waiting lists for places in Year 1 and above. Parents may wish to contact schools directly to establish whether there is space in their child's year group prior to completing an in-year transfer request form. The Council will confirm the availability of a place with the school before issuing a formal offer of a place. Schools must not offer places to parents.
- 7.11 The Council will provide Voluntary Aided and Academy schools with relevant on-line and paper form preference information for those applications which include a preference for their school.
- 7.12 The Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided and Academy schools will consider each application by applying the school's admission criteria and notify the Council of their decision within 5 days of receipt of the application.
- 7.13 Where a pupil is eligible to receive an offer of two or more school places then the parent's highest priority eligible preference will take precedence.
- 7.14 All parents will be informed by the Council of the school place allocated by letter. The letter will also inform the parent of their legal right to appeal and who to contact to make an appeal. Parents should, wherever possible, make an appeal within 20 working days of receipt of the letter notifying them of the outcome of their application.
- 7.15 If the relevant body is refusing admission the Council will write to the parent advising them that the application has been refused and informing the parent of the legal right to appeal against the decision. Where a house move from outside the area or within Wirral is the reason for requesting an in-year transfer and none of the preferred schools are able to offer a place, the Council will, where possible, indicate on the

refusal letter the nearest appropriate school with vacancies at the time of application, where “nearest” uses the shortest walking distance from the Council’s computerised Ordnance Survey Address Point based routing system. The letter will also inform the parent of their legal right to appeal and who to contact to make an appeal. Parents should, wherever possible, make an appeal within 20 working days of receipt of the letter notifying them of the outcome of their application.

8.0 Pupils transferring from Infant to Junior Schools

8.1 All children who are on roll at one of the Infant Schools listed below at the time of transfer from Year 2 to Year 3 are eligible to transfer to the linked junior even if they do not live in the school’s catchment area. Children who live in the catchment area of the Junior School are also eligible.

Black Horse Hill Infant School to Black Horse Hill Junior School

Brackenwood Infant School to Brackenwood Junior School

Greasby Infant School to Greasby Junior School

Overchurch Infant School to Overchurch Junior School

Town Lane Infant School to Higher Bebington Junior School

8.2 Admissions to St John’s Junior School are detailed by the governing body in accordance with the school’s admission arrangements.

9.0 The Fair Access Protocol

9.1 All requests for in-year places will be considered with reference to the Council’s current admission arrangements and procedures for in year placements.

9.2 All schools will take part in the Fair Access Protocol, which is published separately. Schools must respond immediately to requests for admission to school according to the timescales above so that admission of the pupil is not unduly delayed.

9.3 Children who are looked after and previously looked after, and children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the school are NOT included in the Fair Access protocol. These children MUST be placed in the school of their carer’s preference irrespective of the availability of places in the year group.

9.4 **Permanent Exclusions.** For pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion and on the roll of a Wirral school it is open to the headteacher to refer the child to Gilbrook Outreach Service or to consider a Managed Move. All such placements will be

initially on a trial basis for a minimum of six weeks. Confirmation of placement on the school roll will be subject to a satisfactory report.

- 9.5 Pupils who have been permanently excluded will normally be placed on the roll of Gilbrook School or the Progress School. Schools should contact the Exclusions Officer as soon as the exclusion has taken place. The Exclusions Officer will consider whether the pupil can be transferred immediately to an alternative primary school. Such transfers will be agreed with the parent and relevant headteacher. All primary schools will take a minimum number of 1, or the number of permanent exclusions in the previous academic year, as the agreed quota of permanently excluded pupils for placement.
- 9.6 Parents retain their legal right to an appeal for a place at any school of their preference. This right is not affected by the decision of the Fair Access Panel.

Admissions Authorities in Wirral
Wirral Council
Community Primary Schools (54)
Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools (4)
The Governing Bodies of:
Academy Schools
Birkenhead High School Academy for Girls (Junior)
Christ Church (Moreton) CE Primary School
Church Drive Primary School
Co-Op Academy Portland
Co-Op Academy Woodsee
Egremont Primary School
Great Meols Primary School
Our Lady of Pity Catholic Primary School
Poulton Lancelyn Primary School
Stanton Road Primary School
St Joseph's (Birkenhead) Catholic Primary School
Townfield Primary School
Town Lane Infant School
Church of England Aided Primary Schools
Christ Church (Birkenhead) CE Primary School
Dawpool CE Primary School
St Andrew's CE Primary School
St Peter's CE Primary School
St Saviour's CE Primary School

The Priory CE Primary School
Woodchurch CE Primary School
Catholic Aided Primary Schools
Christ The King Catholic Primary School
Holy Cross Catholic Primary School
Ladymount Catholic Primary School
Our Lady and St Edwards Catholic Primary School
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School
St Alban's Catholic Primary School
St Anne's Catholic Primary School
St John's Catholic Infant School
St John's Catholic Junior School
St Joseph's (Upton) Catholic Primary School
St Joseph's (Wallasey) Catholic Primary School
St Michael and All Angels Catholic Primary School
St Paul's Catholic Primary School
St Peter & St Paul Catholic Primary School
St Peter's Catholic Primary School
St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School
Joint Denominational Aided Primary Schools
Holy Spirit Catholic and CE Primary School

A full list and map is provided in the Council's information booklets for parents, available on-line at www.wirral.gov.uk/schooladmissions.

* Status subject to confirmation at time of publication.

PROPOSED ADMISSION NUMBERS FOR 2022-23

**WIRRAL COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED
PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

SCHOOL	ADMISSION NUMBER 2022-2023
Barnston Primary	45
Bedford Drive Primary	60
Bidston Avenue Primary	60
Black Horse Hill Infant	60
Black Horse Hill Junior	60
Bidston Village CE Primary School	52
Brackenwood Infant	60
Brackenwood Junior*	60
Brookdale Primary	30
Brookhurst Primary	30
Castleway Primary	30
Cathcart Street Primary	30
Devonshire Park Primary	60
Eastway Primary*	30
Fender Primary	42
Gayton Primary	30
Greasby Infant	60
Greasby Junior	60
Greenleas Primary	45

SCHOOL	ADMISSION NUMBER
	2022-2023
Grove Street Primary	60
Heswall Primary	30
Heygarth Primary	45
Higher Bebington Junior*	96
Hillside Primary	30
Hoylake Holy Trinity CE Primary	45
Irby Primary	30
Kingsway Primary	25
Leasowe Primary	30
Lingham Primary*	57
Liscard Primary	90
Manor Primary	30
Mendell Primary	30
Mersey Park Primary	60
Millfields CE Primary	30
Mount Primary	48
New Brighton Primary	90
Overchurch Infant	90
Overchurch Junior	103
Park Primary School	60
Pensby Primary	30
Prenton Primary	60
Raeburn Primary	60

SCHOOL	ADMISSION NUMBER 2022-2023
Riverside Primary	30
Rock Ferry Primary	45
Sandbrook Primary	30
Somerville Primary	90
St. Bridget's CE Primary	60
St. George's Primary*	120
Thingwall Primary	30
Thornton Hough Primary	25
Well Lane Primary	30
West Kirby Primary	40
Woodchurch Road Primary	75
Woodlands Primary	45

*Note that the status of these (and potentially other) primary schools is subject to change at time of determination. These tables will be updated accordingly should this occur.

**SCHEME FOR THE CO-ORDINATION OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS
FOR MAINTAINED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE WIRRAL AREA
FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-2023**

This scheme fulfils the requirements for a scheme for co-ordinating admission arrangements under the School Admission (Co-ordination of Admissions Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008, made under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, for the area of Wirral Council. It builds on the well-established coordination of secondary school admissions that have been a longstanding feature of local practice.

The scheme applied for admissions to secondary schools in the academic year 2022/23 and for subsequent years, subject to any review. This scheme was amended in August 2020 in accordance with paragraph 3.6 of the School Admissions Code to take into account Department for Education guidance issued July 2020, "Coronavirus (COVID-19): assessment processes for selective school admissions".

The co-ordinated scheme applies to all schools, excluding special schools, maintained by Wirral Council ("the Council") and to preferences expressed by Wirral resident parents and carers for schools maintained by other English local authorities, academies and free schools. Admissions to other schools with independent status are not be covered by this scheme.

1.0 Applications for school places for admission into Year 7 - the normal admission round

1.1 Wirral Council will act as the co-ordinating authority for all applications. Offers will be made by the Council, in its role as the home authority, on behalf of the admissions authority for the school allocated as follows:

Admissions Authority	Category of School
Wirral Council	All Wirral community and voluntary controlled schools
Governing body of school	All Voluntary Aided, Foundation, Trust and Academy schools
Maintaining Local Authority	Non-Wirral community and voluntary controlled schools

- 1.2 The admission arrangements for schools maintained by Wirral Council are published on the Council's website and in its information booklets, in line with the requirements set out in the School Admissions Code. The Council's information booklets will be available electronically on the Council's website from 1 September. Hard copies are obtainable by request from the Council at the start of the autumn term. Admissions arrangements are also available from each school on request.
- 1.3 All parents who live in the area administered by Wirral Council must apply for places in maintained secondary schools either in Wirral or in the area of another Local Authority by completing the Wirral Parental Preference application. On-line applications are recommended and are made through the Council's website: www.wirral.gov.uk/schooladmissions. Parents of Year 6 pupils who are unable to access the online admission system can request a paper application form from Wirral Council from the start of the autumn term.
- The form (online or paper) provides an opportunity for the parent to:
- apply for up to 5 schools
 - rank the schools applied for in order of preference
- 1.4 Applications for places sent direct by parents and carers to individual schools cannot be accepted and must be sent to the Council for inclusion within these arrangements.
- 1.5 Preference forms should be returned to Wirral Council by 31st October to ensure the allocation of a school place on 1st March or next working day (the National Offer date). Applications received after the published deadline of 31st October will be dealt with once the offer of places has been sent to parents on 1st March or next working day.
- 1.6 **Applications from separated parents.** Only one application can be processed for each child; therefore it is important that both parties in shared custody arrangements are in agreement over the preferred school(s) named. Where a child spends equal time with both parents, the child's main residence should be submitted as their home address. If agreement cannot be reached, or if neither parent has been granted a Specific Issues Order in this respect, then the Council will accept the application from the parent with whom the child is "ordinarily resident". This is the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday), and is usually where the parent/carer receives child benefit for the child (where eligible). Proof of address and residence arrangements will be required with the application.
- 1.7. **Changes of address.** Parents and carers must inform the Council immediately of a change of address, even if details of a future change of residency were included on

the application form. The Council will require supporting evidence to show that the place of residency has changed; e.g. a letter from the solicitor confirming the completion date; a signed rental agreement showing the start of the tenancy and its duration. In addition further information may be requested – for example, copies of council tax and utility bills or any other information considered relevant to the application, including evidence of disposal of previous property. Information and supporting evidence must be received by 1st January. Proof of residency received after 1st January will not be used to assign a higher criterion for admission, but will be used to send the decision letter on the published offer date. We may remove a place where it has been identified that a change of address has taken place before 1st January and has not been declared.

- 1.8 **Home address.** This must be the child’s permanent home address where he/she lives with a person of parental responsibility as the main carer as defined by the Children Act 1989. Applicants must not give the address of a business, relative, childminder, friend, a temporary address or an address to which they hope to move. The home address must not be where parents have taken out a short term let on a property solely to use its address on the application form without any intention of taking up permanent residence there. Arrangements where parents leave and collect children from another relative or carer on a daily basis will be regarded as childcare arrangements, and the child will not be deemed to be “ordinarily resident” with that person. The Council will require proof of residence which may include proof of sale of a previous property.

Wirral Council regularly check addresses and **any deliberate misrepresentation will result in a place being withdrawn.** The Council acts on behalf of all Wirral admission authorities and reserves the right to request independent confirmation of the child’s place of residence, as felt appropriate. The Mainstream Admissions team may have to share the information provided with other departments of the Council in order to verify the authenticity of pupil’s addresses. This may include data held by Council Tax and/or Housing Benefit teams. The Council’s Fraud and Investigations Team may be asked to review the information that has been provided. This may include interviewing and taking a signed statement from the applicant.

- 1.9 **Withdrawal of places.** The Authority has the right to withdraw any place offered on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application, or where a place has been offered in error.

2.0 Dealing with Applications

- 2.1 The Council's admissions criteria will be applied to rank the order of priority of each application for community schools.
- 2.2 The Council will provide Academy, Foundation, Trust and Voluntary Aided Schools with details of applicants for their school by 15th January. Details of preferences for a school place in the area of another Local Authority will be sent to that Authority along with any details and supporting evidence provided by the parent by 1st January.
- 2.3 Preference ranking will not be shared with school admission authorities in accordance with paragraph 1.9 of the School Admissions Code 2014 as this cannot lawfully be used when applying oversubscription criteria.
- 2.4 The Governing Bodies of Academy, Foundation, Trust and Voluntary Aided schools will rank each application by applying the school's admission criteria and are required to notify the Mainstream Admissions team of their ranking by 30th January.
- 2.5 Where a pupil is eligible to receive an offer of two or more school places then the Council will allocate the highest priority preference.
- 2.6 The Mainstream Admissions team will notify the Governing Bodies of Wirral Academy, Foundation, Trust and Voluntary Aided schools of those pupils who will provisionally be allocated places at their school by 13th February.
- 2.7 When the Council receives from other Local Authorities details of their provisional allocation for Wirral children seeking places in schools maintained by them, the Council will then offer the highest preference if they are eligible for more than one school.
- 2.8 On 23rd February Wirral Council will inform schools and neighbouring Authorities of the final allocations. On-line applicants will receive an e-mail notification on 1st March (or next working day). Paper form applicants will receive a letter posted by second class post on 1st March (or next working day).

3.0 Determination of applications for Community schools

- 3.1 Each secondary school has a published admission number. Places will be allocated up to but not beyond this number.
- 3.2 All children who have applied before 31st October will be eligible for a place so long as there is space within the school's admission number. If there are more applications than there are places available, then eligibility for community schools will be determined in accordance with the following scheme of priorities:

- Children in care, and children who were in care but have been adopted or are subject to a residency order or special guardianship order (“previously in care”)
- Pupils who have a medical reason for attending a particular school. A letter in support from a health care professional will be required as evidence. A letter in support from a senior health care professional will be required as evidence which must make it clear why only this school is appropriate for your child’s medical needs.
- Pupils who have a brother or sister of statutory school age (including half or step-brothers and sisters living in the same household) at the school when the pupil starts school. If there are more children with older brothers or sisters at the school than there are places available, we will give priority to children with the youngest brothers or sisters at the school.
- Pupils who live nearest to the school. We measure distances from home to the school gate nearest to the child’s home using the shortest road route, unless it is possible to use a footpath which we consider to be a safe walking route, using the Council’s computerised routing system.

3.3 If places remain available at the school after all “on time” applicants have been allocated, places will then be allocated to late applications received after 31st October according to the admissions criteria, up to the school’s admission number.

3.4 **Multiple births.** For community schools, where the final place in a year group is offered to one of twins (or triplets etc.) it will be our policy to admit the other twin even if that means going above the admission number.

3.5 Applications for Academy, Foundation, Trust and Aided schools will be determined by the governing bodies of these schools in accordance with their published admission criteria.

3.6 **Mandatory Allocation.** Where it is not possible to allocate a place at any of the schools applied for, children resident in Wirral will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate Wirral school where there are places available. “Appropriate “ where possible means community school if the parents’ preferences indicate preferences for non-denominational education; or a Catholic school if the parents indicated a preference for education in a school of that denomination. The nearest school will be measured on shortest walking distance using the Council’s computerised routing system.

3.7 **Special Needs.** All schools will be required to admit a pupil with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the school.

A Health Care Plan does not give any particular priority for admission to a specific school.

3.8 **Route measurements**

The “shortest road route” from home to school starts at the “seed point” of the home address as provided by the Ordnance Survey compiled from Royal Mail and/or local council data. The starting point connects to the nearest point of the Authority’s digitised routing network. The digitised network is based on the Integrated Transport Network (ITN) supplied by Ordnance Survey and is accurately digitised to measure along the centre of roads. The Ordnance Survey ITN dataset is the most accurate road dataset available and is the definitive national road network for Great Britain. The ITN has been augmented by the Authority to take into account public footpaths and alleyways etc. that are approved to be safe for use by children, accompanied as necessary by an adult, by the Authority. The end point of the “shortest road route” is the nearest open gate of the school officially available for use by pupils at the start and end of the school day. The location of these gates has been set by the Authority based on information provided by the school.

The “shortest road route” is not necessarily a driving route as it may use in part a non-driveable route, such as a footpath. The shortest road route is also not necessarily a walking route, because the measurement is along the centre of the road, not the edge (pavement or equivalent).

The same measuring system must be used for pupils in relation to admission to schools as this treats all pupils equally. Other measuring systems may give a different measurement but the Authority cannot take a measurement from another system into account. Online systems that parents may use for comparison, including Google Maps and walk-it.com etc. use the free Ordnance Survey Meridian dataset which is far less detailed, and consequently less accurate. They will not have an accurate starting point, will not bar unsuitable paths, and will not include accurate positions for the gates of the school being measured to.

For addresses outside the Authority’s digitised network of approximately 48 square miles, including overseas addresses, an internet mapping solution will be used, e.g. maps.google.co.uk.

4.0 Admission to Grammar Schools

- 4.1 Admissions authorities for the grammar schools in Wirral will allocate places only to children who have achieved the required standard. If they are oversubscribed with children who have achieved the standard, they will not be able to offer places to all; they will use other non-academic criteria to decide which children should be offered places.
- 4.2 **Request for Assessment.** Parents who wish their child to be assessed for non-Catholic grammar school education should register with Wirral Council by **31st May in Year 5** by completing either the online or paper Request for Assessment form.
- 4.3 The Council administers the assessment arrangements for Calday Grange Grammar School, West Kirby Grammar School, Wirral Grammar School for Boys and Wirral Grammar School for Girls. The grammar schools have criteria to determine which children will be given places if more children achieve the standard than there are places available.
- 4.4 Parents who wish their children to be assessed for a place at Upton Hall School FCJ or St. Anselm's College must follow the procedures for requesting an assessment set out by those schools; those children will be assessed by the schools themselves.
- 4.5 **The selection tests.** The assessment is based on the results of a test comprising two papers that pupils take in Autumn of Year 6. The tests have been designed to predict a pupil's potential performance at secondary school and so preparation for the tests is not necessary. However, familiarisation materials containing sample questions will be available by 30th June to help children prepare for the tests. To ensure that children are not disadvantaged because of their date of birth, in each case the score is age standardised to take account of each child's age in years and completed months. A total weighted score is calculated from the Verbal, Maths and Non-verbal components, for boys and girls. Children who reach the qualifying score will be deemed to have reached the required grammar school standard.
- 4.6 At the end of the process, the Council will have a list of the children who have reached the qualifying score. This does not necessarily mean that they will go to a grammar school; that will depend on the number of preferences that we have for the grammar schools. If a grammar school is oversubscribed, the governors use other criteria to decide who should be given places.

4.7 The Council will send the outcome of the assessment tests by e-mail to parents who have provided a valid e-mail address on their request for assessment form within 6 weeks of the assessment date. Postal notification will be despatched to all other parents on the same date as e-mails are sent out, by first class post.

4.8 A late test will take place later in the Autumn term for pupils who were registered to take the test but were unable to do so due to illness or absence on the main test date. No other arrangements will be made to assess children if request forms were received after 31st May, unless they have moved from another part of the country. Parents should still submit a preference form before 31st October naming at least one grammar school. If their child does not meet the grammar standard, any grammar preferences will be withdrawn.

5.0 Determination of applications for Foundation, Trust, Academy and Aided schools

5.1 The governing bodies of Foundation, Trust, Academy and Aided schools publish their own admission arrangements which include the criteria which they will use to determine priorities if their school is oversubscribed.

5.2 **Special Educational Needs.** All schools will be required to admit a pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health and Care Plan naming the school.

6.0 Offer of Places

6.1 Where online applications have been received from parents resident in Wirral, the parent or carer making the online application will receive their offer by e-mail on 1st March (or next working day). Parents applying on a paper form will be informed in writing by second class post by the Council posted on 1st March (or next working day) of the school allocated to their child.

6.2 This will include the allocation of a place in a school of another Local Authority if the parent's application for a place there has been successful. The letter or e-mail will also inform parents of their legal right to appeal to an independent panel and who to contact to make an appeal. Parents should, wherever possible, make an appeal within 20 working days of receipt of the letter or e-mail notifying them of the outcome of their application.

7.0 Late Applications

7.1 Preferences which are received on or after 1st November will be dealt with after places have been allocated on 1st March (or next working day). At that point some schools may be full and no more places will be allocated at those schools. In the

case of schools which have places available, places will be allocated up to the school's admission number in accordance with the arrangements described in paragraphs 3 and 5.

- 7.2 Late applications for grammar schools will require separate arrangements for testing. See 4.9 above.
- 7.3 Parents will be notified in writing by Wirral Council. The letter will also inform the parent of their legal right to appeal and who to contact to make an appeal. Parents should, wherever possible, make an appeal within 20 working days of receipt of the letter notifying them of the outcome of their application. Parents and carers must accept or decline the offer of a late place within 10 working days of the offer date.
- 7.4 If places become available before the start of the autumn term, the Council will re-allocate them up to the school's admission number. If there are more children interested in a particular school than places available, in the case of Community schools the Council will use the same criteria to determine priorities as is used for the initial allocation. In most cases the re-allocation will be made depending on where the children live. If this is the case, the Council will keep a list in order of those who will have priority because they live nearer the school in question.
- 7.5 If at the end of the Summer Term a school is believed to be full, the Council will close the procedures and make no more reallocations. However, it may be that places will become available at the beginning of or during the Autumn Term. The Council will keep a waiting list of children whose parents are interested in obtaining a place at the school if a place becomes available, following the same criteria as when places were first offered. The waiting list will be kept open until the last day of the autumn term.

8.0 In Year applications outside the normal round of admissions

- 8.1 'In year' applications are those made during the school year into any year group, other than at the normal point of entry (i.e. the normal admission round). This will include applications from parents and carers of children moving into Wirral from another Local Authority area, moving within Wirral, or seeking to transfer to an alternative school for other reasons.
- 8.2 Applications for all schools including Academy, Foundation, Trust and Voluntary Aided schools must be made on a common Wirral Transfer Form which can be submitted on the Wirral Admissions Portal or on a transfer form available on the Wirral Admissions website. The form allows parents to state up to three school preferences ranked in priority order.

- 8.3 Schools should not deal with transfer application forms. Any forms received by schools should be forwarded to the Mainstream Admissions team of Wirral Council. The Council coordinates all parental requests for in-year transfers and placements.
- 8.4 Parents are advised to contact the headteacher of their child's current school to discuss their request prior to submitting an application.
- 8.5 The Mainstream Admissions Team will then request completion of appropriate documentation from their current school to forward to their preferred school. Requests for transfer in Y10 and Y11 will be discouraged on educational grounds, but parents have the ultimate right to proceed with the request. Requests for transfer in these year groups due to relocation to Wirral from another area or country will be processed automatically.
- 8.6 For transfers between Wirral schools, the Council will request from the Headteacher of the child's current or previous school, information relating to the child's curriculum record, attendance and behaviour. The headteacher of the school must sign the form and return it to Mainstream Admissions within 5 school days. Where a child has relocated to Wirral from another area or country, this information will not be requested by the Council.
- 8.7 The background information and any relevant documentation from other agencies such as the Attendance Team, social worker, educational psychologists and so on (where provided), will then be forwarded to the Headteacher of the requested school(s). Where parents have applied online, the application is available for schools to view on an online Portal; paper applications will be forwarded alongside the background information.
- 8.8 The governing body of the requested school should reply to the Council within 10 school days of receipt of the application notifying the decision whether a place will be offered.
- 8.9 If the school believes that the child should be considered under any of the elements of the Fair Access Protocol, this must be notified to the Mainstream Admissions team within 5 school days of receipt of the application. Where it would be helpful, an Attendance Officer, Exclusions Officer or Managed Move Officer may facilitate meetings between the parents and the schools involved in order to resolve any difficulties.
- 8.10 For Community Schools the Council will consider all available information and decide whether to agree or refuse the request within 10 school days of receipt of the application.

- 8.11 If a parent expresses a preference for one or more of the grammar schools, then their child will be assessed by the school or schools concerned and a decision made by the governing body as to whether to offer a place. The governing body will then inform the Council of the outcome of the application.
- 8.12 Where a pupil is eligible to receive an offer of two or more school places then the parent's highest eligible preference will take precedence. Headteachers will be informed of the decision.
- 8.13 All parents will be informed by the Council of the school place allocated by letter and advised to contact the headteacher of the school to arrange admission. The letter will also inform the parent of their legal right to appeal and who to contact to make an appeal. Parents should, wherever possible, make an appeal within 20 working days of receipt of the letter notifying them of the outcome of their application.
- 8.14 In accordance with the School Admissions Code 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 faith school;
 - (c) they have followed a different curriculum at their previous school;
 - (d) information has not been received from their previous school;
 - (e) they have missed entrance tests for selective places.
- 8.15 Parental preference must be met unless the school believes that do so would "prejudice the efficient education or the efficient use of resources", under Section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. In effect, schools are expected to offer a place if there are places available in the year group. Parents who are refused a place have a right to an appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. Schools considering refusing to offer a place when places are available in the year group should consider whether they believe their decision to refuse was one that a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case, as the onus will be on the school to prove prejudice.
- 8.16 **Challenging behaviour:** The Admissions Code says that if a governing body does not want to admit a child with challenging behaviour as an in-year transfer, even though places are available, it must refer the case to the local authority under the Fair Access Protocol. The definition of "challenging behaviour" is set out in the Fair Access Protocol. Any such cases must be raised with the local authority within 5 working days of receiving the transfer paperwork. Children not meeting the Fair Access definition of "challenging behaviour" must be considered as in year

transfers. Fair Access does not apply to a looked after child, previously looked after child or a child with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the school as these children MUST be admitted.

- 8.17 If the request is refused, headteachers are informed of the decision and parents are informed in writing and given details of their legal right to appeal. Parents should, wherever possible, make an appeal within 20 working days of receipt of the letter notifying them of the outcome of their application. If a parent lodges an appeal, copies of the relevant documentation will be sent to the preferred school.
- 8.18 The time taken for a transfer request to be processed should be as short as possible. The Council expects that parents will be informed of the outcome of their request within 20 school days, however this may take significantly longer where background information is not received in a timely manner, further information is required in order to process the application such as visa or address verification, the application requires an assessment for a selective school or the application is referred under the Fair Access Protocol.
- 8.19 **Children of UK service personnel.** Places for these children will be allocated in advance if accompanied by an official letter with a relocation date and Unit postal address or quartering area address.
- 8.20 **Overseas applications.** Parents who have already moved to the UK from overseas who are British or European Economic Area (EEA) nationals, or who have an endorsed passport showing right of abode, can apply for places for their child at any school covered by this scheme.

Parents or children in these categories who do not yet live in the UK can apply before the date they move to the UK. However, the address to be used in the allocation will be the address that the child is living at on the closing date, unless a subsequent house move has been accepted up to the last date for changes in the coordinated scheme. A UK address will only be used once the child is residing at that address, and evidence will be required of this, as in paragraph 1.10 of this document.

For non-EEA nationals, the Council may ask to see passports and visas for verification and may confirm visa status with the Home Office if this is unclear or missing.

Children in the UK on a visitor's visa are not entitled to free state education. Any parents wishing to access education for their child whilst visiting the UK may however choose to pay for private education during their stay. The only waiver to this applies

to children of visiting academics (parent has an Academic Visitor visa, up to 12 months) who may access free state education during their visit.

Visa over-stayers must be able to provide evidence of an on-going appeal in order to access free state education for the duration of the appeal process.

9.0 The In Year Fair Access Protocol

- 9.1 All requests for in-year places will be considered with reference to the Council's current admission arrangements and procedures for in year placements. The majority of requests will be agreed or refused by admission authorities with reference to two important factors: parental preference, and the availability of places within the relevant year group.
- 9.2 All Wirral schools will take part in the Fair Access Protocol, which is published separately. Schools must respond immediately to requests for admission to school according to the timescales above so that admission of the pupil is not unduly delayed.
- 9.3 The categories of children who can be considered under the Fair Access Protocol are set out in that document. Children who are looked after and previously looked after, and children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the school are NOT included in the Fair Access protocol. These children MUST be placed in the school of their carer's preference irrespective of the availability of places in the year group.
- 9.4 Parents retain their legal right to an appeal for a place at any school of their preference. This right is not affected by the decision of the Fair Access Panel. Parents do not need to wait for a Fair Access Panel decision prior to submitting an appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel.

Admission Authorities in Wirral	
Wirral Council	
Community Secondary Schools (1)	
Mosslands School	
The Governing Bodies of:	
Academy Schools	
Birkenhead High School Academy for Girls (Senior)	
Calday Grange Grammar School for Boys	
The Co-Op Academy Bebington	
Hilbre High School	
Oldershaw School	

Prenton High School for Girls
St Anselm's College
St John Plessington Catholic College
St Mary's Catholic College
The Birkenhead Park School
Upton Hall School FCJ
Weatherhead High School for Girls
West Kirby Grammar School for Girls
Wirral Grammar School for Boys
Wirral Grammar School for Girls
Woodchurch High School
Foundation Schools
Pensby High School
Ridgeway High School
South Wirral High School

* Status subject to confirmation.

A full list of schools and a map showing locations is provided in the Council's information booklets for parents, available on-line at

www.wirral.gov.uk/schooladmissions

The scheme will be amended if there are further changes to the status of schools.

PROPOSED ADMISSION NUMBERS FOR WIRRAL COMMUNITY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

SCHOOL	ADMISSION NUMBER 2022 – 2023
Mosslands School	225



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Thursday, 28 January 2021

REPORT TITLE:	BUDGET CONSULTATION
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

REPORT SUMMARY

This report forms part of the Council's formal budget setting process, as set out in the constitution and in accordance with the legal requirements to set a balanced and sustainable budget for 2021/22.

Policy and Resources Committee must recommend a 2021/22 balanced Budget proposal to the Council for its meeting in March 2021, it is good practice for service committees to consider and feedback on Budget proposals.

This is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is invited to comment and provide feedback on the budget proposals which fall under the remit of the Committee so that those comments can be presented for consideration to the Policy and Resources Committee in February 2021.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Policy and Resources Committee (P&R) is required to recommend a Budget to the Council for its meeting in March 2021. The Council has to set a budget for 2021/22 by 11 March by law 2020. This report is a key step in facilitating the Policy and Resources Committee to be in a position to recommend a Budget proposal.
- 1.2 The Council's Budget supports the delivery of the Wirral Plan and is key to ensuring the Council is financially stable. Our residents and businesses expect to be informed and consulted about how services are going to be run and how their money is going to be raised and spent. The benefits of consultations are:
- to improve planning, policy and decision making
 - to make better use of resources
 - to access new information, ideas and suggestions
 - to encourage greater participation in the activities of the council
 - to govern by consent (a full and fair consultation, with careful consideration of all views, can strengthen the legitimacy of the prevailing view among those people not in favour of the final decision)
 - to measure residents' satisfaction with the council
 - to shape council activities around residents' needs and aspirations

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options were considered as the views of the Policy Committees are sought to enable them to be submitted to the Policy & Resources Committee for consideration.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Views are being sought on the Council's future budget and spending priorities, which will be delivered through a programme of community and stakeholder consultation.
- 3.2 The public consultation began on 21 December 2020 and will finish on 22 January 2021. The objectives of the consultation are:
- **Understanding:** Stakeholders understand the scale of the budget challenge, and how we are going about overcoming it
 - **Engagement:** Stakeholders feel able to contribute and that their views are valued and are being considered
 - **Support:** Stakeholders support the budget proposals, appreciate the work which has been done to involve them, and understand the reasons for budget decisions
- 3.3 The roles of the Service Committees is to formalise any feedback from the workshops in November and December 2020 and provide feedback on the proposals to Policy & Resources Committee

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report, however the feedback requested is part of the consideration for the budget setting process, and as such, there could be financial implications.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council is required to agree a budget for 2021/22 by March 2020. The Council must set the budget in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and approval of a balanced budget each year is a statutory responsibility of the Council.
- 5.2 The provisions of section 25, Local Government Act 2003 require that, when the Council is making the calculation of its budget requirement, it must have regard to the report of the chief finance (s.151) officer as to the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. This is in addition to the personal duty on the Chief Finance (Section 151) Officer to make a report, if it appears to them that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure.
- 5.3 It is essential, as a matter of prudence, that the financial position continues to be closely monitored. In particular, Members must satisfy themselves that sufficient mechanisms are in place to ensure both that savings are delivered and that new expenditure is contained within the available resources. Accordingly, any proposals put forward must identify the realistic measures and mechanisms to produce those savings.
- 5.4 Consultation must take place in accordance with the Council's duties under section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. It must be borne in mind that this is consultation on the budget proposals, not on the decision to take whatever decision is implied by the adoption of that budget. This is because the budget is a sufficiently high-level estimate or cap and, in relation to much of the estimated income and expenditure in exercise of the budget, not set in relation to the distinct decisions that will make up that expenditure throughout the year. As such, when setting and formulating the budget it would be difficult to compile a sufficiently detailed consultation document or undertake a focussed impact assessment.
- 5.5 It should be noted, however, that this exercise must also form the essential preliminary consultation under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 and section 27 of the Children and Families Act 2014, as well as due regard under section s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the public sector equality duty) and section 11 of the Children Act 2004 if consultation is necessary, where there is any significant, sufficiently focussed and, in financial terms, apparently rigid relationship of spending to a specific proposal, even if taken as part of the setting of a budget. The consultation process, including the Council's consideration of the responses, is

required to comply with the following overarching obligations (unless detailed statutory rules supplant these):

- Consultation must be at a time when proposals are at a formative stage.
- The proposer must give sufficient reasons for its proposals to allow consultees to understand them and respond to them properly.
- Consulters must give sufficient time for responses to be made and considered.
- Responses must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising the decision.

5.6 The results of the consultation exercises will form part of the report to Policy and Resources Committee. This will be under three headings and accompanying appendices concerning:

- (a) the public consultation responses, which will be presented in a form that allows the Policy and Resources Committee, and therefore full Council, to be able to give conscientious consideration to the consultation responses in making their recommendation and decision (This summary will also be shared with all Members at the earliest opportunity);
- (b) The responses of the individual policy and service committees, the collation of which forms the purpose of this report; and
- (c) Consultation and comments received directly from stakeholders and from other sources

5.7 This is the same whether or not a public body was required to consult or chooses to do so. This is because all of those rules are aspects of an overriding requirement for 'fairness'. The process must be substantively fair and have the appearance of fairness. The setting of the budget and council tax by Members involves their consideration of choices.

5.8 When considering options, Members must bear in mind their fiduciary duty to the council taxpayers of Wirral. Members must have adequate evidence on which to base their decisions on the level of quality at which services should be provided.

5.9 Where a service is provided pursuant to a statutory duty, it would not be lawful to fail to discharge it properly or abandon it, and where there is discretion as to how it is to be discharged, that discretion should be exercised reasonably.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no implications for resources as a result of this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The Council's ability to close the funding gap is highly dependent on the accuracy of assumptions used for Government funding and levies from other bodies, as well as demand estimates for Council services. As the Local Government Finance

Settlement only covers one year, the uncertainty around future funding over the MTFP period remains high.

- 7.2 A key risk to the Council's financial plans is that funding and demand assumptions in particular can change as more information becomes available. As such, the MTFP is regularly reviewed and updated as part of routine financial management.
- 7.3 There is a risk that external factors could impact on agreed savings, which means that may not be delivered or may be delayed. Progress on delivery of agreed savings will be monitored using Budget Monitoring reports presented to P&R Committee. As such the Council continues to hold a General Fund reserve of £10.7m. This represents a minimum level of contingency to support the organisation if savings cannot be delivered and no other options for mitigation can be identified.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Views are being sought on the Council's future budget and spending priorities, which will be delivered through a programme of community and stakeholder consultation.
- 8.2 The Council has also worked with staff and Trade Unions where required to ensure obligations in relation to statutory staff consultation is delivered appropriately and within agreed guidelines.
- 8.3 Should any financial proposals agreed by Policy and Resources Committee require specific consultation, the Council will commence appropriate consultation directly with any service users and stakeholders who are affected and will feedback their views before final decisions are taken.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 It is recognised that some of the developing proposals could have equality implications. Any implications will be considered and any negative impacts will be mitigated where possible.
- 9.2 Equality implications will be assessed during planning, decision and implementation stages and will be recognised as an ongoing responsibility. Equality issues will be a conscious consideration and an integral part of the process.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 No direct implications. The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of Greenhouse Gases.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Savings Proposals

BACKGROUND PAPERS

2021/22 Budget Transition Process (Policy and Resources Committee 7 October 2020)
Local Government Association: Consulting Residents

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Policy & Resources Committee	7 October 2020
Council	19 October 2020
Policy & Resources Committee	18 December 2020

Appendix 1 – Savings Proposals

Children, Young People & Education Committee		
<p>Children's Services in Wirral have made considerable improvements in recent years after being rated "inadequate" back in 2016. The improvements are in part because the authority made the decision to invest in the service and because of the hard work and dedication of those who work there.</p> <p>A family's history should not and will not impact on the ambition of children in Wirral. We are focussed on breaking the cycle of poor outcomes and low ambition, raising the aspirations of every child in Wirral – regardless of where they live or their background. Our job is to encourage, and inspire, and we are relentless in pursuit of that goal. We will enable families to bring up children in safe, happy and secure environments.</p>		
OPTION	VALUE	NARRATIVE
Explore reduction in Youth Provision	£200,000	Activities for young people can help with educational outcomes and prevent child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation and anti-social behaviour. We are looking at exploring a reduction in Youth Provision, which would result in a potential saving of £200,000
Modernisation & Social Care combined: Staff Efficiency Savings	£102,000	Children's Services includes preventative and support services that are both statutory and non-statutory and which support each other and are closely integrated. Their work includes ensuring vulnerable children who are being harmed or abused are protected and kept safe and families get the help they need. We are looking at combining the Modernisation & Social Care offer, which would result in a potential saving of £102,000

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, 28 January 2021

REPORT TITLE:	REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF CHILDRENS SERVICES

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the financial monitoring information for the Children, Young People & Education Committee. The report provides Members with an overview of budget performance for the area of activity which falls under the remit of the Committee. The financial information details the projected year-end revenue position, as reported at quarter 2 (Apr-Sep) 2020/21.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People & Education Committee are requested to note the projected year-end revenue forecast position of £2.058m adverse, as reported at quarter 2 (Apr-Sep) of 2020-21.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

1.1 Regular monitoring and reporting of the Revenue Budgets, savings achievements and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) position enables decisions to be taken faster, which may produce revenue benefits and will improve financial control of Wirral Council.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 No other options have been considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The overall financial forecast of Children, Families and Education directorate shows a full year adverse position of £2.058m.

3.2 The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a recognised risk of significant placement demand pressures transpiring later in 2020/21; as the full impact of Covid-19 emerges, the current estimate of this is a 5% increase in placements, which amounts to £0.6m forecast for the full financial year. A forecast overspend on In House Foster Care Skills payments, which is a 5% contingency of £0.19m for additional Covid-19 pressure for the rest of year. This is due to in house foster carers being unable to work as children are self-isolating or unable to attend school due to covid-19 restrictions meaning the year group are unable to attend. Willowtree Residential Unit has a £0.133m pressure on staffing which is due to extra staff being required to cover shifts were other staff members or children have been self-isolating. Within Schools-Core, there is £1m overspend projected on Transport is due to social distancing on the vehicles resulting in less children in each vehicle and more vehicles required to provide transport.

TABLE 1 2020/21 Children, Families and Education – Service Budget & Forecast

	Full Year		Variance		Adv/Fav
	Budget	Forecast	(+ Fav, - Adv)		
	£000	£000	£000	%	
Children and Families	48,415	49,862	(1,447)	-3%	Adverse
Early Help and Prevention	11,868	11,791	77	1%	
Modernisation and Support	5,032	4,720	312	6%	Favourable
Schools - Core	10,110	11,110	(1,000)	-10%	Adverse
Schools - DSG	(5,544)	(5,544)	0	0%	
Directorate Surplus / (Deficit)	76,118	78,176	(2,058)	-3%	Adverse
Support / Admin Building	7,792	7,792	0	0%	

Overhead					
Movement on Reserves	6,238	6,238	0	0%	
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	83,910	85,968	(2,058)	-2%	Adverse

3.3 **Children and Families:** Children and Families area is reporting a £1.447m forecast deficit. This is due to a £0.472m pressure on placements particularly on independent residential and semi residential placements as high rate increases are impacting on the service and £0.242m on Allowances which is made up of a £0.052m forecast overspend on in house foster care skills payments (no budget), plus a 5% contingency of £0.190m for additional Covid-19 pressure in rest of year and £0.133m on staffing in Willowtree residential service. The service reviews high cost placements on a two-week basis to manage and reduce their prevalence. The service has started a project to improve the offer for residential services, including Willowtree, to improve outcomes and drive future efficiencies.

Although the indirect financial impact of Covid-19 across this area has been managed to date there is a risk of significant pressures transpiring later in 2020/21 as the full impact of Covid-19 emerges; a conservative estimate of 5% increase in demand has been forecast. There is an expectation that the number of looked after children (LAC) will increase due to reduced community-based activities in the current climate which support families and prevent children entering the care system (amounting to £0.6m for the remaining 6 months Oct to March). The Covid-19 impact on referrals is reviewed weekly by the service, to date no action had been required.

3.4 **Modernisation and Support:** Overall, full year favourable forecast variance of £0.077m is reported due to staffing being budgeted at the top of the pay scale but not all staff are at this level, in addition not all staff are members of the pension scheme.

3.5 **Early help & Prevention:** Early Help & Prevention is forecast to be £0.312m in surplus at year-end. This surplus is mostly due to staffing being budgeted at top of scale but not all staff are paid at top of scale as well as staff on maternity leave and/or have opted out of the pension scheme. There is also a delay in the implementation of the PAUSE program until October 2020. PAUSE is a programme which aims to reduce the demand for Children's social services by working with women who are at risk of repeated pregnancies that result in children being removed from their care.

3.6 The new Emergency Duty Team staffing model, which was to reduce cost pressures, was planned for implementation in April 2020 but has been delayed until January 2021 due to the current Covid-19 pandemic. There is also a £0.1m Agency Staff pressure of whom are mostly backfilling vacancies.

3.7 **Schools – core:** It is expected that services will be delivered with a deficit of £1m at year-end. The Children's Assisted Travel total annual budget of £3.5m has been transferred into Children's Services. This service was previously held in the Neighbourhoods directorate and has moved to this area to more closely manage the key driver of expenditure, demand for the service. This is to assist in monitoring the quality and cost of the service to ensure value for money. The £1m overspend

projected on transport is split £0.560m transport autumn term; £0.440m transport spring 21 term. This is due to social distancing on the vehicles resulting in less children in each vehicle and more vehicles being required to provide transport. The transport position for 2020-21 and Covid-19 restrictions is currently being reviewed weekly.

- 3.8 **Schools – DSG:** The full year position for 2020-21 is forecast to be balanced. Schools DSG reflects the position reported at Schools Forum on 29th September which is currently forecasting an operational overspend of £1.7m due to demand for High Needs support. The overspend will be off-set by use of the DSG reserve to deliver a balanced position at the end of the financial year. This is the third consecutive year that the DSG reserve has been used to off-set in-year expenditure and this will result in a deficit (overcommitted) reserve of £3m by the end of 2020-21. The deficit position will need to be recovered in future years and the service are currently developing a deficit recovery plan. It should be noted that the DSG reserve is entirely ringfenced to DSG activity and does not impact Wirral Council reserves position.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This is the revenue budget monitoring report that provides information on the forecast outturn for the Children, Young People & Education Directorate 2020/21. The Council has robust methods for reporting and forecasting budgets in place and alongside formal Quarterly reporting to the Policy & Resources Committee, the financial position is routinely reported at Directorate Management Team meetings and corporately at the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). In the event of any early warning highlighting pressures and potential overspends, the SLT take collective responsibility to identify solutions to resolve these to ensure a balanced budget can be reported at the end of the year.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The provisions of section 25, Local Government Act 2003 require that, when the Council is making the calculation of its budget requirement, it must have regard to the report of the chief finance (s.151) officer as to the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. This is in addition to the personal duty on the Chief Finance (Section 151) Officer to make a report, if it appears to them that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The possible failure to deliver the Revenue Budget is being mitigated by:

1. Senior Leadership / Directorate Teams regularly reviewing the financial position.
2. Availability of General Fund Balances.
3. Review of existing services and service provision.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The priorities in the Council Plan 2025 were informed by stakeholder engagement carried out in 2019.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

9.2 There are no equality implications arising specifically from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Wirral Plan 2025 includes a set of goals and objectives to create a sustainable environment which urgently tackles the environment emergency. These are based on developing and delivering plans that improve the environment for Wirral residents. The performance report will include information on key areas where environment and climate related outcomes are delivered.

10.2 No direct implications. The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of Greenhouse Gases.

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APPENDICES

none

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2020/21 Revenue Budget Monitor for Quarter Two (Apr - Sep)
- Revenue Budget 2020/21 and Medium-Term Financial Plan (2021/22 to 2024/25)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, 28 January 2021

REPORT TITLE:	UPDATE ON SEND IMPROVEMENT PLAN
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

The report provides members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee with an update on the Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Improvement Plan.

The Improvement Plan underpins the SEND Strategy 2020-2024, agreed by the Committee in December 2020.

It provides the detailed activity to be undertaken to support delivery of the Strategy and is focussed around the four main local area strategic priorities:

1. Provide high quality provision and support focussed on achieving outcomes
2. Ensure early identification of special education needs and high-quality intervention particularly for children and young people exhibiting social, emotional, and mental health issues
3. Further develop effective transition from one education phase/setting including preparing for adulthood pathway
4. To further develop participation, engagement and coproduction with children, young people, parents, and carers

Appendix 1 to this report is the detailed SEND Improvement Plan with progress updates identified.

The aim of the improvement plan is to ensure that the local area works collaboratively to identify and support children with SEND and improve their outcomes. This will mean reducing inequalities and helping to achieve the Council's priorities, specifically provide:

- Brighter futures for our young people and families – regardless of their background or where they live
- Services which help people live happy, healthy, independent, and active lifestyles, with public services there to support them when they need it

This matter affects all wards.

This is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is recommended to:

- (a) Endorse the progress made to date on achieving the actions set out within the SEND Improvement Plan at appendix 1; and,
- (b) Agree to receive a further update on progress towards achievement and evidence of impact in six months.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Children, Young People and Education Committee has a role to play in ensuring that the local authority and partners are working collectively to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The Improvement Plan, attached at appendix 1, provides an opportunity to update the Committee on progress made to date and to seek endorsement for the activity undertaken.
- 1.2 Members of the Committee may wish to continue to play a role in monitoring progress towards SEND improvement by receiving a further update within six months or at a future convenient time.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 It is important that the SEND Strategy has a core delivery element which provides direction and accountability for improvement. The need for an action plan is therefore important in this context.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 At its meeting of the 1st December, the Children, Young People and Education Committee agreed the SEND Strategy 2020-2024. The Strategy sets out the local area's priorities over the next four years for improving services, support and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The Strategy is aligned to the Wirral Plan 2025 which aims to secure brighter futures for young people and families and deliver services which help people live happy, healthy, independent lives.
- 3.2 Underpinning the Strategy, the SEND Improvement Plan provides a detailed action plan for delivery of the priorities and commitments made. The plan is aligned to the four strategic priorities agreed by the local area and the Children's Committee in December. The Committee agreed to receive an update on the Improvement Plan at its meeting of 28 January 2021.
- 3.3 The update presented at Appendix 1 is based on a review of the current action plan and target dates. The original improvement plan set challenging timescales, particularly in the context of delivery within the COVID-19 pandemic. The refreshed Improvement Plan reflects a more realistic picture in terms of key milestones and timescale. Equally, some previous actions have been amalgamated to one to avoid duplication of activity and to support a more streamlined and coherent plan. Continued review of the plan will ensure that it remains relevant and focussed to achieve the objectives of the Strategy.
- 3.4 A summary of the progress update includes:
- 3.5 **Priority 1: Provide high quality provision and support focussed on achieving outcomes**

- Extensive training has been carried out with core teams involved in Education, Health and Care assessment and planning. This has included the development of a competency training for recording on the local authority information system, training on assessment and planning with specific focus on capturing the views and aspirations of children, young people, and families. This has resulted in better skilled officers and improved capacity within the service and improvements in the timeliness of assessments.
- A dedicated SEND Commissioning Team is being established with officers expected to be in post by the end of January. The priorities for the team will be focussing on reviewing individual commissioning arrangements to give children, young people, and parents/carers greater choice.

3.6 Priority 2: Ensure early identification of special education needs and high-quality intervention particularly for children and young people exhibiting social, emotional, and mental health issues.

- A communication plan has been developed which sets out ways of improving communication across the partnership (health, education, local authority) and which focusses on early identification of need.
- Initiatives underpinning the developing Inclusion Strategy will help to improve support for social, emotional, and mental health issues, particularly in education. This includes successful support from University of Chester to support training and development around trauma informed practice. Schools have now been identified for pilot programme and key members of staff identified for a Postgraduate Certificate in attachment, trauma, and mental health. Online training will be available for 5000 staff from January. This will help provide a sustainable model moving forward by creating a hub of expertise.

3.7 Priority 3: Further develop effective transition from one education phase/setting including preparing for adulthood pathway.

- The Wirral Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Targeted Support initiative launched on 18th September 2020 to enable the local area to test the implementation of the SEND reforms in relation to young people with SEND transitioning to adulthood. There are four pathways of focus: employment, independent living, community, inclusion, and health. A dip sample of up to 80 EHC Plans was embarked upon to gain a coherent understanding of what was working well and what are the areas for development. This resulted in a co-designed training offer that targeted the development needs in Wirral.
- In 2021, a post-training dip sample will be undertaken to measure impact and identify whether children and young people are any better off because of the SEND Strategy being implemented with a particular focus on the process of preparing for adulthood, a key transition.

3.8 Priority 4: To further develop participation, engagement and coproduction with children, young people, parents, and carers

An accessibility audit of the Local Offer was carried out in October 2020 and rated the website as 86% accessible which is 26th out of 152 local authorities. During the pandemic, the Local Offer website was the 'go to' website to support parents of young people with SEND. The number of twitter followers for the site has risen from 285 to 460 from 1st March to date which was a 62% increase. 32 new contributors have been identified to help provide key information about health and adult services.

In partnership with the Parent Carer Partnership Wirral an action plan has been developed to improve participation around the four cornerstones of co-production. This resulted in a proposed action plan being created around collaborative projects. These will be taken forward as key priorities for coproduction.

- 3.9 There has been positive progress made on the actions within the SEND Improvement Plan. Work will continue to review the action plan to ensure that it appropriately reflects the key activity needed to deliver the priorities within the Strategy.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising out of the report. However, delivery the actions may result in there being financial implications for the Council and/or wider financial implications in relation to the Dedicated Schools Grant. Members of the Committee will be informed in the next update on the financial monitoring against the Improvement Plan.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The report recognises and responds to the requirements set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the statutory responsibilities on local authorities regarding how services and support are delivered for children and young people with special education needs and disabilities.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are no resource implications arising out of the report. Delivery of the action plan is carried out using existing resources. The Committee will be informed should there be any resource implications.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The local authority and partners are committed to driving improvements across the local area to support improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND. Failure to do so will mean that children and young people may not be provided with the right support and intervention to enable them to achieve their aspirations both now and in the longer-term.

7.2 The local authority and partners are inspected by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission in relation to how the local area effectively identifies, meets the need, and improves outcomes for children and young people with SEND. Improvement which is aligned to statutory requirements and responds to the needs of the local area, is essential to demonstrate to regulators that Wirral has effectively delivered on the SEND Reforms as set out in 2014 Children and Families Act.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Two SEND Summits have been held with over 150 professionals and stakeholders engaged in the development of the SEND Strategy and the actions which underpin it. Over 250 young people have also been engaged in its development and will continue to help shape and deliver activity moving forward.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

(c) No because the quality impact assessment has already been completed for the SEND Strategy and can be found here: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments> The EIA has been reviewed since its completion three months ago and remains valid.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO2.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: SEND Improvement Plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SEND Strategy 2020-2024

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
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SEND Improvement Plan
Update on progress – December 2020

SEND Strategy priority 1: Provide high quality provision and support focussed on achieving outcomes

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress update	Status
Collaborative partnership working					
1.1	Work collaboratively across the Local Area to ensure a clear understanding of all specialities so that there is transparency around what services provide; what services deliver and where support is needed.	SEND Strategic Board	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Deputy Director for Quality and Safety of Wirral CCG now Chairs the SEND Strategic Board with local authority, health and education represented. – SEND Strategy and Self-evaluation all shared and approved at SEND Strategic Board and considered by Health and Wellbeing Board meaning that key documents which provide overview of local area are understood across the partnership. 	Completed
1.2	Host termly SENDCO Exchanges to share information, upskill SENDCOs and foster positive communication.	Sally Tittle, Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Termly SENDCo exchanges have been held and a virtual forum held with SENDCo's this year. – Participation Lead provide single point of contact and communication between local authority meaning that information and advice can be directly channelled to inform SENDCo's. Feedback from SENDCOs is positive about their relationship with Local authority. 	Completed
1.3	Work with the specialist SEND sector (special schools and resource provision schools) to strengthen their leading role in developing SEND improvement across the Local Area.	Head of SEND and Inclusion Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There is regular attendance from the local authority at the local area Wirral Special Headteachers Association (WiSpA) so information and key areas for improvement/development shared. – Further work is required to agree a meaningful approach to implementing the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Management Plan in partnership with special schools. <p>Timescale to be revised to: March 2021</p>	Ongoing

EHCP Assessment and Planning processes

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress update	Status
1.4	Further develop the role of the social care designated officer so that their role incorporates greater consideration and involvement of children and families in co-producing and defining the support for children.	Head of Assessment and Intervention	November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A new quality assurance process has been built in to improve the quality of advices from social care. This considers how the voice and views of families and children/young people are incorporated. – Next step will be to consider opportunities for how parents and carers will co-produce plans for social care support through for example, personal budgets. Revised timescale: March 2021 	Ongoing
1.5	Improve the Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) assessment process to meet statutory timescales.	Head of SEND and Inclusion	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The SEND competency framework has skilled up EHCP Co-ordinators to effectively use systems for capturing progress. – The Head of SEND and Inclusion has made meeting statutory timescales for plans a priority for the team – Increased capacity within the team has helped to manage the number of plans being produced by each team member – Training and development by the DfE have increased quality of plans and skilled up Co-ordinators – Compliance with timescales now at 60% cumulative over the calendar year and much improved. – Next steps are to continue to focus on meeting statutory timescales with aim for 100% Revised timescale: March 2021 	Ongoing
1.6	Produce a recovery plan for the DSG current and projected budget overspend and consult with all stakeholders to determine changes to make DSG budget savings	Head of SEND and Inclusion	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The local authority is currently in consultation and review stage with schools and partners about the requirements of the plan and process for development – The Schools Forum will consider any potential proposals in the New Year – Next steps are to develop a series of proposals for wider consultation which may form part of the plan 	Ongoing
1.7	Ensure the views of parents and young people are captured in annual reviews and carry out audits to check that their views are reflected	Head of SEND and Inclusion	November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annual review training was held in Feb 2020 with Department for Education (DfE) 'effective annual review 12-month review process' 	Completed

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress update	Status
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A revised template has been produced for review officers which includes capturing the views of parents/cyp – Training for staff in schools will be carried out by NDTI – Audit process now embedded into review and plan process 	
Commissioning					
1.8	Develop a SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy across education, health, and social care in response to identified immediate priorities.	Commissioning Manager	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A Joint Commissioning Forum has been established to agree and plan for joint commissioning arrangements – A SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy will be developed in the New Year, incorporating the key principles of joint commissioning across SEND 	Ongoing
1.9	Review the availability of specialist residential facilities for young people with complex needs and ensure there is sufficient to reduce the need for them to be placed at a distance.	Commissioning Manager	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A new SEND commissioning team is being recruited to and will be in place from the end of January. The team will focus on the priorities within individual plans and develop a new framework for SEND placements – a priority for first 6 weeks. 	Ongoing
1.11	Ensure service users on future joint commissioning contracts are consulted and feedback incorporated.	Commissioning Manager	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A process is in place to ensure that all Service users will be consulted with as part of any commissioning arrangements and their views fed into future decisions. 	Completed
1.11	Review individual packages of support and undertake micro commissioning, giving parents greater choice	Commissioning Manager	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – As per 1.9 the new SEND Commissioning Team will focus on individual packages of support. Next steps - Proposed to combine actions 1.9 and 1.11 	Ongoing
1.12	Review the impact of the All-Age disability Service for improving outcomes for children young people and adults with SEND.	Commissioning Team	January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Suggested revised timescale of 2022. Initial discussions to take place with commissioning officers to scope out the specification for the review and what is required. 	Not started
Preparation for Adulthood					
1.13	Continue to develop a high-quality post 16 provision offer for learners with SEND within the borough to support their transition to adulthood.	Head of Integrated Skills, Learning and Employment	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Careers advice and support is offered by Wirral Met College in three special schools – 20 additional Supported Internships for young people provided by Wirral Met College 	Completed

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress update	Status
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Since 2016, 42 young people (aged 16-25) have been supported through internships with 50% sustaining employment 	
1.14	Develop further understanding of the Gatsby benchmarks so that they are embedded and result in an aspirational culture for young people across all provision.	Head of SEND and Inclusion	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preparation for adulthood Targeted Support initiative developed in September 2020 – Four preparing for adulthood pathways were the focus and these were: employment, independent living, community, inclusion, and health. – Separate action plan being developed which will ensure principles and benchmarks included 	Ongoing
Quality Assurance and Performance Management					
1.15	Improve the information management systems to inform on the impact of services and outcomes for children and young people.	Performance and Improvement Manager	February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Competency framework developed to support compliance with updating systems to data is relevant and timely: Phase 1 - performance reports developed against the indicators within the 20-week process Phase 2 - review process (end of Jan) Phase 3 - tribunal, mediation and re-assessment stages (end of Feb) 	Ongoing
1.16 (New)	Review SEND Dashboard to ensure it reflects a wider local area analysis of data and provides insight to SEND local partners	Performance and Improvement Manager	May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Request for participation in review of Dashboard have been circulated and working group to be convened in new year to critically review and develop Dashboard further 	Ongoing
1.17 (New)	Continue to address data quality issues within the SEND information management system so that information is accurate and up to date	Performance and Improvement Manager	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Data officers have been appointed to assist with cleansing of data and troubleshooting data quality issues. 	Ongoing
1.18	Develop a skills audit across the Local Area to identify strengths as well as establish gaps.	SEND Strategic Board	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Council for Disabled Children audit tools have been used across the partnership and will provide baseline for the development of a skills audit across the local area 	Ongoing
1.19	We will develop our audit and refine the internal and external moderation of our Education Health and Care Plans and	SEND Manager	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Internal QA processes are in place e.g., peer support, dip sampling, 	Ongoing

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress update	Status
	reviews to continue to develop integrated high-quality plans with clear outcomes.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1144 181 1977 292">– The Department for Education (DfE)/National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) has quality assured up to 80 anonymised EHC Plans <li data-bbox="1144 300 1977 450">– Further work will be to develop a local area, multi-agency audit process which will explore the responses to all partners in the quality of plans and interventions put in place 	

SEND Strategy priority 2: Ensure early identification of special education needs and high-quality intervention particularly for children and young people exhibiting social, emotional, and mental health issues

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress update	Status
Early identification approaches					
2.1	Improve knowledge and skills across the local area so that a young person's needs are identified early, and a clear pathway identified.	SEND Strategic Board (all partners)	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The local authority has carried out extensive training across the assessment teams to ensure that needs are identified well: – 2.12.2019 DfE EHC plan writing training for the SEN team – 07.02.2020 & 14.02.2020 DfE Training Annual Reviews: Managing the Process Effectively - North West Region – 03.07.2020 External Quality Assurance of EHC plans including Section A – 09.07.2020 External Quality Assurance EHC plans Report observations and recommendations, including EHC plans Section A – 28.07.2020 External Feedback session to education, health and care colleagues on Quality Assurance, including Section A EHC plans – Use of online surveys for young people implemented – Young people's voice key driver for the new SEND Strategy – Participation Lead/Officer play key role in engaging views of young people. – Training across early years settings, including childminders and good uptake of the SENDCO accreditation in early years – Next steps to undertake skills audit across the local area to identify any gaps – see 1.18 action plan 	Completed
2.2	Use survey feedback from children and young people to develop and improve integrated assessments and plans for children and young people with SEND.	SEN Manager	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – DfE plan writing training taken place particularly focussing on capturing the views of young people – Feedback from parents and CYP from assessment process has been positive with ideas incorporated into changes 	Ongoing

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress update	Status
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Further work to ensure feedback is captured as mandatory part of process – Suggested revised timescale March 2021 	
2.3	Education providers to ensure that the support for learners with SEND at school support is clear on the Local Offer and schools are identifying learners in line with the information on their school information reports.	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Local Offer team engage through various mechanisms with schools and parents to promote the Local Offer. – Schools reminded to update Information Reports and publish on website – audit completed of all schools last year with good compliance with information – Refresh of Local Offer in progress and schools will play key role in shaping information (see separate action). 	Completed
2.4	Support parents' knowledge of child development to identify issues earlier.	SEND Strategic Board	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New Early Years Strategy to aim to strengthen parents understanding – Local Offer review to promote understanding 	Ongoing
2.5	Ensure Children Looked After with SEND needs are recognised and assessed early and that the right level of support and placement is available.	Head of SEND and Inclusion/ Head of Virtual School	Revised: February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Project group established to review timeliness of assessments for Children Looked After and to work with schools to ensure that they can remain in education. – New pathways and processes to be defined so that needs are considered as part of Personal Education Pathway planning 	Ongoing
2.6 (new)	<i>Amalgamation of two previous actions:</i> Ensure that advice and guidance is provided by the Education Psychologists Team to inform assessments (within timescale) and to key partners such as SENDCO's so that young people get support at the earliest opportunity	Educational Psychologist Team Manager	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New drop-in service offered to SENDCOs to be promoted across the local area to access advice and support – Recruitment of Education Psychologist underway which will increase capacity within the Service to provide timely advices as part of the assessment process 	Ongoing
Communication					

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress update	Status
2.7	Review feedback from complaints, mediation, and tribunal hearings to develop and improve our service delivery.	SEN Manager	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints tracker has been developed which reviews source and reason for complaint SEND Resolution Officer developed Communication Plan which addressing issues raised from complaints Process for feeding in outcome of mediation and tribunal to be developed – Revised timescale March 2021 	Ongoing
2.8	Improve communication between educational settings and services to improve the experience of transition for young people at key points.	Head of SEND and Inclusion	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Lead plays key conduit role in person and or via Teams Reports are provided to Schools Forum on SEND and Inclusion Services Monthly letter to Chairs of school groups/clusters on Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Management Plan Further work to embed improved communication between local authority teams and schools in relation to individuals (revised timescale March 2021) 	Ongoing
2.9	Review how we communicate with young people and families.	Head of SEND and Inclusion	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of how we communicate has been carried out and Communication framework in development with internal consultation in October 2020 Individual family communication plan to be developed as part of assessment process. 	Completed
Identifying of gaps					
2.10	Work collectively to produce a clear pathway for reporting gaps in provision to improve the experience of the young person.	SEND Strategic Board	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement Plan and SEND Strategy to be owned by Strategic Board with risks and issues highlighted Reports to be fed in regularly and key discussions to be had about areas for development and agreed actions 	Completed
Inclusion					
2.11	Ensure that Mental Health Transformation Plan fully recognises and reflects the needs of children with SEN/D	SEND Strategic Board	February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The local authority has carried out a Wellbeing Return to Education Department for Education (DfE) Project led by Educational Psychology Service (EPS) which focussed on the mental health of children and young people. 	Ongoing

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress update	Status
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The ESLA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) pilot programme had received positive results. – A project looking at developing a co-ordinated approach to mental health will consider CYP with SEND as a priority 	
2.12	Work collectively to produce an Inclusion Strategy which effectively promotes a culture and embeds working which promotes inclusion	SEN/Inclusion Manager	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A new Inclusion Strategy is in development. – Work is ongoing to consult stakeholders on the proposals within the Strategy and ensure it is aligned to key strategies across the partnership 	Ongoing
2.13	Develop with schools an early intervention approach using research-based practice	SEN/Inclusion Manager	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Successful support from University of Chester to support training and development around trauma informed practice – Schools now identified for pilot programme and key members of staff identified for PG Cert in attachment, trauma and mental health. – Online training available for 5000 staff from January. This will help provide a sustainable model moving forward by creating a hub of expertise 	Ongoing
2.14	Refine the Exclusion process to reduce permanent exclusions	SEN/Inclusion Manager	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Numbers of exclusions have reduced by half. – Numbers for this academic term are 3 perm exes compared to 12 this time last year. – The local authority is providing challenge and working with heads to secure other alternatives to exclusion which has been key. The role of Inclusion Manager is vital to continue the downward trend and encouragement for schools to adopt a more inclusive approach. 	Ongoing

SEND Strategy priority 3: Further develop effective transition from one education phase/setting including preparing for adulthood pathway

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress update	Status
Transition planning					
3.1	Develop clear guidance around pathways and options and person-centred planning to improve the personal transition experience to adulthood for young people with SEND and their families	Head of SEND and Inclusion	May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preparation for adulthood Targeted Support initiative developed in September 2020 – Four preparing for adulthood pathways were the focus and these were: employment, independent living, community, inclusion, and health. – Separate action plan being developed which will ensure pathways and processes refined and reviewed 	Ongoing
3.2	Work with young people and stakeholders to develop a “curriculum for life”.	Head of SEND and Inclusion	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Attendance at Parent Carer Participation Wirral (PCPW) termly + additional Keep in Touch (KIT) meetings – Priorities agreed with Parent Carer Participation Wirral (PCPW) to shape curriculum for life – Next steps to ensure wider views feed into development including young people 	Ongoing
3.3	Promote Supported Internships and access routes to employment for young people with SEND.	Head of Integrated Skills, Learning and Employment	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There is a good take up of Supported Internships for Children and Young People with SEND – This is promoted across the service to all young people 	Completed
3.4	Strengthen the partnership with special schools, local FE colleges/ training advisors and Youth services/informal education settings to share expertise and support effective progression towards adulthood.	Head of Integrated Skills, Learning and Employment	May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a good relationship with special schools about supporting young people post 16 - Wirral Met College work with three schools to offer careers advice to SEND young people - Supported Internships are offered by the College, the local authority and employees 	Ongoing

3.5	Work with local stakeholders to promote improved and earlier joint working between Children and Adults' Services to support young people into adulthood so that young people get the right information from the right people at the right time.	Head of Assessment and Intervention	2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Transition planning meetings are held with Adult Services – Designated Social Care Officer ensures that links are established early for children in social care services so that social care needs can be identified early – Next step is to ensure pathways are robust so that transition planning is effective 	Ongoing
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Information and Advice

3.6	Provide clear information about the services that can support preparing for adulthood across education, health and social care from year 9 review.	Head of SEND and Inclusion	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Department for Education (DfE) and National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) PfA initiative launched Sept 20 and will take place until January 2021 will help to ensure information is accessible to all and provide recommendations for improvement – Information on the initiative was provided at SEND Strategic Board presentation and 3 workshops to ensure all partners were involved/informed – Training was carried out with partners in November with a review and impact assessment in January 2021 	Ongoing
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3.7	Regularly update our Transition to Adulthood brochure (available on the Local Offer) and host Your Future, Your Choice events to prepare young people for their next chapter	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – This has been paused due to COVID but will be picked up again in the New Year 	Not started
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3.8	Ensure clear information and guidance is available to parents and families to support the transition from primary to secondary schools supporting the SEND Code of Practice ethos of a right to mainstream education.	Head of SEND and Inclusion	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Review of family guidance and information underway – Transition pathway information under review – Revisions and new information to provide by March 2021 	Ongoing
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Pathways to adulthood

3.9	Work with a wide range of providers, further develop provision, pathways into adulthood, supported internships and employability skills across the 16-19/25 phase.	Head of Integrated Skills, Learning and Employment	January 2021	– Update as per 3.4	
Student voice					
3.10	Oversee and manage how the views of children and young people impact on service provision, developments and decisions, via school consultations, individual consultations with young people and Wirral SEND Youth Voice Group.	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – An action plan has been developed around the four principles of co-production and a series of collaborative projects have been identified for co-production with young people. – Next steps to begin the work to engage young people in initiation of design of the programme/bespoke work 	Ongoing
3.11	Build on the success achieved to date with Wirral's SEND Youth Voice group and continue to develop young people to ensure that their voices are heard and influence practice developments.	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SEND Youth Voice has continued to be active during COVID with virtual meetings and engagement and opportunities to "have your say" – Promotional campaign will be tied into Participation and Engagement strategy to showcase the positive work of SEND Youth Voice 	Ongoing
3.12	SEND Youth Voice group will access training and support to be the 'voices and champions' of SEND issues locally for themselves and other SEND young people.	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	May 2021	– Training to be undertaken and feedback mechanism to be developed and progressed with the Youth Voice so that they can fully champion the voice of young people with SEND	Ongoing

SEND Strategy priority 4: To further develop participation, engagement and coproduction with children, young people, parents and carers

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress update	Status
Improve awareness and use of the Local Offer website					
4.1	Resource marketing materials for the Local Offer	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – April 2020 Wirral Local Offer includes a SENCO Forum dedicated space where updates known as snapshots are maintained to keep an open dialogue with SENCOs. 	Ongoing
4.2	Increase followers and contributors on the Local Offer Twitter and Facebook accounts	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There has been an increase of followers as result of COVID-19. Refresh of the Local Offer will help further this action – The recent Accessibility Audit in October 2020 rated the website as 86% accessible which is 26th out of 152 local authorities. – COVID-19 response meant that the Local Offer received 63% increase in followers 	Completed
4.3	Introduce Local Offer Champions in each service or setting.	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 20 Local Offer champions have been appointed and working as key conduits for local offer information – Number of Local Offer champions has risen by 32 as a response to COVID with new contributors from Adults Services and health 	Completed
4.4	Continue to develop the Local Offer to ensure that there is a full range of advice, support and services that can be accessed by children, young people, parents, carers, providers and professionals.	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A full audit of the Local Offer in 2018 using a RAG rating scheme. Document available. Have moved the few non-compliant areas from amber/red to green but still experiencing a few issues mainly around Transport. – Have instructed Hey Strategy to complete an audit re broken links. Links corrected. – Recent Accessibility Audit in October 2020 rated the website as 86% accessible which is 26th out of 152 local authorities. 	Completed

4.5	Prioritise finding ways to engage with those who are 'hard to reach	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Targeted campaign as part of COVID-19 to ensure that information and advice about lockdown was accessible for all people. Further work required to consider alternative ways of reaching out – Engagement with social care and health colleagues to understand mechanisms for tapping into service-users 	Ongoing
4.6	Signpost parents to where help is available if children and young people do not meet service criteria for a statutory plan	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	Mar-21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Information and advice already available on Local Offer but work to strengthen will take place in New year 	Ongoing
4.7	Develop advice and information for parents that is co-produced and where possible in Easy Read	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Participation and Engagement Team have access to organisation which can translate information into Easy Read. Plans to promote this will be developed 	Ongoing
Coproductio					
4.8	Work collaboratively to produce a working Wirral Coproduction Charter.	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New Participation and Engagement Strategy in development which will strengthen approach to charter and promote chart principles. 	Ongoing
4.9	Seek to work collaboratively with Wirral's Parent/Carer forum (PCPW) to progress areas of agreed priority (e.g. Preparation for Adulthood) Continue to support at Parent/Carer attended school/community events (amalgamation of actions)	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Regular meetings held with Parent/Carer Forum to discuss issues and look at opportunities for collaboration and engagement – Virtual events for parents are being promoted - current events have been paused – An action plan has been developed around the four principles of co-production and a series of collaborative projects have been identified for co-production with young people. – Next steps to begin the work to engage young people in initiation of design of the programme/bespoke work 	Ongoing

4.10	Continue to work in partnership with Wirral's third sector and voluntary organisations	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	September 2021	– Strong relationships already established with VCEs - this will be developed further	Ongoing
Maximise resources					
4.11	SEND Participation & Engagement service which will include a full time SEND Youth Engagement Officer to develop engagement programmes with young people and champion youth voice in all that we do.	Head of SEND and Inclusion	September 2020	– April 2020 Lia Poppy Cain, Local Offer Apprentice has now been appointed on a permanent basis within the Participation and Engagement Service and has been proactive in engagement. For example, over 200 children and young people engaged with over development of the Strategy.	Completed
4.12	Maximise the reach of the four established SENDCo Locality Boards and in doing so improve engagement/feedback/ coproduction opportunities.	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	January 2021	– Feedback from locality boards is positive and good engagement with schools SENCOs who value the relationship with Local authority	Completed
4.13	Increase the numbers of parents we work with to review and plan services through different groups in addition to the Wirral's Parent/Carer forum. (PCPW)	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	March 2021	– Feedback questionnaire to parents about their levels of involvement and support – Next steps to develop tool to assess impact and numbers of parents involved	Ongoing
4.14	Develop the implementation of Personal Budgets	Head of SEND and Inclusion	March 2021	– Sept 2020 Personal Budgets Education workforce development training delivered by Special Educational Needs Managers x2 to EHCP Coordinators. – Dec 2019 Contract for provision of person-centred speech and language therapy package for child established within LA SEND & Inclusion services for Personal Budgets Education	Ongoing
4.15	Research and agree joint funding for a new IT platform for the Local Offer	Participation, Engagement and Co-production Lead	December 2020	– This is in development but there is further work to be done to identify appropriate platform	Ongoing

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Early Years

4.16	Support Early Years settings to engage at the start of the family's SEND journey.	Head of Early Years	September 2020	– Increased uptake of training and development, qualified practitioners able to identify need - good increase of 2-year-old offer	Completed
4.17	Further develop transition process for early years children into schools	Head of Early Years	March 2021	– Improved joint working and shared data between early years and schools, school nurses so that everyone understands needs of child before they arrive at school	Ongoing



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, 28 January 2021

REPORT TITLE:	WIRRAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT
REPORT OF:	STATUTORY SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS

REPORT SUMMARY

The Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) annual report sets out activity undertaken by the WSCP and relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Wirral. This includes activity to improve outcomes for children and young people, statutory case review activity, delivery and evaluation of safeguarding training, audit activity, quality assurance and performance, progress against priorities and scrutiny of the safeguarding arrangements.

The report is designed to provide a transparent assessment of multi-agency safeguarding activity, and to demonstrate the strength of the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements that came into force in September 2019, replacing the previous Local Safeguarding Children Board arrangements.

The annual report is presented on behalf of the three statutory safeguarding partners – the Local Authority, Merseyside Police and Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group, who are jointly responsible for the new safeguarding partnership arrangements.

The full report is included as an appendix to this report, and is also published on the WSCP website alongside a summary document and presentation:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/the-board/annual-reports-business-plans/>

The statutory safeguarding partners urge all those with a responsibility and interest in safeguarding Wirral’s children and young people to read the report.

This report does not relate to a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is requested to note the Annual Report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The statutory safeguarding partners must ensure that the annual report is widely available. The report is shared with the WSCP's relevant agencies and is published on the WSCP website (<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/the-board/annual-reports-business-plans/>) placing it in the public domain.
- 1.2 The WSCP and the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee had an agreed protocol which included presentation of the WSCP's annual report. As the successor committee the WSCP will continue to bring the annual report for noting to the Children, Young People & Education Committee.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other option was considered as it is a statutory duty for the WSCP to publish an annual report.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership became the statutory body for overseeing multi-agency arrangements to safeguard children in September 2019. This is the first annual report published by the partners.
- 3.2 In order to bring transparency for children, families and all practitioners about the activity undertaken, the safeguarding partners must publish a report at least once in every 12-month period. The report must set out what they have done because of the arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.
- 3.3 Safeguarding partners should make sure the report is widely available, and the published safeguarding arrangements should set out where the reports will be published.
- 3.4 The report includes:
 - an introduction from the safeguarding partners reaffirming the multi-agency partnerships commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all Wirral's children and young people
 - an assessment of the multi-agency response to the Covid-19 pandemic in the context of safeguarding. The WSCP continues to be very impressed and grateful to all partner agencies for their efforts to ensure vulnerable children and young people continue to be safeguarded in these unprecedented times
 - a presentation of what the profile of our children and young people would be if we had 100 children. The report also includes a deeper look at the disparity that exists in Wirral by contrasting the lives of two children, one of whom lives in an affluent part of West Wirral, and the other lives in one of our most deprived wards in East Wirral.

This highlights the need for agencies to work together to 'reduce the gap' for children across the borough

- a summary of key safeguarding statistics for 2019-20. It is important to note that the statistics do not include the impact of Covid-19, but the safeguarding partners continue to meet very regularly to receive and scrutinise this data. The data in the annual report tells us that Wirral continues to receive a higher number of contacts and referrals than our statistical neighbours, but referrals demonstrate a good understanding and application of thresholds. The report also illustrates that the numbers of children who are looked after in Wirral remain high
- the annual report summarises the case review activity undertaken by the WSCP over the previous 12 months. In this period the WSCP undertook one statutory Serious Case Review related to accidental methadone ingestion by a 20-month year old boy, and three multi-agency learning reviews. The WSCP undertakes learning reviews on cases which do not meet the statutory threshold, but where multi-agency learning is likely. The learning reviews undertaken in 2019-20 related to a child who had suffered a childhood trauma and his carers were struggling to cope, an 18-month-old child who had unexplained bruising and unreported fractures, and a case of the neglect of five young siblings
- as well as case reviews, the WSCP also undertakes a programme of multi-agency auditing throughout the year. The report details the audits completed in 2019-20 which included audits of: the use and quality of case chronologies; the awareness and response to neglect; the quality of child protection plans; the impact of child exploitation; and assessing mental capacity. Reports of the findings and learning from audits are shared with all relevant agencies and published on the WSCP website
- one of the priority areas for the WSCP is the multi-agency understanding and response to contextual safeguarding issues i.e., those risks from outside the family home. The WSCP undertook a large-scale survey of Wirral children and Young people about how safe they felt and the findings from the 2,000 responses are published on the WSCP website
- the WSCP undertakes an annual audit of the strength of partnership safeguarding arrangements (the Section 11 and 175 audits) which include all schools and key relevant agencies. The results of the audits show safeguarding arrangements to be strong, and the key findings are included in the report
- a summary of the pan Merseyside Child Death Overview Panel annual report is also included. The full report is published on the WSCP website
- a summary of activity undertaken by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against professionals
- a summary of the WSCP multi-agency training officer, including an evaluation of the effectiveness of training. The report also includes a summary of the single agency safeguarding training offer made to school and colleges by the WSCP
- a report of the latest developments in the Supporting Families Enhancing Futures (SFEF) model. This is the agreed model for multi-agency working with children and families in Wirral and continues to be developed and enhanced
- a summary of the progress against the current WSCP priorities: Emotional Health and Wellbeing; Contextual Safeguarding; Impact of Intergenerational Abuse and Neglect; Working Together partnership

- a summary of the very successful multi-agency safeguarding learning events organised by the WSCP. Unfortunately, Covid-19 prevented the March and September 2020 events from going ahead but the WSCP has organised a Virtual Event for the 19th January 2021
- the annual report also includes a report provided by Professor Maggie Atkinson who is the WSCP's Independent Scrutineer. All safeguarding partnerships are required to be subject to independent scrutiny and Professor Atkinson's report is based upon her attendance at WSCP Executive and committee meetings, scrutiny of all papers, policies and procedures, and scrutiny of all case review activity. Professor Atkinson comments positively about progress made by the WSCP during its first year

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership is funded from a range of partner agencies. Responsibility for funding the WSCP lies with the three statutory partners, who hold an equal and joint responsibility; the LA, Merseyside Police and Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group. The annual budget for the WSCP is £300,000. The statutory partners are currently in discussions to agree the funding arrangements for 2021-22 and beyond. The financial burden on the LA will not increase next year.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership has a statutory duty to publish an annual report under the Children Act (2004) as amended by the Children and Social Work Act (2017). This report demonstrates our compliance with this duty.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are no resourcing implications arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 It is a statutory requirement for the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership to publish an Annual Report of activity. Failure to do so would constitute a breach of statutory guidance and the requirements of the Children Act (2004).

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 A number of key safeguarding activities included consultation and meetings with children, young people and families, as well as professionals across the multi-agency children's workforce. This includes, but is not limited to, WSCP auditing and case review activity; views, wishes and feelings gathered through the Early Help and statutory Child in Need, Child Protection and Looked after Child processes; ongoing work to develop and embed the Supporting Families Enhancing Futures model; engagement with young people through the Contextual Safeguarding agenda.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.
- 9.2 There are no equality implications rising directly from the publication of this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no environmental and climate implications arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 WSCP Annual Report (<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/WSCP-Annual-Report-2019-20.pdf>)

Appendix 2 WSCP Annual Report On-A-Page (<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/WSCP-Annual-Report-2019-20-on-a-page-1.pdf>)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Section 16 of the Children Act (2004)
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 – Statutory Guidance

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	25 th March 2019

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Minute Extract – Council 7 December 2020

Minute 49

Councillor Kate Cannon moved and Councillor Paul Stuart seconded the following motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13:

“Poverty is devastating and deeply destabilising to families and communities, and residents from Wirral suffer from poverty at a higher rate than they did ten years ago, and at a higher rate than the national average. (Wirral children in low-income poverty has seen a 23.3% increase since 2015/16.)

It is particularly damaging during crucial stages of development, and the lasting effects that poverty has on physical and psychological processes are now well documented and long-lasting.

Child poverty is not simply about struggling to make ends meet financially but are linked with a wide range of deprivation issues such as poor-quality housing, poor health and low levels of educational attainment. Children in poverty are also more likely to go missing and have increased risk of exploitation and grooming.

Late interventions can be effective, but those made in the first five years of a child’s life are by far the most effective. The early interventions are also the most cost-effective.

With the social problems in our borough getting worse over the last decade – not better – and with the complex and varied nature of the causes and effects of poverty, Council recognises the significant work that has already been done to establish a poverty profile in the borough. It endorses the workstreams already going on to reduce child poverty, and asks that Children, Young People and Education Committee considers this motion and requests it begins to lead on compiling a comprehensive child poverty strategy for the borough.”

Councillor Moira McLaughlin moved and Councillor Mike Sullivan seconded the following amendment, submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.3:

“Delete everything in the original Notice of Motion after 3rd paragraph ending in “Children in poverty are also more likely to go missing and have increased risk of exploitation and grooming”

And insert the following:

‘A strategy to eradicate child poverty needs to address family poverty and should have a national, as well as a local dimension which encompasses policies to lift families out of poverty, alongside action to reduce the impact of inadequate income by providing help at community level.

Wirral has been at the forefront of this approach through the work of the community based organisation Feeding Birkenhead Supporting Wirral one of a number of 15 pilot areas across the country that forms Feeding Britain.

To date examples of how this approach has been successful are:

- (1) Using locally gathered evidence, Feeding Britain highlighted to Government that serious delays in payment of Tax Credits was resulting in families being left without income for long periods. This brought about an improvement at national level to the administration of Tax Credits.
- (2) Feeding Britain raised issues of additional charges for people using pre-paid meters for their fuel. These are often people on low income and it was able to negotiate with Ofgen that a cap on pre-payment be introduced.
- (3) The model for school holiday provision developed in Wirral, was presented to MPs by Feeding Britain, got cross party support and was the basis of the School Holiday (and Activity) Bill.
- (4) Feeding Britain developed the scheme which has become Kick Start, aimed at providing employment opportunities for young people.

Any local strategy needs to be comprehensive and work across all Council Departments and with community and voluntary sector, health, business and private sector partners.

Wirral has a well-established network of community and voluntary sector organisation which have a strong history of co-operation to address food and fuel poverty and offer help with debt and other factors which reduce disposable income.

It is 4 years since the Council's strategy "Improving Life Chances" was developed by the then Director of Public Health and though there are several other very good initiatives aimed at reducing poverty, it is clear that there is a need for a more integrated approach which uses the learning from research and builds on the recent activity to alleviate food poverty.

Council therefore requests that:

- (A) The Policy and Resources Committee undertake to pull together the different policies and strategies aimed at alleviating the problems which lead to poverty into a comprehensive Anti-Poverty Strategy and recommends that the expertise and experience of organisations involved in this area of work are used to inform that strategy.
- (B) That a set of performance indicators are developed which can monitor any improvement in poverty rates.
- (C) That these are reported on an annual basis, or as appropriate, to Policy and Resources Committee and the policy is updated as required.' "

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9.1, the Council did not debate this matter.

The amendment was put and lost on the Mayor's casting vote (29:29) (One abstention).

The substantive motion was then put, and it was –

Resolved (58:0) (One abstention) -

Poverty is devastating and deeply destabilising to families and communities, and residents from Wirral suffer from poverty at a higher rate than they did ten years ago, and at a higher rate than the national average. (Wirral children in low-income poverty has seen a 23.3% increase since 2015/16.)

It is particularly damaging during crucial stages of development, and the lasting effects that poverty has on physical and psychological processes are now well documented and long-lasting.

Child poverty is not simply about struggling to make ends meet financially but are linked with a wide range of deprivation issues such as poor-quality housing, poor health and low levels of educational attainment. Children in poverty are also more likely to go missing and have increased risk of exploitation and grooming.

Late interventions can be effective, but those made in the first five years of a child's life are by far the most effective. The early interventions are also the most cost-effective.

With the social problems in our borough getting worse over the last decade – not better – and with the complex and varied nature of the causes and effects of poverty, Council recognises the significant work that has already been done to establish a poverty profile in the borough. It endorses the workstreams already going on to reduce child poverty, and asks that Children, Young People and Education Committee considers this motion and requests it begins to lead on compiling a comprehensive child poverty strategy for the borough.

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, 28 January 2021

REPORT TITLE:	WORKING GROUP UPDATE: THE PROVISION OF FOOD & ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN IN SCHOOL HOLIDAYS DURING THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

A report, presented to the Children, Young People and Education Committee on 1 December 2020, provided an update following the proposal agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee in respect to the provision of free school meals (FSM) in school holidays during the COVID 19 pandemic. The report explained that the Policy and Resources Committee agreed a proposal for a project co-ordinated on behalf of the Council by local charity Neo Community, working in partnership with schools and local community-based feeding groups and organisations, to provide food and activities to children eligible for Free School Meals over the Christmas 2020, February half-term 2021 and Easter 2021 holidays. This built upon learning from the operation of the Edsential Holiday Activity Fund over the summer, providing for adaptation of a successful model of delivery.

A recommendation arising from the report, considered at the previous Committee Meeting, was to establish a Working Group with key partners to explore options in relation to supporting children with free school meals in the medium to longer term. The purpose of this report is to update the Children, Young People and Education Committee on progress made to date.

RECOMMENDATION - The Children, Young People and Education note the progress of the Working Group for the Provision of Food and Activities in School Holidays during the COVID- 19 Pandemic.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 The Covid 19 crisis has highlighted the need for children to be able to access food and support activities during school holidays. A specific request was made by the Leader of the Council for a report to be taken to the Policy and Resources Committee on 11 November 2020 to address two issues. Firstly, an urgent decision to agree the use of the Tranche 4 COVID-19 emergency fund (£200, 000) to provide funding for the provision of meals to eligible children (those identified as able to access Free School Meal provision under the current Government scheme) between Christmas and the end of Easter term 2021; this was agreed. Secondly, as the full impact of COVID-19 becomes clearer for the Policy and Resources Committee to consider how best to meet the needs of these children in the medium and longer term. The Children, Young People and Education Committee was tasked with progressing this.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on the progress of the working group established by the Children, Young People and Education Committee on 1 December 2020.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The option to not provide any provision to children over the school holidays was considered and discounted. Through the Council's Humanitarian Cell, created in response to COVID-19, agencies and third sector partners had been engaged in determining both emergency and sustainable approaches to food and other poverty, the impacts of which on households have been compounded by the pandemic.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Policy and Resources Committee agreed a proposal for a project co-ordinated by local charity Neo Community (on behalf of Wirral Council) working in partnership with schools and local community-based feeding groups and organisations, to provide food and activities to children eligible for Free School Meals over the Christmas 2020, February half term 2021 and Easter Holidays 2021. This built upon learning from the operation of the Edsential Holiday Activity Fund over the summer, providing for adaptation of a successful model of delivery.
- 3.2 As noted at the Policy and Resources Committee on 11 November 2020 and reported by the Government after the report had been drafted, the Department for Work and Pensions announced on 8 November 2020 a significant package of extra targeted financial support for those in need over the winter period. This included:
- £170m COVID Winter Grant Scheme to support children, families and the most vulnerable over winter.
 - Holiday Activities and Food Programme to be expanded, covering Easter, Summer and Christmas in 2021.
 - Healthy Start payments set to rise from £3.10 to £4.25 a week from April 2021.

3.3 Wirral's proposed allocation of the £170m COVID Winter Grant Scheme is £1,224,617; this is for the period 1 December 2020 – 31 March 2021. Through the Humanitarian Cell (Food Sub-Group), partners agencies, local organisations, and groups – have been engaged in the development of proposals for spend of the COVID Winter Grant Scheme.

4.0 **PROGRESS ON THE PROVISION OF FOOD & ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOL AND NURSERY AGE CHILDREN DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

4.1 The scope of the project was developed in discussion with partners and presented to Children, Families and Education Committee on 1 December 2020. The scope was also extended from school age children eligible for Free School Meals to include nursery age children (eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium/2 Year Funding) and an enhanced food offer including breakfast.

4.2 The Working Group met on 21 December 2020 and 18 January 2021 to be informed of progress and to agree next steps. The group is scheduled to meet monthly for the remainder of the municipal year.

4.3 During the Christmas holiday period, 23 organisations were involved in the distribution of 8071 hampers and 9961 activity packs that were delivered to those eligible children in the cohorts outlined above whose parents/carers requested support. The hampers delivered to families were per household. The activity packs were distributed per individual eligible child.

4.4 The overall budget consisting of the DWP Covid Winter Grant Scheme (£385,790) and the Budget Tranche 4 (£200,000) is £585,790. The actual spend for Christmas 2020 was £439,621 with an additional projected spend of £243,205 for February half term. The total projected spend is £682,827. The estimated contingency for the project is up to £97,037.

4.5 The way in which the budget was allocated is detailed in the table below:

COVID Winter Grant (Hampers)	£331,566.27
Tranche 4 (Activity Packs)	£87,540.79
Project management (Neo Community)	£14,601.04
Military Style Education & Development CIC (logistics) (Tranche 4)	£5,913.00
Total Spend	£439,621.10

- 4.6 Individual hampers were costed at £20 each per week with an enhancement for larger families. The budget attributed to the programme was aimed at a 56% take up rate, based upon delivery of the programme in the summer, but with additional contingency set aside anticipating increased demand over Christmas. In practice, there has been a 66% take up rate from eligible children, and 45% take up rate from early years settings and additionally two colleges requested support. Contingency had been built into the projects costing in order to support this.
- 4.7 The group were informed of ongoing work to identify gaps across the Borough. It was reported to the Working Group that Wirral West was the Constituency area with the most gaps in support. Work is currently being undertaken with organisations and schools with the view to schools having a single point of contact with individual community group or organisation, providing an ongoing and sustainable link for community-based support to families.
- 4.8 In order to support community groups and organisations a collective Governance Board has been established so that officers can share knowledge and offer professional advice. The board consists of representatives from Wirral Council, Community Action Wirral, Wirral Development Trust, Edsential, Feeding Birkenhead – Supporting Wirral and Neo Community.
- 4.9 The next steps will be to continue working alongside organisations to deliver hampers and activity packs during the February half-term and for the Working Group to continue to meet on a monthly basis.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The overall cost of the project is estimated to be up to £682,827. The project management, activity pack costs and additional logistical costs elements (£200,000); which was allocated from Tranche 4 of the Government's COVID -19 emergency funding by the Policy and Resources Committee (minute 18 of 11 November 2020 refers). The cost of the food element of the project will be funded by the COVID Winter Grant Scheme). There was some contingency for the take up rate being above 56% built in to both funding streams. The overspend will be funded by utilising all of the Tranche 4 allocation and the remainder provided from the COVID Winter Grant Scheme.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The spend proposed is consistent with the terms of each grant.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 7.1 Oversight of the project is with the temporary lead for food and welfare support (COVID-19) within the structure of the Humanitarian Cell and a representative on the Governance Board

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 8.1 Risks associated with the project include gaps in provision in delivery of the project. This has been identified and ongoing work is being undertaken to address this.
- 8.2 It is anticipated that additional logistical support with deliveries will be required over the February half-term due to the national lockdown, which means that collection of food hampers from schools by parents/carers is not a preferable option.
- 8.3 Calculations had been based on a take up rate of 56%. Contingency funding had been built into the project's costings to support the actual take up rate so far of 66% (Free School Meal eligible children).

8 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 9.1 The design of the project reflects learning from previous delivery (including feedback from groups and organisations engaged) and engagement with those partners engaged in the Humanitarian Cell Food Sub- Group.

9 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

This report has no impact on equalities.

11.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Deliveries and collections are a part of the project's operating model. Due to some families self-isolating and the need to minimise contact between households, even within a COVID – safe environment, it is not appropriate for food and activities to be hosted within local community facilities.
- 11.2 Food has been sourced locally where it has been practical and cost effective to do so.

REPORT AUTHOR: Victoria Simpson
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Provision of Food & Activities for Children in School Holidays During the Covid-19 Pandemic, Policy and Resources Committee, 11 November 2020.

Covid Winter Grant Scheme – Draft Guidance for County Councils and Unitary Authorities, Department for Work & Pensions.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Children, Young People and Education Committee	1 December 2020
Policy & Resources Committee	11 November 2020



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 28 JANUARY 2021

REPORT TITLE:	WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

The Children, Young People and Education Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which are within the remit of the Committee.

It is envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. This report provides the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Children, Young People and Education Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Members are invited to note and comment on the proposed Children, Young People and Education Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure Members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 A number of workplan formats were explored, with the current framework open to amendment to match the requirements of the Committee.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The work programme should align with the priorities of the Council and its partners. The programme will be informed by:

- The Council Plan
- The Council's transformation programme
- The Council's Forward Plan
- Service performance information
- Risk management information
- Public or service user feedback
- Referrals from Council

Terms of Reference

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is responsible for services which help keep children and young people safe and fulfil their potential. It incorporates schools and attainment, and social care for children and families. It has a particular focus on those children who are in care, and for whom the Council has corporate parenting responsibility.

The Committee is charged by full Council to undertake responsibility for:

(a) exercising management, oversight and delivery of services to children and young people in relation to their care, wellbeing, education or health, with the exception of any powers reserved to full Council;

(b) the functions and powers conferred on or exercisable by the Council as Local Authority in relation to the provision of education;

(c) working with all schools (including academies) in relation to raising standards of attainment and developing opportunities;

(d) leading for the Council and its partners in the discharge the Council's functions as Corporate Parent for its children in care and care leavers;

(e) any other functions comprised in partnership arrangements with other bodies connected with the delivery of services for children, young people and families;

(f) providing a view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management in relation to the Committee's functions;

(g) undertaking the development and implementation of policy in relation to the Committee's functions, incorporating the assessment of outcomes, review of effectiveness and formulation of recommendations to the Council, partners and other bodies, which shall include any decision relating to:

- child protection;
- children's centres;
- education, schools and settings;
- looked after children;
- mental health services;
- safeguarding;
- special educational needs and disability (SEND);
- youth offending services;
- youth services; and
- social and education transport

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report is for information and planning purposes only, therefore there are no direct financial implication arising. However, there may be financial implications arising as a result of work programme items.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, there may be legal implications arising as a result of work programme items.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no direct implications to Staffing, ICT or Assets.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The Committee's ability to undertake it's responsibility to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, make decisions on policies, co-ordinate spend, and maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets may be compromised if it does not have the opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

This report is for information to Members and there are no direct equality implications.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report is for information to Members and there are no direct environment and climate implications.

REPORT AUTHOR: Victoria Simpson
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Children, Young People and Education Committee Work Plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Council Constitution
Forward Plan
The Council's Transformation Programme

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

PROPOSED AGENDA FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

28 JANUARY 2021

Item	Key?
Admission Arrangements	Yes
Revenue Budget Monitoring	No
Budget Consultation	No
SEND Self Evaluation Update	Yes
Notice of motion: Child poverty	No
Safeguarding Partnerships annual report	No
Working Group update: Holiday food and activities	No
Work Programme	No

Item	Key Decision	Approximate timescale	Lead Departmental Officer	Wirral Plan Priority
Update on the children looked sufficiency strategy	Yes	March 2021	Paul Boyce	
Protecting Vulnerable Adolescents	Yes	March 2021	Tony Kirk	'Brighter Futures'

School Places Review	Yes	March 2021	Carly Brown	'Brighter Futures'
'Cradle to Career' Project Update	No	TBC	Elizabeth Hartley	'Brighter Futures'
Ethical Care Market Development Update	No	TBC	Simone White	'Brighter Futures'

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED

Item	Approximate timescale	Lead Departmental Officer
Service Review – Corporate Transformation	TBC	Paul Boyce
Care Plan Scrutiny Review Update	TBC	Simone White
Missing from Care	TBC	Simone White
Care Leavers Update	TBC	Simone White
Advocacy Service	TBC	Paul Boyce
Healthy Weight	TBC	Paul Boyce
Update on LAC placements	TBC	Simone White
Learning from Covid and targeting resources with regards to social inequalities	TBC	Paul Boyce
Anti Poverty Strategy Review	TBC	Paul Boyce

STANDING ITEMS AND MONITORING REPORTS

Item	Reporting Frequency	Lead Departmental Officer
Performance and Financial Monitoring Report	TBC	Shaer Halewood/Carly Brown
Childrens Committee Work Programme Update	TBC	Committee Team
Summary of Standards	Twice Annually	Sue Talbot

Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report	Annually	David Robbins
Public Questions	Each Meeting	

WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE

Item	Format	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Working Groups/ Sub Committees				
Corporate Parenting Panel	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Task and Finish Reviews				
-	-	--		-
Spotlight Sessions and Workshops				
County Lines Action Update	Workshop	2020/21	Paul Boyce/Tony Kirk	

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