

## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Home and Continuing Education Service is an Alternative Provision for Children and Young people who are unable to attend school due to medical needs (It is not currently listed as part of Wirral's' Guild of Alternative Education) It also forms part of Wirral's statutory responsibility/ duty to provide a suitable education for children who cannot attend school because of their medical needs <sup>2</sup> 1 in10 school children will suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder<sup>1</sup> which is reflected in the referrals to the service (approximately 90% are through CAMHS).

This report summarises the aim of the service and highlights both a future review and some proposed changes to the current funding/charges for schools. The Service is being managed on an interim basis (previous headteacher retired in October) until the end of this academic year. (31<sup>st</sup> August) It also highlights the effect of Covid-19 on the pupils within the service provision.

## **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 preparation for Life.
- 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.<sup>2</sup> One to one teaching is, by its nature, more intense than class teaching.
- Developing a multiagency graduated response for children with medical needs that enables access to a suitable education in the most appropriate setting for that child,

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<sup>1</sup> 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

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

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.

### **3. Changes to the Service**

The Service is being managed on an interim basis and has encompassed the management of the Medical and Physical Needs Advisory Teacher within the service delivery. This has allowed for a more graduated response to supporting schools include pupils with medical Needs.

The two teams were managed by the Interim Service Lead from October half term 2019, this was instructed and overseen by the Assistant Director of Education at the time.

Both the Medical and Physical Needs Advisory Teacher and the HCES team are subject to an ongoing review by the Head of SEND and Inclusion.

The Service will be operating from The HCES Base at Hilbre and some teaching will be delivered at Pilgrim Street which allows easier access for families and increased links with Youth Service/teams.

Staff have had just had (February 2021) the roll out of the Council Agile Working Kit and there has been a whole service ICT Improvement programme to response to the demands of On-line Learning.

Some enrichment activities being available in 2021/22 are being proposed in order to help prepare the pupils to move on successfully .This development will rely upon the year 11 Pupil Premium being received.

### **4. The Effects of Covid-19 on the Service**

The recent pandemic has led to a small decline in referrals to the service, but an increased amount of year 12 pupils than usual. This is likely to be the case next year due to the limited work around transition, because of the pandemic.

There are currently 102 pupils receiving provision in comparison with 80 at this point last year. There are 15 year 12 pupils. This increase in the number of older pupils receiving a service is more significant than the overall number in terms of the effect of COVID since they are currently without funding. There are 24 year 11 pupils.

### **5. Budget Position 2020-21 and 2021-22**

In 2020-21 the budget position indicates an overspend of £100k and this reflects the financial resources to cover the service. There is no increase proposed for the 2021-22 budget.

As part of the review the service are planning to increase the £80 per week charge to schools for pupils who attend the service for more than 12 weeks. **The proposal is to increase this to £125 per week from April 2021.**

This will mean an annual total cost to schools of £4,875 (apart from the pupil's first year which will cost £3,375 as the first 12 weeks are free). **Which is below AWPU rate.** Based on income received in 2019-20 financial year of £42k this will increase income for the Home Education Service by approx. £13,500.

This will not apply to year 11 pupils where it has been previously agreed that the AWPU will be transferred from the schools. This will continue for those pupils who are agreed will transfer to the AP census. Schools will need to pay the standard weekly rate for those pupils who do not transfer to the AP census on January 21<sup>st</sup>.

#### **6. Request for the year 11's Pupil Premium to be transferred with the Pupil to HCES from September 2021**

Schools are also being asked to agree transfer of the PP (£955) adhering to the principle of funding following the pupil.

This will be used to develop enrichment activities which will be essential to help the year 11 pupils make successful transitions, particularly after the Lockdown periods.

#### **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Forum note the report and the increase to charges with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 at the rate described above.

If the Forum wishes to express any views in relation to this increase, they are invited to inform the Local Authority.

**Julie Hudson**