

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Home and Continuing Education Service is Wirral's response to its statutory duty to provide a suitable education for children who cannot attend school because of their medical needs. 1 in 10 school children will suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder¹ which is reflected in the referrals to the service (approximately 90% are through CAMHS).

This report is a summary of progress in the service following the introduction of charging the referring schools for home education from the 13th week of work. This was first presented to Schools Forum in May 2018.

2. BACKGROUND

The Home and Continuing Education Service aims to respond to the changing needs of Wirral's children who cannot attend school for physical or mental health reasons by:

- Providing a suitable education for the children of Wirral who have medical needs that prevent them from attending school by ensuring that: they make the best educational progress that their health needs allows and that they achieve outcomes that allow them to access the most suitable pathway to prepare them for their future success.
- Providing sufficient hours of continuing education in line with statutory guidance; the equivalent of full-time or for the number of hours the child's health condition allows. "Full-time education" is not defined in law but it should equate to what the pupil would normally have in school – for example, for pupils in Key Stage 4 full-time education in a school would usually be 25 hours a week. When education is delivered via one to one tuition it is not, necessarily, expected to be 25 hours a week.² One to one teaching is, by its nature, more intense than class teaching.
- Developing a multiagency approach to a graduated pathway for sick children that enables access to a full or fuller time education in the most appropriate education setting for that child, e.g. 1:1 teaching, small group teaching, part or full time within a mainstream or special school. The overarching aim is that the child should be as fully included in the education process as their health condition allows.

¹ Future in Mind: Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing NHS England DoH 2015 Chapter 3 page 25

² Ensuring a Good Education for Children who cannot attend school because of health needs. May 2013 DFE-00307-2013 page 4

Progress towards revised service structure

	Proposed	Actual August 2020
Head of Service	Full time	0.8
Deputy Head of Service	Full time	0.8 Remains on casual basis
General admin/exam officer	0.6 week	0.4
Finance clerk	0.6 week	Not appointed
1 learning mentor	0.8	Remains casual
Contracted teacher	FTE 1.0	1 x 0.8 1 x 0.4 3 x 0.3 2 x 0.1 2.5 FTE
1 HLTA	Full time	0.6 casual

	F2	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Y14	
2016/17	2	3	3	0	0	4	3	8	7	19	20	31	8	4	1	113
2017/18	0	2	2	5	2	3	7	11	17	17	22	43	12	2	3	147
2018/19	0	0	2	3	1	4	4	9	13	19	32	35	17	2	2	143
2019/20	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	8	15	22	16	37	9	5	3	122

Changes to the WH&CES offer:

Electively Home Educated pupils

Although the guidance (DFE-00307-2013) states that provision should be available to pupils whether or not the child is on the roll of a school, the service has withdrawn the facility to educate these pupils for the following reasons:

- The parents of the children have taken responsibility for the child's education which is their prerogative. The children easily become stuck on home education with no exit back to a school.
- As no funding can be drawn down at any time, this often places a significant strain on the Home Education budget.

*Electively Home Educated: 2 Brothers, elder in Year 10 been with HEd since May 2018 and unlikely to transition to a school; younger now in Year 5 been with HEd since June 2019. No longer under the care of CAMHS, we are working towards transitioning him into a primary school.

	Pupils with EHC Plans	Electively Home Educated
2016 - 2017	18	2
2017 - 2018	38	1
2018 - 2019	41	5
2019 - 2020	29	4*

Summary of Budget / staffing changes from 2019/20

1. Admin support has reduced by 0.6. The admin assistant expressed a wish to return to her contracted hours (0.4). This leaves the service without office cover for 3 days per week which present a challenge in terms of JCQ/awarding bodies' requirements and the effective running of the service. The salary has risen by cost of living rises. Funding has remained the same as 2018/2019.
2. Learning Mentor covers group session work, co-ordination of CIEAG through Career Connect, and transition to Post 16 provision if this is appropriate for the pupil. Her work has levelled off as she has developed and systems and procedures in addition to further developing relationships with Post 16 providers.
3. Cost of Invigilators has also levelled off as more pupils are becoming able to attend the base for lessons and examinations. GCSE, BTEC and Functional Skills examination were cancelled because of COVID-19, this removed the need for invigilators and will also mean the service may be eligible for a refund of examination entry fees.
4. Apprenticeship Levy costs – introduced automatically as part of payroll costs in April 2017 - no extra budget allocated to cover costs.
5. Pension deficit increased costs as part of payroll - no extra budget allocated to cover costs.
6. Contracted and casual staff pay has increased by the cost of living increase only. Contracted staff have not been able to access pay increases through Teacher Appraisal or by professional development and pay progress.
7. Casual Teacher hours pay increased from

£204,717 in 2017/18, £ 339,822 in 2018/19 & £450,000 in 2019/2020 - as a direct result of needs led demand and significant increase in pupil referrals from schools, delays in placing pupils with EHC Plans, delays in transition back to schools, increase in Year 11 and Post 16 pupils.
8. Charging schools £80/week/child started in September for pupils who had been in receipt of Home Teaching for 12 weeks before the end of July 2018. 2 terms have been charged to schools, the final term in is in financial year 2019/20 and is always going to be accrued. It has to be borne in mind that teacher salaries and on-costs rise year on year.

An increase of charges to schools is to be proposed from April 2021. This is being discussed with the Local Authority.

9. PFI Rental costs for the CLC building go up each year by RPI but the budget allocation has not increased.
10. Expenditure on other supplies and services are kept to a minimum of average £4500 per annum which is not excessive.
11. In 2019/20 Hilbre charged the service £12,000 for fees to support HES's operation. The management of the service's finances requires a substantial amount of Finance Director/Finance team time, especially the chasing up of schools and other establishments who do not pay the charges or Pupil Funding Elements. Pressure on the budget has meant the part time finance clerk has not been appointed.
12. Year 11 Exam fees average £12500, fees go up as pupil numbers increase.
13. LA Re-Charges remain static at £10,100. No idea what these cover so queried with the LA.
14. Claimed from schools:
Year 11 AWPU & pupil funding elements and charges to schools
2019/2020 - £300,000
15. Head of Service retiring 31st October 2020, Julie Hudson taking over the role in the interim and conducting a review of the service.

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